

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Friday, 21st July, 1939.

The Council met at 10.30 a.m., pursuant to adjournment, His Excellency the Acting Governor, SIR JOHN WADDINGTON, K.C.M.G., O.B.E., President, in the Chair.

PRESENT.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Mr. G. D. Owen, C.M.G.

The Hon. the Attorney-General (Acting), Mr. S. E. Gomes.

The Hon. J. S. Dash, Director of Agriculture.

The Hon. E. A. Luckhoo, O.B.E. (Eastern Berbice).

The Hon. E. G. Woolford, K.C., (New Amsterdam).

The Hon. E. F. McDavid, M.B.E., Colonial Treasurer.

The Hon. M. B. G. Austin, O.B.E. (Nominated Unofficial Member).

The Hon. W. A. D'Andrade, Comptroller of Customs.

The Hon. N. M. Maclellan, Director of Medical Services.

The Hon. J. I. De Aguiar (Central Demerara).

The Hon. E. M. Walcott (Nominated Unofficial Member).

The Hon. L. G. Crease, Director of Education.

The Hon. B. R. Wood, Conservator of Forests.

The Hon. W. A. Macnie, Commissioner of Labour and Local Government, (Acting).

The Hon. Percy C. Wight, O.B.E. (Georgetown Central).

The Hon. J. Eleazar (Berbice River).

The Hon. J. Gonsalves, O.B.E., (Georgetown South).

The Hon. Jung Bahadur Singh, (Demerara-Essequibo).

The Hon. Peer Bacchus (Western Berbice).

The Hon. C. R. Jacob (North Western District).

The Hon. A. G. King (Demerara River).

The Hon. J. W. Jackson (Nominated Unofficial Member).

The Hon. G. H. Smellie, (Nominated Unofficial Member).

The Hon. F. H. Martin-Sperry, (Nominated Unofficial Member).

MINUTES.

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on the 20th July, 1939, as printed and circulated, were confirmed.

UNOFFICIAL NOTICES.

INCREASED GOVERNMENT COUNTY SCHOLARSHIPS.

MR. DE AGUIAR gave notice of the following motion:—

Whereas there appears to be a general awakening and a genuine desire among the people of the Colony to provide their children with Secondary Education;

And whereas there is a healthy response from the Primary Schools as evidenced by the number of entrants and the results of the County Scholarship Examinations;

And whereas there is a continued increase in the number of children attending the Primary Schools;

And whereas the number of free places provided annually for Secondary Education are insufficient to meet the needs of these children, and, are less in number than in the British West Indies and other Colonies:

Be it Resolved,—That this Council is of the opinion that provision should be made for increasing the number of Government County Scholarships to twenty-four, and that opportunity should be taken to consider with a view to readjustment, if necessary, of the regulation dealing with the number of Scholarships to be awarded annually to each of the Counties of Demerara, Berbice and Essequibo, and that His Excellency the Acting Governor be respectfully requested to refer the matter to the Honourable the Director of Education and the Education Committee with directions that early steps be taken to give effect to this proposal.

APPOINTMENT OF UNQUALIFIED SANITARY
INSPECTORS.

Mr. JACOB, on behalf of Mr. LEE, gave notice of the following questions :—

1. Is Government aware that Sanitary Inspectors have been appointed before being qualified as such? If the answer is in the affirmative, will Government state the names and reasons for each appointment?
2. Will Government state how many applications were made to the Department before any such appointment or appointments, and the dates of the respective candidates' qualifications and/or qualification?

CIVIL SERVICE APPOINTMENTS.

3 Will Government in the future adopt the policy of appointment of members of the Civil Service in order of the date of the applications together with the respective merits in the applicants' qualifications and all surrounding circumstances in order to give every applicant an opportunity of being employed in the said Service.

REPORT OF LEONORA COMMISSION.

4. Did Government deliberately lay on the table of the Council the report of the Leonora Commission in its incomplete form? Will Government give the reason for doing so? Is Government aware that the incompleteness of any report when laid on the table of the Council is misleading and unfair to members of the Council? Will Government in the future assist members of the Council in the discharge of their duties by not laying on the table any incomplete report and/or document?

ORDER OF THE DAY.

PRISON FOR FEMALES IN GEORGETOWN.

Mr. JACOB, on behalf of Mr. LEE, asked the following question :—

1. Is Government aware that if a woman is convicted and sentenced to 7 days' imprisonment or less she has to be publicly escorted by a matron from Georgetown to New Amsterdam Prison and she is in full view of everyone travelling in the trains and steamers as an object of pity? Will Government cause this to cease by erecting in or near Georgetown a prison for women under-going short terms?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Mr. G. D. Owen) replied as follows :—

1. A female prisoner is not identifiable as such when travelling to New Amsterdam unless, by her own behaviour, she attracts attention. It is not considered necessary at present to erect a prison for females in Georgetown.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATE, 1938.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I beg to move :—

That, this Council approves the Statement of Supplementary Expenditure for the year 1938, additional to that included in the Schedules of Additional Provision for the year 1938, already passed by the Legislative Council, which has been laid on the table.

Hon. members will see from the statement that the total amounts under heads A and B come to \$148,238.79. There are one or two items to which I should call special attention. On the first page hon. members will see under head IX.—Education—an item, Grants to schools, \$6,678.91. That sum is required to meet payments of arrears in salaries to certain teachers during the period 1923 to the present day. The payments will be made under Regulation 21 of the Education Code, 1919. On the second page there is a large item under head XXIII.—Miscellaneous—sub-head 38—Depreciation of Investments, Post Office Savings Bank, \$104,607. This is due to the revaluation of the investments of the Bank at market prices at 31st December, 1937. There will not be a similar depreciation of the investments in future because the Post Office Savings Bank is now a separate organisation. Under head XXIX.—Poor—there is an item of \$3,593 for dietary, which is necessary owing to the increase in the prices of foodstuffs. On the next page, under Public Works Extraordinary there is an item—Police Station, Belfield. It was found that the amount provided for the building of this station at Cove and John was insufficient and a supplementary vote of \$7,146 is asked for. The reason for this excess is given in the remarks column. Under the same head there is an item—Improvement of drainage and filling in of low-lying areas of Government lands, Georgetown, \$5,325. The work was accelerated towards the end of last year for the relief of unemployment, and that is the cause of this additional expenditure. Most of the other items are small, and reasons for them are given in the remarks column.

Professor DASH (Director of Agriculture) seconded.

Mr. JACOB: I would like to make a few remarks on this supplementary estimate. The hon. mover explained one or two items on page 2 but I would have

liked to have listened to an explanation in regard to the item under the head Police—Emergency measures, Labour disturbances, \$1,098.34. In addition to that there is another large amount in another estimate in connection with the labour disturbances, and I would like to make a few comments on it. In addition I observe on page 5 of the estimate an item—Expenses of visit of Major G. St. J. Orde Browne, Labour Adviser to Secretary of State, \$181.76. I would like to enquire whether Major Orde Browne has submitted a report, and if so, whether that report will be laid on the table at the earliest possible date? If he has not yet submitted a report I may be informed when we may expect a report from him. In regard to the labour disturbances I cannot help stating that public money is being wasted in the manner Government is spending it. I cannot understand why, when there are slight stoppages of work, when workmen ask for increased pay, or when they ask that matters be investigated, police reinforcements should be sent to estates and expense incurred. I take it that if there is a dispute between employer and employee it should be settled before the police or Government intervene. Recently we had the creation of a very expensive department, and I am sure that if that department is given an opportunity to investigate in these matters there will be no necessity to spend all this money on labour disturbances.

In addition to that we have had the recent Leonora disturbances, resulting in the loss of several lives. I do not wish to question the findings of the Commission. In fact I have stated it before and I repeat it now, that I have the greatest confidence in the members of that Commission. At least one of the members I can consider a personal friend of mine, and my name having appeared in that report dozens of times I claim the privilege to speak on it. In the first place I was prevented from going to the sugar estate to speak to workers who wanted me to speak to them. I drew the attention of Government to it. I spoke to the Colonial Secretary, the Commissioner of Labour and the Secretary of the Sugar Producers' Association and advised them that it was necessary that the attitude of Government, the police and the Sugar Producers' Association should be changed. I advised them strongly and

even went so far as to say that if Government did not take steps we would issue and broadcast a statement to the public that we were withdrawing from the labour troubles. The Royal Commission was in the Colony then and I went to the Commission and made a statement, and to my horror I see certain references to me in the report of the Leonora Commission.

We asked for copies of the evidence taken at the enquiry, but Your Excellency attempted to gag us yesterday. I know Your Excellency has only been here quite recently, but the attitude of Government in these matters is very reprehensible. I am accused in that report; I am told that although I was prevented from going on the estate I should have gone there at the risk of my life and my liberty to speak to the workers employed and controlled by the Sugar Producers' Association, and who, I take it, are loyal subjects of His Majesty the King. Suppose I had gone there and something had happened? I am not too sure that something would not have happened, because the Police would do anything to put me in 12 Camp Street. I say that very feelingly. My conduct on the whole has had the greatest scrutiny, and not a single individual, not a member of this Council who had the temerity to accuse me not long ago, can say that I have not done my duty to my King and country. I am told that I should have gone and spoken to those people. Why should I? I would have been told, if anything had happened, that as one of the leaders who are supposed to know the law, I had flouted the law and gone to a place where I was not asked to go. Yet the Commissioners say that I should have gone on the estate. I have the utmost confidence in those Commissioners but I do think something wrong has happened, and I ask Government to print the evidence taken before the Commission so that we might go into it. I personally want it so as to be able to find out whether the findings of the Commission are based on the evidence given. In any case I am certain that that statement was not based on my evidence, or what I stated in evidence was not regarded as true. I would like to see the notes of evidence and have legal opinion on it.

If the attitude of Government had been different the position of the Colony

would have been quite different. I make that bold statement, and I say again that unless Government changes its attitude there is going to be trouble in this Colony. When there was shooting at Leonora the Commissioner of Police was in Georgetown. I do not know whether he is getting promotion, but I know that junior officers in times of stress may commit errors of judgment. The fact remains that those people have been promoted, and at the expense of innocent human lives. I do not know how Government regards people's lives, but even if those officers were entitled to promotion it was not just or fair to give them promotion at that time. The manager of the estate has resigned, for what reason I do not know, but we know that he is not there. On Government's side the people who have committed grave errors of judgment in my opinion—and I put my opinion against that of any other hon. member of this Council—have been promoted and money has been spent. Money can be found for destroying lives but not for productive expenditure. I consider the conduct of Government very reprehensible, and I ask Government to change its attitude in the future. I will not say more. We are told all the time that Government wants the co-operation of the members of this Council, but I am sorry to say that while we hear that from the Chair I do not think Government really requires the co-operation of all the members of this Council, because in my own case I have demonstrated it but I am sorry to say that Government does not accept our co-operation.

I read some questions this morning from another hon. member, but I do not know how Government is going to reply to them. I suppose the usual reply will be given. We are put to great inconvenience here; we are not given the information we are entitled to get. The whole system of government here and in the West Indies is most demoralizing, and I do urge and hope that the Royal Commission will make recommendations for a change of this Constitution, which is working in the interest of a few who have pull and influence at the Colonial Office.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I have never attempted and will never attempt to place my opinion against that of the hon. member who has just sat down, but I cannot digest his

system of logic when he says that if he had gone to Leonora he would have been in danger of losing his life, and yet he objects to the police having been sent there. Whatever he feels I cannot conceive of his objection to the police being there. It was a good thing that they went there because the loss of life might have been considerable. While we regret the lives lost, I do not think anybody but the hon. member could justify the remark that the police should not have been sent there. I think I have very much more experience than the hon. member. I was one of the lawyers engaged in connection with the Rosehall riot in which 16 persons including policemen, lost their lives. If the police had not been there I do not know what would have occurred. Whenever there is a likelihood of loss of life the presence of policemen is a very necessary factor. At Port Mourant where there are thousands of people in comparison with only 20 policemen, nothing transpired. If the policemen had not been there something was bound to occur. No money spent on such occasions can be said to be too much. I compliment Government on sending the police to Leonora, and I go further and say that the conduct of the police was very exemplary indeed.

But I have a grouse against Government with respect to the large amount spent on the police station at Cove and John. As far as I know the police stations in the Colony are all built at strategic points, but suddenly somebody got it into his head that there were too many, and some of them were closed down. This has resulted in a prevalence of crime which would never have existed. The Belfield post office and police station was erected 72 years ago at a very strategic point, and men had been living there all these years. We had never heard that Belfield was unhealthy; in fact it was considered a health resort all the time until suddenly, without any indication to anybody concerned, somebody thought it was not a very nice place to live. The sand reef at Cove and John is considered a better place and a tremendous police station is being erected there. The convenience of the people in the district was not taken into consideration at all, in spite of the fact that a police station is needed where there can be supervision over a larger area. For the convenience of the people

who occupy the place for a time Government has removed the police station from Belfield. This large expenditure over the original estimate has to be approved at the expense of small items which are more necessary.

Government has erected a beautiful fire escape alongside of the New Amsterdam Hospital, but would you believe that there is no exit from the hospital to the fire escape? That is the sort of thing members complain about. An elaborate fire escape is erected but because there are no funds it is left incomplete; there is no escape from the building to the fire escape. What the hon. member for North Western District wanted to say he has not said.

Mr. JACOB: I do not know if the hon. member is assuming the role of a prophet, but I object to his accusing me of statements which I do not wish to make.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I sympathize with the hon. member. Sometimes I see a thing burning within him, but his language does not convey exactly what he wants to say.

Mr. WOOLFORD: I would like before the discussion proceeds to make one appeal to the hon. member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob) who has asked that the evidence taken before the Leonora Commission be printed and laid on this table. He has given as one of his reasons for that request that in the course of the trial, as I understand him, his name was mentioned on several occasions, and the Commissioners have taken the view that at some point or another he ought to have approached the people or come into more contact with them, and so and so may or may not have resulted. At any rate the Commissioners have indicated that his more direct intervention might have led to different results. I appeal to the hon. member to consider whether the testimony of the other witnesses may have justified the findings of the Commission, apart from anything he may have said, and whatever his own view may be of the findings of the Commission it must always be borne in mind that the findings of a judicial tribunal are the result of the collective evidence of the witnesses who appeared before it. I do ask that in so far as that is given as a sufficient reason for having the evidence printed at very

considerable expense, hon. members would not be persuaded by him in joining in such a request.

There is another aspect of the matter. I do not think there is anyone in this Colony who has had a greater and wider experience of commissions and committees than myself, and I think I need cite only one instance which might convince the hon. member that his appeal to have the evidence printed is one which, however justifiable it may be in his opinion, is without precedent, at any rate in this Colony. In the case of the British Guiana Constitution Commission, which in its scope and importance was of far wider significance than the limited investigation of the Leonora Commission, the evidence taken before that Commission, affecting every inhabitant of the Colony, was never printed or laid on this table. It is no use the hon. member shaking his head because I tried my best to have it done, but I found that leaning on precedent it could not be established. I was all the more anxious that that evidence should be printed, because I felt that the findings of that Commission were against the weight of evidence, and if the evidence had been published it would have disclosed that one individual and about seven other people were in favour of a change of the Constitution, yet the majority finding of the Commission was in favour of that. The fact remains that the evidence taken before that Commission was never printed and was never laid on the table.

I have not the slightest desire that the hon. member should not have access to the evidence taken before the Leonora Commission, and I would suggest, as in fact has already been suggested, that the typewritten evidence, the record itself, should be made accessible to the hon. member and any other person in order that they might read it. The hon. member is always asking Government to restrict expenditure. I may tell him that the cost of printing the evidence is about \$800. To satisfy the hon. member's curiosity as to what the finding of the Commission was in relation to his own evidence, I would suggest that if his only desire is to find out what was the testimony given by himself and how it has been actually recorded, and to see the testimony of the other witnesses, he would be able to satisfy

his curiosity by looking at the typewritten notes of the evidence. I do ask that the public should not be put to the expense of \$800 for that purpose, when an extract from the evidence could reasonably satisfy the hon. member's anxiety.

I know that the hon. member has always listened to advice, and we have had many discussions, but while I do not agree with him I share to some extent his feelings in this matter. I am very greatly interested in and dependent on the people of his race. I agree that their state in this Colony is nothing to be desired, and if I could ameliorate the conditions under which they work I would gladly do so, and I still hope that other and better methods may produce that result. I ask the hon. member, not because he is an East Indian, but because he was born in this Colony, to restrain his language and not to think altogether that there are men who are not entirely sympathetic. I ask him not to put the Colony, to the expenditure of \$800 to attain his own personal wishes, or to attain a result which is not commensurate with the expenditure. I am sure that \$800 could be spent in a far more beneficial direction. If the hon. member is disposed to take the view I offer him he would see the Colonial Secretary and wade through the evidence, making copies of it if he wished.

Mr. JACOB: I do welcome advice and remarks made by the hon. member but I would ask him as one of the advisers of Government, and as a respected member of this Council, to be accurate when he makes a statement in this Council. He told the Council that a precedent would be created if the evidence taken before the Leonora Commission was published, and he instanced the case of the Constitution Commission. I would like to refer the hon. member to the Hector Josephs Commission which enquired into the labour disturbances. I have on my desk a copy of the evidence taken before that Commission, and if the hon. member is not aware of that fact I do ask him to make sure that his statements are accurate, and that he does not mislead the Government, the public and this Council. I cannot imagine the hon. member suggesting to me that I want this evidence to satisfy my own curiosity. Government is aware, and I think the hon. member ought to be aware,

that a very responsible association has asked for it. Another hon. member of this Council has asked for it by letter and has tabled questions about it. Why should Government not print this evidence? Government is prepared to spend \$20,000 in connection with labour disturbances. Money spent like that would remain in the Colony and would provide work for the people. I do not think it would cost \$800 to print the evidence. I would like to have that figure confirmed, but even if it cost \$800 I see no reason why that sum should not be spent. I do not think Government is justified in having documents like this kept within the precincts of the Colonial Secretariat. It should be given the widest publicity possible, both here and in London, and in other places where those unfortunate people come from. If the hon. member wants to know why I want the evidence printed I will tell him that the B.G. East Indian Association wants to send the document to India, the Man-Power Association and the legal representatives of the relatives of persons who were shot require this document. I ask that every publicity be given the document, and that in future the police should not be used to shoot down defenceless people who are asking for more money.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: There are just four points to which I would like to refer. First of all the hon. member has indicated that in his opinion if Government had insisted upon the estate authorities allowing him to go on the estate there might have been no disturbance. Government could not insist upon the estate authorities admitting any particular individual to their estate, but Government kept the Unions and the Sugar Producers' Association constantly informed throughout the day of what was taking place, and the Labour Commissioner advised at every possible opportunity action which he thought should be taken. I think the hon. member will admit that there is at present very close co-operation between the Unions and the Sugar Producers' Association.

Mr. JACOB: Unfortunately, after the loss of several lives.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The hon. member referred to the printing of the evidence taken by the Leonora Com-

mission. That point has been fully covered by the hon. member for New Amsterdam (Mr. Woolford). I wrote a letter to the hon. member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob) in reply to one received from him, in which it was stated that Government has no desire to withhold the evidence from anybody, as it was published in the newspapers, but there was the question of the cost of printing it. The minimum number of copies would have been 100, and would have cost \$795. To print 300 copies would cost \$940. I have informed the hon. member that Government is in possession of only one copy, and if he would send a typist to the Building he could type copies from it, but Government could not allow the only copy of the evidence to be taken from the office. There are 749 pages of evidence, and nobody in the Secretariat has the time to sit down and copy that.

The hon. member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar) referred to the fire escape at the New Amsterdam hospital. I spent several hours with the hon. member when I was in Berbice recently, and I think he mentioned everything he would like to have, but I do not think he mentioned the fire escape. (laughter).

Mr. WOOLFORD: I would like to make a correction. The Commission to which the hon. member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob) referred, of which the late Mr. Hector Josephs was Chairman, was an enquiry into labour disputes. The Commission presided over by Mr. Justice Verity was an enquiry into the causes of the death of certain persons. There is a vast difference between the two. Again I would like to emphasize that the sittings of the British Guiana Constitution Commission were held *in camera*; the public were not admitted, and it seemed to me to be very desirable that the evidence taken by that Commission should be published, but there was no precedent for it. I mention those things by way of comparison, and in the hope that the hon. member will be persuaded or convinced that the printing of this evidence is undesirable and without precedent.

The Council resolved itself into Committee to consider the statement of supplementary expenditure.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Item 38—Depreciation of Investments Post Office Savings Bank, \$104,607.

Mr. McDAVID (Colonial Treasurer): I understood the hon. Colonial Secretary to say that the item in regard to the depreciation of the investments of the Post Office Savings Bank was unlikely to occur again for the reason that the Savings Bank had been established recently as a separate and independent organisation. Nevertheless it is a fact that the Statute under which the Post Office Savings Bank is operating provides a definite guarantee that public revenue must bear any capital deficiency which might arise either as a result of loss on the working or as a result of loss by depreciation of investments. There has been some depreciation in the year 1938, and there is a contingent liability on public funds for its amount. I do not think the Council should be unduly alarmed at this depreciation. The reason for it is well known; public revenue has gained by taking between 1932 and 1935 something like \$400,000 from Savings Bank funds in respect of Savings Bank investments when conditions were entirely different to what they are to-day. I would therefore like to warn the Council of the possibility of another sum being put on the budget in respect of depreciation of Savings Bank investments for last year.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: I am not quite sure that I understood the hon. Colonial Treasurer correctly, or whether he meant to convey to the Council that there was actually a cash transaction or a distribution of cash. My understanding is that whenever there is appreciation cash is paid in by the Post Office Savings Bank to public revenue, and when there is depreciation cash is paid from public revenue into the Post Office Savings Bank. I would like him to make that clear, or whether it is only a question of book entry. If it is a book entry I will have something more to say on the subject. In that case this item would be in the wrong place. This is expenditure of the Colony, and I am assuming that actual cash transactions take place between Government and the Post Office Savings Bank.

Mr. McDAVID: The hon. member's assumption is quite right. The amount of

\$104,607 has actually been withdrawn in cash and put to the credit of the Post Office Savings Bank funds to make good capital deficiency arising in its books by reason of depreciation of its investments. As regards what I said about appreciation in previous years, a cash transaction took place. The appreciation was actually withdrawn from the Savings Bank funds and brought to revenue as a credit, but I want to say that such transactions will cease since, as the Colonial Secretary has stated, from 1937 the Post Office Savings Bank has been established as an independent financial organisation, and if in future there should be appreciation it would be put to the credit of the Savings Bank reserve and would meet any deficiencies in the distant future.

Mr. DE AGUIAR : I take it that when that time arrives this Council will be informed of the fluctuations of appreciation or depreciation. I presume that a regular account is kept of these transactions, so that when the maturity period of these investments arrives, or when the time arrives for more of these investments a proper record of the various transactions which have taken place will be laid before the Council for examination or observation. I do not quite understand the matter at all. If we are going to pay into the Savings Bank funds money from current revenue to meet depreciated funds and receive money from the Savings Bank in respect of appreciated funds, I am rather inclined to the view that we are likely to find ourselves in some difficulty later ; that when one or both of those periods arrive, or when the time arrives for selling investments or investments mature, it would be very difficult to know what has happened on balancing. After all we are entirely dependent upon the Crown Agents to make investments, and we have no voice at all in the making of these investments. If bad investments are made by the Crown Agents and this Colony has to foot the bill when depreciation takes place this Council will have something to say on the subject. I do not like the look of it, but I have not had the time to go into it. I have not seen any consolidated statement prepared by the Post Office Savings Bank showing these transactions under one head. I think the Colonial Treasurer, who is a wizard at figures, will appreciate the point I am making. I want to warn Govern-

ment that when the time comes it may find itself in some difficulty to answer some questions.

Mr. McDAVID : I think the hon. member is taking the matter too far ; I never admitted any balancing of accounts at all. I said that before 1937 the Savings Bank was not an independent organisation, and public revenue benefited by any appreciation of its investments. Therefore, at the moment the Savings Bank has no surplus or reserve at all. In 1938 there has been depreciation, and under the law public revenue must make good that capital deficiency because, obviously, money held by the Bank on behalf of depositors will not be there, whether it be due to depreciation of investments or loss. I merely mentioned the appreciation of previous years so as to show that this is really a giving back of money we had taken in the past. Had we not taken it, the Savings Bank would have been able to stand this by itself. It will probably be able to build up a reserve from time to time. There is not going to be any balancing of accounts at all.

As regards the working of the Bank, very complete annual statements are published by the Postmaster General, and I am quite sure the hon. member, who is perhaps a better wizard at figures than I am, would be able to follow them completely if he would only read and digest them.

Mr. DE AGUIAR : I did not refer to any balancing of accounts between the Post Office Savings Bank and this Government. What I referred to was what would be the position on balance of these appreciation and depreciation transactions that are going on, whether it would be found that this Government as a result of what it has to pay out as a result of depreciation is greater than the amount of appreciation. I will pursue the question with the Colonial Treasurer on another day.

Mr. GONSALVES : May I suggest that the two hon. members allow the item to pass and have a friendly argument afterwards ?

Item put, and agreed to.

POLICE.

Item 32—Emergency Measures Labour Disturbances, \$1,098.34.

Mr. JACOB: I desire to record my protest against this item which is described as "expenditure on purchase of rations and expenses in connexion with employment of rural and special constables, and travelling expenses and detachment pay for N.C.O.'s and constables of the Police Force during the labour disturbances in July, 1938." I still maintain after all that has been said, particularly by the hon. member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar), that this money should never have been spent, and if the Police and this Government would listen to legitimate grievances which are pent up, and take note of them and have them rectified there would be no need to spend public money in this fashion. Recently there has been something like that being carried on but it has cost the Colony a considerable sum of money and resulted in loss of lives. I do hope that in future expenditure of this kind will not appear on these estimates.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: I purposely refrained from joining in the debate when this matter was raised by the hon. member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob), but in view of the definite protest he has made as regards the expenditure of this money I find it extremely difficult to remain in my seat without making a few observations. I desire first of all to say that as a member of this Council and a citizen of this community I will never at any time restrain the Police from preserving law and order. I am not prepared to discuss the question of grievances of workers, but I do wish to ask the hon. member whether it is not his intention—

Mr. JACOB: I ask the hon. member not to refer to me at all. I wish to take no advice whatever from the hon. member.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: I think I am entitled to ask the hon. member whether he is serious in his remark that this Council should not vote a sum of money for the Police, having for its primary object the preservation of law and order? That is the reason why I have risen from my seat. I do ask him whether we should refuse to vote money to the Police for the purpose of preserving law and order? I do not

think he will find support from any other member of the Council or any other citizen of the community.

Mr. JACOB: In reply to that I wish to make the identical observation. I find support from nine-tenths of the people of the country.

Dr. SINGH: I was not in the Colony at the time when the disturbances took place, but I feel sure that all this expenditure would have been avoided if the grievances of the people had been looked into.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I would like to move that \$800 be spent on the printing of the evidence taken before the Leonora Commission, and see if I could not get the hon. member to agree to this item being passed. If you will permit me, sir, I would move that \$800 be spent for that purpose.

Mr. JACOB: I am afraid the hon. member does not know that he cannot move a motion for a money vote. I would suggest that the hon. member consult the Rules.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I am asking the hon. member if he would pass this item if I did that. There is nothing to prevent me from doing that.

Mr. AUSTIN: I do not know whether the hon. member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob) in his latest remarks referred to the little trouble we recently had on the Corentyne Coast, but I would like to ask him what is the Manager of an estate to do when 600 people flock around his house, blow shells, break windows and throw stones at the Deputy Manager and Head Overseer? When the hon. member was asked about it he said "We have not been told about it yet." That was 48 hours after, and the next answer we got was that it must have been done by a number of schoolboys. Surely any individual in this Colony has the right to ask for police assistance, because in cases of wage disputes a rush is made on an estate without first collaborating with their Unions in Georgetown. I cannot help thinking that if the hon. member was in the same position in any part of this Colony and was rushed by a crowd which did not see eye to eye with him, he would look for the first police station to go to. I certainly would.

With regard to the publication of the evidence taken before the Hector Josephs Commission I think I am right in saying that Mr. Hector Josephs said he could not possibly go through all the evidence unless there was a stenographer and an assistant to take it down and send members of the Commission the report by the next morning. I think that was done with the consent of Government, and those reports were sent to the Commissioners after they had been read over by the witnesses. I think the cost of those reports did not fall on Government.

Mr. JACOB: The hon. member has given me an opportunity to refer to recent matters. The Commissioner of Labour is here and I would like him to enquire and report to the particular union concerned the extent of the damage complained of by the hon. member who has just spoken. My point is that immediately grievances appear they should be investigated and remedied, and if those concerned with the Government are not prepared to do that it is a matter purely for them. As a public man, and representing as I do a large number of working people—I make bold to say that I represent about nine-tenths of the working people on the estates—I can only offer advice to Government. It is not true to say that those concerned are not aware of those grievances; they have been detailed over and over again, and it is not only the action of the employers but the connivance of other Departments that is responsible for things that have arisen on the estates.

I refer particularly to the Central Board of Health. An employer has a perfect right to put a man off his estate if he does not want him, but what is the position of that man when he can find no suitable plot on which to erect his house, and no land to cultivate when he has been accustomed to work on an organised plantation, doing a particular class of work throughout his life? Government seems unconcerned about the inhabitants of the Colony. A large number of people are unemployed and cannot find work. I say emphatically that the responsibility is on Government and Government alone, and if Government chooses not to take action it must bear the fullest responsibility possible. I maintain that Government is not looking after the interest of the working man but

of vested interests which are getting subsidies and preferences and getting money from the inhabitants of the Colony.

Numerous changes have to be made in various ways for this Colony to improve, but I cannot see any attempt being made by Government to do that. We have gone out of our way to ask the Director of Medical Services to listen to grievances which have existed for several years, and we received the reply that if we were going to make recommendations which would impede public health measures our request for an interview would not be entertained.

THE CHAIRMAN: If the hon. member is going to talk about health matters he must do so under the proper head.

Mr. JACOB: I am asking officers of Government who are paid by the taxpayers to consider the interests of the taxpayers and not a few people. That is why the country is not progressing.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I wish to emphatically deny that Government is not concerned with the affairs of the inhabitants of the Colony. As the hon. member has referred, I take it, to some little disturbance which occurred on one of the estates on the East Coast, I wish to let him know one or two truths about that occurrence.

Mr. JACOB: I referred particularly to the point raised by the hon. Mr. Austin. I think he knows exactly what I referred to.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Government was anxious to find out what was happening when a report was received that there were labour disturbances in Berbice. I was not informed until 8.30 in the evening and I at once got in touch with the Commissioner of Police. I tried to find out what were the grievances of the people but he could not tell me, nor could the Commissioner of Labour tell me because nobody had told either of them. First thing next morning I rang the Commissioner of Police and the Commissioner of Labour but neither of them had found out from the estate authorities or the people what their grievances were. The Commissioner of Labour lost no time in getting in touch with the President of the Labour

Union to try to find out from him, but he had heard nothing about it. I think it was at our request that the President of the Union got in touch with the Union's agent on the estate through the police station in New Amsterdam. We were out to do everything we could to get the agent and the President of the Union in touch with each other.

Dr. MACLENNAN (Director of Medical Services): I think the remarks of the hon. member for North Western District with regard to the correspondence between the Association and myself require some qualification. I received a letter recently in which a request was made for an interview between a deputation from the Association, the Commissioner of Labour and myself. In my reply to that letter I suggested that it would be of no use having the interview unless we were aware of the nature of it. We understood that certain hardships were complained of in the operation of the Public Health Ordinance, and that certain amendments were going to be suggested. I think it is only reasonable that before granting an interview we ought to know what the discussion would be, and furthermore I have a responsibility to the Central Board of Health in that it is a statutory body and I should like to have knowledge of what amendments were proposed so that I could put them up to the Board before receiving the deputation. I think that was a perfectly reasonable answer. There was no intention to refuse an interview to the Association which the hon member represents. I would be glad to receive them at any time, but I must have details of what they propose to discuss at the interview.

Mr. JACOB: The hon. member is in charge of the Central Board of Health and has a large number of officers. Is he telling this Council that he is not aware of what is happening? If that is so, I would like to have a clear and definite statement about that. I have gone to the trouble to make detailed investigations and to visit places, which is not my duty. Correspondence has passed between Dr. Sneath and other officers of the Central Board of Health, but has led nowhere. Then the hon. Director in a skilfully worded letter told us that he would consider whether he would receive the deputation which consisted of the President of the Man-Power

Association, the Chairman of the Local Authority and other responsible individuals who would advise, but I am afraid that the Central Board of Health is not concerned. The officers of the Board do not want to be worried about additional work. They do not want even to do their normal work. That is my impression. I visited a house and saw the plan, and I was satisfied that the man could not add one inch to the house. I advised the man—

THE CHAIRMAN: I cannot allow the hon. member to speak about the details of a house during the consideration of an item under Police.

Mr. JACOB: If you rule that I will raise it under another head, but I think it would be more appropriate to raise it in reply to what the Director of Medical Services has said.

Dr. MACLENNAN: Isn't it quite clear that I have already informed the Council that there was no question of an interview not being granted? I would be delighted to have it provided I am given details so that I could consult with the Central Board of Health.

Mr. JACOB: In reply to that I would refer to a remark made by Dr. Francis who knows the details. They were communicated to him and he suggested that it was a wise course to adopt. If the hon. member does not keep in touch with his officers, it is not my fault. A request is made in writing to the owner of a house who is carried before the Magistrate who orders the demolition of the house. The people have nowhere to go. If the Director says that the provisions of the Public Health Ordinance are not creating severe hardships, I am afraid he has not kept in touch with what is going on on the Central Board of Health.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I cannot allow the hon. member to stand here and say he represents nine-tenths of the people living on the sugar estates. I claim to represent 100 per cent. of the people of this Colony. (laughter). Doesn't the hon. member know that the people whom he claims to represent have been representing, that they alone should be employed and that people of my race should not be employed? Instead of trying to prevent that kind of

thing, he comes here and says he is carrying all the people on his shoulders. What are the police to do when people are there urging that that class of individual should not be employed? Can I tell the world that? I see danger in the situation and I hold my tongue. Do I not know that there would be a clash to-morrow if the people of Fyrish knew that a request was made that only East Indians should be given work? It is a dangerous thing to propound, yet it is being propounded. The hon. member says he does not take advice from anybody, but I am asking him in the interest of the peace of the community not to pursue his remarks too far. Other people know as much as he does, but they refrain from saying it. Do I not know that his people at Cane Grove wanted to put the black people out of the factory? Is the hon. member working for such a clash? Things will come out that should not be given out, and will cause trouble in the country. I again appeal to the hon. member to let things drop at this stage. Take them up with the proper authorities. Do not come to the Council and broadcast them to the world and to the newspapers. If nothing else would, let me appeal to him as a fellow Buxtonian.

THE CHAIRMAN: I must ask the hon. member to speak to the head of the estimate.

Mr. ELEAZAR: As Buxtonians we know no difference between East Indians, Chinese or anybody else. We are all Guianese. Let us labour for the good of humanity. This differentiation does not do us any good.

Mr. JACOB: As usual the hon. member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar) is misinformed. Nine-tenths of his statements are not accurate, and I do appeal to the hon. Mr. Austin and the Commissioner of Labour to flatly deny the statement made by the hon. member who has just taken his seat. Those of us who have been in close collaboration with the two interested Unions will know that every single word uttered by the hon. member is absolutely incorrect. We have always preached racial unity, but I am sure the hon. member has always preached otherwise. Let him digest these few words of mine: he has always preached racial disunity and I have always preached racial unity.

THE CHAIRMAN: I must ask the hon. member to speak to the Chair and to the item under discussion. We have had considerable discussion on this head, and unless someone wishes to move an amendment I will pass on to the next item.

Item put, and agreed to.

POST OFFICE.

Item 5—Conveyance of mails, \$2,927.29.

Mr. GONSALVES: Apparently there is no telegraphic communication between Garraway Stream and Potaro. A recent incident has shown that a very urgent message was not delivered until after the event, which it was intended to stop, had taken place. I understand that the distance is 12 miles, and the message had to be taken by lorry, which had passed on without stopping, with the result that the message did not reach its destination. Government might spend the \$800, which the printing of the evidence taken by the Leonora Commission would cost, on the improvement of communication in the Potaro district.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I will investigate the matter referred to by the hon. member.

The Council resumed.

Motion put, and agreed to.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATE, 1938.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I beg to move:—

That this Council approves the Statement of Supplementary Expenditure which has occurred during the years 1938, and which has not been included in any previous schedule and now admitted as a charge to public funds under Colonial Regulation 265 (2), which has been laid on the table.

This is really a small supplementary estimate, but it is necessary to lay it before the Council in accordance with Regulation 265 (2). There are no particular items calling for special mention.

Professor Dash seconded.

The Council resolved itself into Committee to consider the Statement.

POST OFFICE—EXTRAORDINARY.

Item 6—New telephone switchboard for Transport and Harbours Department—\$45.63.

Mr. ELEAZAR: There is no Post Office at Schepmoed but there is a kind of postal agency. I think it is over a year now that there has been no communication by telegraph or telephone between Mara and New Amsterdam, a distance of 25 miles. The telephone system has been allowed to go out of commission because it is said that it did not pay, and the poles have begun to fall. There is no means of communication between Mara and New Amsterdam except by launch which travels on Wednesdays, and the road is impassable. It is a scandal. Government must be told about these things because it seems to be its policy to save a penny and spend a pound.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: This matter was raised at the annual session last year. The road is impassable, the line has broken down, the population is decreasing and Government feels that it is not profitable to incur large expenditure which would be necessary to relay the line and recondition the road. Government has taken up the question of wireless telephones with the Police. One or two wireless sets have been ordered. Whether it would be possible to erect one in that district I cannot say. I do not wish the hon. member to regard that as a promise. Government is trying to see if it is possible to do anything for the people there at little cost. Government cannot incur the expenditure of relaying that line having regard to the small population in the district, which I understand is getting smaller and smaller.

Mr. ELEAZAR: Might Government not close down the police station at Schepmoed where there are three policemen, and give the people *carte blanche* to make bush rum? That is the kind of logic Government uses.

The Council resumed.

Motion put, and agreed to.

SECOND SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATE, 1939.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I beg to move:—

That, this Council approves the Second Schedule of Additional Provision required to

meet expenditure in excess of the provision made in the Estimates and not included in the first schedule of additional provision for the year 1939, which has been laid on the table.

The total of this supplementary estimate is \$76,824, that is as printed. There are a few items which I shall move in when we are in Committee, and there are one or two points to which I would like to refer. Under Agriculture there is a slight change. It is the intention of Government to raise the status of the Registrar of Banks to a Class I. clerk, and a sum of \$44 is required to give effect to that proposal. Similarly, under head VII., Customs, the salary scale of the Inspector of Distilleries is being slightly increased. Under head XII., Labour and Local Government, there is an item of \$822. One of the two officers named in the remarks column has been acting in a post in which he has suffered financial loss by so doing, and naturally Government considers that he should be recompensed. With regard to the other officer, a junior officer who has been performing very senior duties in that Department owing to the absence on leave of the substantive holder of the post, Government thinks he should be given an acting allowance. There is also an item—Overseer, Government Estates, West Demerara, \$1,200. For years past that officer has been paid from a block vote, and as the post has just become vacant Government thinks it should be shown separately. The present holder is in receipt of a salary of \$1,200, but at one time the salary was \$912, and it is proposed that the new office should carry a salary scale of \$912 x \$48—\$1,200. There is therefore no change in that particular item, and I think hon. members would prefer to see it shown separately.

Under head XX.—Medical—it is proposed that the office of Government Medical Officer of Health should be re-designated Deputy Director of Medical Services, and the additional amount required is due to the fact that the last holder of the post received a salary of \$4,320 and a house allowance of \$480. It has been decided to abolish the house allowance and make the salary \$4,800.

It is proposed to make a malaria survey and a sum of \$10,000 is required to meet the expenditure from July to the end of the year. Hon. members will observe

from the note that the Sugar Producers' Association will make a contribution to this expenditure, and the Rockefeller Foundation will make a similar contribution.

Under Head XXVIII., Police, the salaries of the County Superintendents of Police and the Detective Superintendent of Police are being increased from £450-£550 to £550-£600, an increase of £50 on the maximum salary.

Under Head XLVI.,—Public Works—Extraordinary, there is an item of \$3,500. It is proposed to build a Post Office in the Kitty district which is growing very rapidly, and it is considered necessary that a Post Office should be established there.

There is also an item of \$18,000 under the same head. Rapid progress is being made with the work of draining and filling Government lands, Georgetown, which also relieves unemployment to a certain extent, and it is hoped that members will see their way to agree to this expenditure. I will mention the other items as I move them in Committee.

The Council resolved itself into Committee to consider the schedule.

AGRICULTURE.

Mr. JACOB: I want to make an appeal to the Head of this Department to devote some time to an endeavour to grow crops so as to prevent the importation of products which could be grown or manufactured in this Colony. A great deal can be done in that direction, and I do say, and I express the wishes of a large number of people, that this Department has not done all that could have been done towards that end.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I would like the Director of Agriculture to go at the back of the Market to-morrow morning between 8 and 9 o'clock, or even this afternoon between 5 and 6 o'clock and he will see the millions of pineapples, and ask whether they have come from Hawaii or the Demerara river. The whole City is flooded with pineapples, and I ask the Director to go and see whether he has changed his opinion and is now convinced that pineapples can grow here.

EDUCATION—SCHOOLS, INSTITUTIONS AND MISCELLANEOUS.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move the insertion of an item—Rent of Premises, \$360. This provision is required to pay a rental of \$65 on lots 60 and 61, Main Street, for the Teachers' Training Centre, lecture room and hostel for women students.

Item put, and agreed to.

MEDICAL—GOVERNMENT HEALTH DEPARTMENT.

Mr. JACOB: I would like to direct attention to Ordinance 15 of 1934 and ask that sections 3, 135 and 136 receive the closest scrutiny by those concerned with a view to taking steps to amend them, because they are creating hardships throughout the Colony. I hope the Director will appreciate that, and that he and his officers will begin to do some work. Here we have additional money being voted, and I am sorry to say that these salaries carry us nowhere. It is all salaries all the time and nothing productive being done. I protest against expenditure of this kind. The Central Board of Health is not functioning properly. The Union and the Association with which I am connected have been going around the whole country in order to suggest details and amendments of the Ordinance to the Central Board of Health. That is very laudable, but I maintain that that is essentially the duty of Government officers who are paid to look after the interests of the public. It is well known that this Board is not operating in the interest of the majority of the people of this Colony. There are certain provisions which apply to villages and not to other places. How this Ordinance was passed and has remained on the Statute Book for such a long time I cannot understand.

I have protested here that the Ordinance is working unfairly but we have had it from the Director in public that he wants to be told how hardships are being created. I am going to cite one or two cases. At Felicity, on the East Coast, workers who have lived on the lands for quite a number of years are not allowed to repair their houses. They make written applications to the sanitary officers who visit the houses and tell them some kind of story which

they would not put in writing, but they refuse to allow them to repair or remodel their houses. One house which was erected at Sophia, which is owned by Messrs. Curtis, Campbell & Co., was ordered to be taken down recently. Throughout the Colony hardships are being created with regard to the erection of houses, and from the remarks made here the Central Board of Health is not aware of them. At Lusignan I was asked to inspect a house which did not conform strictly to the provisions of the law. It was the house of a labouring man who had not been properly advised. I maintain that it is the duty of Government officers to advise the public as to what they should do, but the majority of them think it is their duty to put hindrances in the way of the public. The man had provisions growing on the plot and was ordered by the Magistrate to remove his house with a penalty of three months in jail if he did not take the house down. He was told that if he did not obey the order he would go to jail and when he came out he would find his house somewhere else. The estate authorities have no land to give those people. The result was that the man had to live in another house which, if this Ordinance was enforced, he could be made to give up also. I challenge the Department to prove that what I have said is not correct.

From throughout the Colony complaints have come to the Association, yet Government says it is doing all it can in the interest of the working man. I maintain that Government is not doing what it should, and I appeal to officers who are getting handsome salaries to make up their minds to do some work which would be of benefit to the working man in this country. I was glad to hear that a contribution would be made to the cost of the malaria survey by the Sugar Producers' Association and the Rockefeller Foundation. While we appreciate that I want to lay stress on the fact that it is a liability on the estate authorities and not an act of generosity. If the tariffs of this Colony were amended and certain things done there would be far more revenue coming to the Colony than these generous offers.

Mr. WOOLFORD: I think the hon. member has ventilated a real grievance. In order that hon. members should be fully acquainted with the position I will ask

them to allow me to read section 136 (1) of Ordinance 15 of 1934. It says:—

No building shall be erected, altered or enlarged by any person without the previous approval in writing of the local sanitary authority.

The word "building" is defined in the same Ordinance as including any house, kitchen, storeroom, garage or other out-house, or part thereof being part of premises, whether permanent or temporary. The situation exists that if there is an existing building—and there have been cases in court—and the owner wishes to substitute for its covering galvanized zinc instead of trolley he is not allowed to do so unless he has obtained the previous approval of the local sanitary authority. That approval is never given. It is contended by the Central Board authorities that until a building has been erected on an approved site they would not give approval of any enlargement, alteration or improvement in the living conditions of those who live in buildings situated as the buildings to which the hon. member has referred. The sole question for the consideration of Government is whether that Ordinance was ever intended to be retrospective. In my view it never was. If it is intended to have that authority then the logical sequence would be for the sanitary authorities to pursue at once a system whereby every building which is not on an approved building site should be removed. It is anything but humanity to reject an appeal for improvement of living conditions and then follow it up with prosecution, because not only is approval withheld but prosecution follows, and the only order a Magistrate can make is for the demolition of the building. Your Excellency is peculiarly acquainted with those conditions; they existed when you left here to go to Barbados. You cannot plead ignorance of them. There has been an attempt to compromise where a building is situated on an estate. I know of cases of buildings on sugar estates which, on the intervention of the estate proprietors were allowed to remain. In other words the authorities winked at those cases. A very serious condition of things will be created.

Mr. JACOB: It has been occurring all these years.

Mr. WOOLFORD: The hon. member

has discovered that when I speak I do so with inaccuracy. (laughter). I am speaking of occurrences which have only taken place since 1934; they had not been in existence at any other time. I know what I am talking about. Those conditions have always existed. The point is that no prosecution has taken place since the introduction of that Ordinance. It is only a late activity on the part of the Central Board of Health. I agree with them that if a new building is to be erected it must be erected on an approved building site, but you cannot have that sort of thing in a Colony like this where nine-tenths of the village population are living where there are no approved building sites. I would support any kind of revolt against conditions of that sort. There is an opportunity for the hon. member to use his influence with his Association to put a period to those prosecutions of innocent people who are really being done a very grave wrong by being prosecuted. I ask you, sir, to direct—it is quite a simple matter—that no prosecution should ensue in cases of that kind, and that in the case of existing buildings permission should be given for any improvement of the existing conditions. If people wish to live in insanitary surroundings, and having been warned they still continue to do so, while I do not agree with the view that they should suffer any kind of immunity I maintain that there is nowhere else for them to go. If you are trying to improve sanitary conditions you must also admit that the economic conditions of people like those do not admit of any improvement. Until there can be evacuation of those spots to healthier building sites I do ask in the name of humanity that those people should not be persecuted in this way.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: One can genuinely agree with the manner in which the matter has been put forward by the hon. member for New Amsterdam (Mr. Woolford). It places an entirely different complexion on what the hon. member said and on what the hon. member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob) has said on the subject. I can speak with some authority on the subject. I happen to be, fortunately or unfortunately, a member of the Central Board of Health which came in for scathing criticism by the hon. member for North Western District. I would like to ask what is the position of a Board which

is faced with an Ordinance, section 136 of which clearly states that no building shall be erected or altered without the previous approval in writing of the local authority? A definite statutory obligation is imposed on the Board for the carrying out of public health work.

Mr. JACOB: I think the hon. member was a member of the Council and must know how the Ordinance was passed, and that an undertaking was given by the then President.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: I had not forgotten; I was going to leave it at that. My memory goes even further back. When the Public Health Bill was first introduced in this Council it was thrown out, and it was not until 1934 that it finally met approval and Government undertook that certain leniency would be exercised. How long are we to allow leniency to be exercised? If the hon. member had based his point on that principle he would have obtained not only my support but the support of every other member of the Council.

The Council resumed and adjourned for the luncheon recess until 2 p.m.

2. p.m.—

Mr. DE AGUIAR: When the Council adjourned I was endeavouring to point out the statutory obligations that are imposed on the Central Board of Health in order to carry out its functions as enacted in sections 135 and 136 of the Public Health Ordinance. While it is true to say that the application of those two sections will undoubtedly create some hardship, it would not be correct to say that an effort is not being made to carry out the work properly and efficiently. As a member of the Central Board of Health I can state quite emphatically that the Board and its officers endeavour at all times to do all they can to assist the people. It does not follow, however, that certain amendments cannot be made to the sections as they stand. The question this Government will have to bear in mind is how long must it be expected to perpetuate what we all know is not the best thing in the interest of public health? That is the question I would like hon. members of the Council to consider. I do not wish it to appear that I am in any

sense against any amendment which would afford that measure of relief to those people who wish to put their houses in order. I do know that in some cases certain hardship was created, when applications were made for permission to carry out certain structural alterations to buildings and could not be granted as those alterations would not be in strict conformity with the law. Some of the hardship created would appear to be very slight, but nevertheless the whole trouble hinges on what is good in public health matters and what is not.

Perhaps those hon. members who spoke against the Central Board of Health this morning are not aware of the work that is being done by that Body. I have in my hand the agenda of the next meeting of the Board. It is a very small agenda, but even in it there are applications in respect of some 720 odd buildings to be repaired or renovated or built in various parts of the Colony. When the first Bill was introduced it was referred back in Committee, and when it was passed in 1934 we all agreed that it was the best thing to be aimed at, but for some reason or another—some of it I am inclined to think were purely economic—it was agreed that certain releases should be given here and there. I am entirely in sympathy with those who want to carry out certain structural alterations to their buildings, but at the same time when granting such applications one has to take into consideration the effect it would have on public health generally.

Lest it be understood that there is any discrimination in the consideration of applications—I think the remark was made that in some cases influence was brought to bear—I would like to mention this: I do not think any more careful scrutiny could be carried out in respect of buildings on sugar estates than is being done at present by the Central Board of Health. We meet on the Board and go into the plans, seeing that proper drainage, ingress and egress are all properly provided for on those plans, and it is not true to say that at any time influence has been brought to bear upon the members of the Central Board of Health in respect of applications. I do not think I can speak too strongly on that point. I am one of those members of the Board who exercise very careful scrutiny when an application comes up for

the erection of a new building. The hon. Director of Medical Services can support my statement. I look on that as a very responsible duty, because I have every regard for public health matters. I feel sure that hon. members will support the Board's action in dealing with these applications, but at the same time I am in sympathy with some of the remarks made. It would be better if hon. members got together and devised some means whereby further leniency might be exercised in the application of public health measures.

Mr. PEER BACCHUS: There can be no doubt that the Public Health Ordinance has created a hardship in some rural districts, but I think—if I remember correctly the point made by the hon. member for New Amsterdam (Mr. Woolford)—the legal view is that the Ordinance is not retrospective in its effect. On that point, I think, this Council would be grateful to the hon. and learned Attorney-General for his opinion. If that be the case, I think a lot of the embarrassment which these people suffer would be eliminated. The hon. member for Central Demerara (Mr. De Aguiar) asked how long must the old conditions continue, but ended up by saying that when the Bill was introduced in this Council Government was asked not to enforce it right away owing to economic reasons. To that I say he has answered himself. I think it would last as long as there is this economic depression throughout the Colony. I think, if the economic conditions were improved all would be well, as the people would much prefer to live in better sanitary surroundings.

So far as public health is concerned, I doubt very much whether the enforcement of the law affecting repairs to dilapidated buildings has not done more injury to the health of the occupants of those buildings by preventing them from doing the necessary repairs. I happen to know that in many cases the occupants of houses have been exposed to the effects of the weather through not being able to effect repairs. Can that be said to be in the best interest of public health? In other instances in my personal knowledge, a family having grown their house became too small to accommodate them, but they could not obtain permission to enlarge their house and so had to remain congested in that small house. Is that in the best interest of public

health? The important question to be decided, which may eliminate a lot of the difficulties, is whether the Ordinance is retrospective or not in its effect.

Dr. SINGH: I do not wish to prolong this debate. This subject has been before this Council on more than one occasion and has been fully debated. I believe that at the end of the last debate an undertaking was given that Government would take a lenient view of the whole situation. There is a hardship created where old buildings are concerned, and I believe if Government can make the law a bit elastic that will meet the needs of the people. This hardship can be seen everywhere. Daily complaints are being received, and I think Government should see its way not to perpetuate this hardship.

Mr. ELEAZAR: This Bill does not want any leniency. Hon. members who were present when it was passed in 1934 will remember that it was hurriedly brought into this Council. That was before the late Surgeon General, who is something else now, left the Colony. In doing that the Bill was not a work of art but a hotch-potch. A part of it was obtained from Nigeria, a part from Nyasaland, a part from Trinidad, and a part from Jamaica with a few patches here and there from the Local Government Ordinance of this Colony. When it came before this Council it was subjected to such treatment by me and the late hon. elected member, Mr. Crane, that Government withdrew the whole Bill and said it would be remodelled. A Bill made for Nigeria cannot be taken up and planted in British Guiana, but that was done. When the Bill was brought back before this Council several chapters were left out.

It was never the intention of the Legislative Council that this Ordinance should apply to the settled communities, like Buxton and the other villages of this Colony, but it is now being made applicable to those places. Imagine a villager of Buxton being told that he cannot erect a new house on his land because it has not been laid out originally for building purposes. That was intended for new districts like the front lands of sugar estates, where there had never been buildings before and where the people should not be allowed to build helter-skelter over the place, so that

the site of one man's latrine would be that of the other man's kitchen or drawing-room. The Central Board of Health, however, has made this section of the Ordinance, which is intended to be applied to entirely new districts, applicable to old districts.

There was a case in point before a Magistrate. A man's house was in a bad state of disrepair and was practically falling down on him. He applied to the Central Board of Health for permission to rebuild his house, and was told that it could not be granted. After a long interval he asked to be allowed to repair the house and was refused. The man, however, repaired his house and was summoned before the Magistrate for doing so. Your Excellency, that man retained me to defend him, and I summoned as witnesses the Chairman and a Councillor of the Local Authority of his district, and also the Village Overseer. They all testified that the man's house was in a bad state of disrepair and the Central Board of Health had refused his applications for permission to put it in order. The Magistrate rightly asked if the man was to allow the house to fall down on his head, and the Sanitary Inspector who was prosecuting had to admit that what the Chairman and Councillor of the District had said was correct. The Magistrate reprimanded and discharged the man. The application of that section to old communities is creating a great hardship, and the Sanitary Inspectors cannot defend the situation as they have received orders from the Board not to give permission to do any repairs to old buildings.

Take another case. In the same Ordinance there is a section which says a man must not build nearer than four or six feet from the end of a lot. When the Ordinance was being passed, I pointed out that on the West and East Coast, Berbice, the width of a man's land is only eighteen feet—a rod and a half—and if you take out six feet on one side and six feet on the other side what can he build on the remaining space but a pen. In spite of that, the section still remains in the Ordinance and is being applied when the people want to build on their land. It is a hardship which cannot be remedied and which shows that the Ordinance was never meant to be applied to those places that

have been already settled or occupied. I well remember the Medical Officer of Health going to a place on the Corentyne Coast and actually telling the people that they should enter into contracts with each other so that they could build over one another's land in order to comply with the section. That is ignorance over-running itself. Because the Ordinance is there and these sections are there, you find people coming here and saying: "What is the Board to do? The law is there and must be enforced." You must enforce the law and create a hardship, which it was never intended that the law should create. What is required is that the Ordinance be not applied where it is found to create a hardship. Such a law does not suit conditions such as do exist in this Colony. Take New Amsterdam, which is an Urban Sanitary District: Are you going to go over the old lots and re-lot them so as to permit a man to build on a particular lot or to repair his house on that lot? Even repairs are not allowed under the Ordinance. Your roof has gone bad, and though you do not want to increase it by an inch you are not allowed under the Ordinance to repair it.

Your Excellency, I know certain lawyers who the moment they begin to plead the case is lost. I do not say that is the case with my friend, the hon. member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob). He is known to have called "Wolf" when no wolf was there, but in this case there is a real wolf ravaging the flock. I think Government should instruct the Board to stop this thing. It is a real annoyance. A man is known to have waited eighteen months for permission to do repairs to his house, and because the district has not been laid out for building purposes it was not granted. That was never intended. In Nigeria or some other places where the people build their houses helter-skelter, without any proper order, such a law is made to prevent that. But that is not the case in this country. The front lands of the sugar estates which were originally pasture lands are now being laid out for building purposes, and it is for such cases that the law is intended. It was never intended that the law should be applied to long-established places, and its enforcement has certainly created a great hardship.

I do not agree with my hon. friend (Mr. Jacob) on one point. The estate authori-

ties are not allowed themselves to build on their lands until they have been laid out for building purposes. It is not fair for them to allow any individual to build thereon and have as an excuse that he has nowhere else to put his house. If a man has a house on the front lands of anybody's estate and that somebody is not allowed himself to build thereon unless the land has been laid out for building purposes, I do not think that man can claim the right to build there because he has nowhere else to go and build. He should not be allowed to build there. If the owner is not strong enough to put him off the land, then somebody else should do so. That has been going on since 1934—the time the Bill came into operation—and I think it is Government's bounden duty not to allow it to continue.

Mr. JACOB: I think I must reply to one or two points which have been raised, so that those who will reply on behalf of Government will be able to answer what I say. As usual we have heard our two hon. friends, who have just spoken and who are hardly properly informed, continuing to make erroneous statements to this Council. The hon. member for New Amsterdam, (Mr. Woolford) who I am sorry is not here, referred to the fact that he is very much older than I am and is able to advise me. In reply to that I say, this is a modern age in which we are living and we soon forget the ancient after a while. He suggested that no prosecution should be encouraged or carried out against these unfortunate people. I would like a definite pronouncement from Government on that point. The hon. member for New Amsterdam is a King's Counsel, and of course is one of the present advisers of this Government. If he can get up in this Council and tell us that a law in the Statute Book should not be enforced, then we will soon find ourselves in a pretty position. Government has been cornered to-day in this matter, and one of its advisers tells us: "Oh no, we can suspend prosecution." Let all prosecutions under all our laws be suspended and we will have a very sorry state of affairs. The plain fact is that the Ordinance should be amended and that immediately. Government can pass legislation within a few hours, but takes years to amend it. All the hon. members who have spoken have declared that every year the matter comes up,

We also have the hon. Director of Medical Services—I do not blame him—writing to a Trade Union with which I am associated: “I am not going to agree to any suggestion that will impede public health progress.” We have had it stated here very clearly that what is going on is impeding public health progress, and yet we are told nothing will be done to impede public health progress. But that is a state of affairs that you find existing in British Guiana. I would suggest that Government correspondence should not be written in the personal singular, “I,” but in the plural “We.” In that case the hon. member for Central Demerara (Mr. De Aguiar) will have some responsibility in the matter. As a member of the Central Board of Health, he says that every application is carefully scrutinized. May I be informed if the application for the erection of the Police Station at Parika was carefully scrutinized, and it was seen that the land had been laid out in accordance with this Ordinance? May I enquire also if the Police Station at Den Amstel was erected on lands laid out in accordance with this Law? May I enquire also if the house of the District Superintendent of Police at Leonora has been erected on lands laid out in accordance with this Ordinance?

Mr. ELEAZAR: Some of those buildings had been erected before this Ordinance came into force.

Mr. JACOB: Perhaps that is another defender of Government's action speaking?

Mr. ELEAZAR: No; but I am stating the truth.

Mr. JACOB: I stated this morning that the situation we have here is most demoralizing and prevents progress in this Colony. If any evidence is wanted in support of that, the hon. member for Demerara-Essequibo (Dr. Singh) supplied it this morning. I can talk on this matter for a considerable time but will not, as I think I have shown that a great hardship is created. I hope that it will be adjusted and very shortly too.

Mr. GONSALVES: I have risen not to prolong the agony but to say one or two things with regard to the Central Board of Health, of which I happened to have been a member until last December.

It is correct to say that the work done by that Board during the time I was on it was not carried out in a slipshod manner as may be considered. Matters brought before the Board were carefully investigated. A good many of the new houses erected on sugar estates on the East Coast Demerara during the last year or two have been the result of plans submitted to that Board, and I can assure hon. members and those who are in doubt, that they were not just brought to the Board and as they belonged to Pln. So-and-So were passed. They were fully investigated. I know certain plans had been referred back three times before they were finally approved by the Board. I mention that so as to show that it is not a question of certain people getting what they want right away.

With regard to the question of the plans, it has been considered more than once by the Board as to whether it had power to do anything which was not provided under the Ordinance. As far as I can remember, advice was obtained on that point by the Board to the effect that the law, as it stood then and still is, required those things. If a great hardship is created—and in one or two instances it has occurred—it is a matter which hon. members may consider. There are also a few other snags in the Ordinance which, perhaps, may well be considered, but that is a matter which can engage the attention of a committee and be put right.

I quite appreciate with the hon. member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob) the difficulties the poor people are experiencing, but one has to consider—to use his own words—we are living in a modern age, a progressive age, and therefore everything in the interest of public health should receive first consideration. If there is hardship—and there must be hardship in the introduction of every new measure for improvement on the old—it can be gone into. The hon. member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar) referred to the first Bill which was brought to this Council, and knowing how he always refers to old stories—and funny ones at that—I was a bit disappointed that he did not mention that one of the strong objections at that time was even made the subject of a newspaper cartoon. Under that Bill if you wanted to kill a rooster, you had to take it to the abattoir. The definition was not complete enough to allow of the exemption. That

was put right in the new Bill, which was brought forward with the exclusion of that trouble. I have only mentioned that as a passing remark. I would like hon. members, who are not on the Central Board of Health and do not, perhaps, know the working of the Board, to understand that every care is exercised in dealing with all matters before it.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL: With respect to one of the two sections which have been the subject of criticism, I would like to make some observations which, perhaps, are rather late. The two sections to which I refer are 135 and 136 of the Public Health Ordinance, and my remarks are directed to section 136. One hon. member seems to think the substance of that section has been an importation from foreign countries. I may assure him that the direct contrary is the position. The first subsection of section 136 reads:—

No building shall be erected, altered or enlarged by any person without the previous approval in writing of the local sanitary authority.

As far back as 1911 certain District By-laws were made, and By-law 35 reads as follows:—

No building shall be erected or no building enlarged on township lot without permission from the local authority.

The local sanitary authority under the Public Health Ordinance happens to be the local authority, so that the difference in wording between this section and the By-law is merely the insertion of the word "altered" in the Ordinance. There is absolutely nothing new in so far as that section is concerned, as the provision has been in the Statute Books since 1911 and action taken on it, and as regards the provision referred to by the hon. member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar) relative to the distance within which a building should be erected on a lot, that is also fully set out in the said By-laws.

With regard to the question asked by the hon. member for Western Berbice (Mr. Peer Bacchus) as to the effect of the section, there is no question of a retrospective effect arising, as the wording of the section is very clear. It says: "No building shall be erected, altered or enlarged." There can be no alteration or enlargement unless the building is actually in existence. The section applies to

buildings in existence at the commencement of the Ordinance. In the same way the By-law refers to buildings in existence in 1911. With respect to section 135, I shall not deal with that.

Mr. JACOB: May I raise a point which I am not sure about? The section says: "No building shall be erected, altered or enlarged." Does that mean a building cannot be repaired, such as taking off the roof and putting another with new materials in its place? Objections have been raised to that, and permission is not being granted even to the taking down of a wall and replacing another of new materials. I have discussed it with some sanitary officers, and while one agreed that permission cannot be withheld, the other said it can be. I would like to get an explanation on that point.

Dr. MACLENNAN: (Director of Medical Services): I would like to reply briefly to the various remarks made. I think there is no doubt from what I heard to-day that there is a general concern amongst hon. members as to the operation of these two controversial sections of the Public Health Ordinance. I must say that I was very much impressed by the remarks of the hon. member for New Amsterdam, who in his own inimitable way offered some very interesting criticisms of those sections. I am also very grateful for the remarks made by the hon. member for Central Demerara, who has put the situation very clearly indeed and in fact replied a great deal better than I can.

Legislation of this nature is operative in most countries; there is no doubt about that. It is aimed at improving health conditions—housing and town planning in rural areas. In most countries where I have been, there is legislation of this kind operating very well indeed, but here in British Guiana we have different problems. We have the awfully difficult problem of drainage, laying out and partitioning schemes, many of which at the moment are in a chaotic condition. Perhaps these two sections are a little too advanced at the moment for the present state of this country, but at the same time, however, you must have sanitary progress; you cannot stand still. Here you have people living in houses under very insanitary conditions. Are you going to allow those houses to be repaired and to remain in those conditions

forever? We cannot allow those conditions to continue. The position is far more serious than the ordinary man in the street may think. It is a very big economic question, and the whole thing is wrapped up with new land settlement and housing schemes for the poorer classes of this Colony.

I feel that hon. members in voicing criticism of these sections have omitted to refer to an amendment to this particular section of the Ordinance, which was passed by the Legislative Council in May last year. That amendment says:—

The Governor in Council may by Order published in the *Gazette*, exclude from operation all or any of the provisions of Part XII of this Ordinance and any regulation made thereunder, other than any right of appeal therein contained, in respect of any area defined in the Order and may revoke or vary any such Order

That allows a certain amount of latitude. At the moment the Board is considering that certain areas in Berbice, I think, should be excluded from the terms of this section for the same reasons hon. members have raised to-day. Unfortunately we cannot apply that throughout the Colony, as that would be a retrograde step. I do not know that I would like to answer every detailed point raised. It seems that hon. members have raised a very big question, and I think the best thing to do, if I am given permission to do so, is to give hon. members the assurance that I will consider with the Central Board of Health these two sections of the Ordinance and see if we can find a way out to reduce the hardship by introducing some constructive amendments to the Ordinance which will allow for a standard of sanitary progress and at the same time not cause so much hardship.

As the hon. member for Georgetown South has said, you cannot make sanitary progress without causing some hardship here and there and expenditure of money. Sanitary progress means a certain amount of hardship and expenditure of money, but I do feel that there seems to be, from what hon. members have said, a definite hardship being inflicted in this country by the legislation. If I am allowed to take the matter to the Central Board of Health, I give the assurance that if it is possible to make suitable amendments I would do so.

Mr. ELEAZAR: The hon. Attorney-General's explanation does not carry the

matter any farther. That is the reason why we are where we are to-day. No one objects to making application to the local sanitary authority for permission, but what I am saying is that the local sanitary authority will not give consent at all because the land, they say, has not been laid out originally for building purposes. It does not matter whether all the requirements have been complied with, the authority will not grant the application because the place has not been laid out for building purposes. It means that the whole of Buxton village has to be laid out afresh so to make it possible for a villager to obtain permission even to repair the roof of his house. The law was never intended to be applied to such places. The people in the villages have been applying for permission to build or repair their houses all these years and are still doing it, but do not get such permission now.

Mr. JACOB: I have looked at Ordinance No. 17 of 1938 which was referred to by the hon. Director of Medical Services, and I am wondering why other necessary amendments were not put through then. But that carries us no farther, and I am hoping that from the assurance given something will be done and that very promptly. I am also hoping to see that sanitary officers do not hinder the people in repairing their houses, that the people are granted permission to remove a roof and replace it with new materials, and that all difficulties are removed and differences settled. I know of dozens of cases in which real hardship was created by these sections on the East Coast, Demerara, and I think if the hon. Director of Medical Services enquires of his officers he will find out that what I am saying is absolutely correct. My object has been achieved here to-day, and I do want to assure the hon. Director of Medical Services that there is nothing personal in what I have said. All I want is that officers of Government do what is expected of them by the ratepayers.

THE CHAIRMAN: I would like to add to what the hon. Director of Medical Services has said. He has given the assurance that he will go into these two sections and see whether anything can be done to reduce the hardship complained of. Although he will do that, there will however, still be hardships. You cannot ex-

pect to have any legislation of this sort without hardship of some sort. I have seen a similar Ordinance in operation in two other countries, and in every case there have been complaints of hardship, which we who administered the Ordinance knew existed but we could not make exceptions without multiplying from the effect of the Ordinance. If we are to have any progress at all in housing and sanitary conditions, we must have regulations governing the building of houses. There can be no indiscriminate erecting and repairing of houses.

The hon. Director of Medical Services will give attention to certain aspects of the case that may enable him to allow some people, who have not been given permission so far, to go ahead with the building of their houses, but it cannot be expected that there is going to be any general acceptance of the proposal put forward here to-day, that the people should be allowed to repair or add to their houses without any control at all. I want that to be very clear.

Item 1(a)—Deputy Director of Medical Services, \$310.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I see from the explanatory remarks that the house allowance of \$480 per annum is to be attached to the salary of this officer. As a house allowance, the officer will not get a pension on the amount, but if it is attached to his salary when the time comes for the computation of his pension it will be taken into account. Is Government changing the old order of things? This was not done by accident but by design. The person who has put it there, must have known that it is an attempt to get this officer's pension computed on his house allowance as well, which was never intended to be. When cases of this sort are put before this Council members must begin to question everything.

Mr. JACOB: I am hoping to hear some explanation and would like to take this opportunity to state, that when discussing this Ordinance to-day I particularly referred to section 136. I want it to be clearly understood that I am not in any way a party to impeding public health progress. Your Excellency made a pronouncement that that will not be allowed,

I want to say that I am no party to it, and all that I am asking for is that a man who has a house on a particular plot of land should be given an opportunity to repair that house and even to enlarge it if needs be. If it is the intention of Government not to allow people to enlarge their houses or to repair them because of the unsuitability of the land, then it is equally the duty of Government to find suitable land nearby for them to erect their houses on. I cannot imagine Government shirking its responsibility in this way.

I do not want to stress cases of victimisation, but only to urge that when Government is going to close the door one way it must open the door another way. If that is not the intention of Government I shall have to protest as vehemently as I possibly can. That is what is creating the hardship. A man is told he can neither repair nor rebuild his house because the site is not suitable, but he is not told where to go and get suitable land on which to put his house. It is essentially the duty of Government or of some authority to provide such land. Reference has been made to land settlement and drainage schemes, but all these things must be done first. Until you can provide suitable land for the people to build their houses on, it is distinctly unfair to prevent them from rebuilding on the lands they occupy.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: When I moved the motion I drew special attention to this particular item. The hon. member for Berbice River was perfectly correct when he said that Government purposely increased the salary of the officer by adding to it the house allowance. It was felt by Government that the salary of the Deputy Director of Medical Services should be \$4,800 without house allowance. It is not that Government has overlooked the fact that the additional £100 per annum will become pensionable. It was purposely done by Government.

Mr. ELEAZAR: You will not have to pay any pension on it if it is house allowance. The officer will still be receiving the additional £100 if given as house allowance. A rose called by any other name smells just as sweet.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Item 35—Representation at New York World's Fair, \$600.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move the insertion of this sub-head—“Representation at New York World’s Fair \$600.” It is considered desirable that there should be some one at this Fair to give answers to questions about this Colony, to do all that is possible to bring to the notice of people attending the Fair the existence of British Guiana, and to advise them to see it. It is considered that the officer, who would be there for about six months, should be remunerated at the rate of \$100 per month.

Mr. GONSALVES: I take it that Government will be getting a report from that gentleman, as to what are our prospects from such representation at the Fair. I would like to hear some more details.

Mr. JACOB: I would like to know what we are going to advertise at the Fair. I am not in favour of spending this money in useless advertisement. The progress of the whole country is held up on account of the visit of the Royal Commission, and I do not think it would be well to spend \$600 in that direction.

Mr. WALCOTT: I think this suggestion was put forward by the Tourist Bureau after very mature consideration. The officer to whom it is proposed to pay this amount has been doing extremely good work. Notwithstanding what anyone may say to the contrary, I certainly think the Colony is going to derive considerable benefit from the work that he has done, and I do not think we should expect anyone to do work for the Colony without pay. I consider it would be more advantageous to the Colony to pay \$600 for the advertisement which it would get at the World’s Fair than to spend \$800 on the publication of reports.

Mr. JACOB: I think we have got it that Government has contracted to spend this money and is only seeking permission to spend it. It is only a formal way of obtaining authority for the payment of the money which has been contracted for. I think the whole thing is very unsatisfactory.

Mr. WALCOTT: I think the hon. member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob) should have a little more knowledge of the working of things. The Tourist Bureau is allowed a certain amount by

this Council every year and is in a position to take \$600 out of that amount so as to guarantee payment for the man to do the work, in the hope that this Council would see its way to refund it.

Question put and agreed to.

POLICE.

Mr. JACOB: I object to the following items under this head totalling \$15,530:—

Item 3—Ammunition, arms and equipment, \$776.

Item 34—Emergency measures, labour disturbances \$5,000.

Item 35—Purchase of motor lorry transport, \$8,065.

Item 36—Purchase of hammocks and mosquito nets, \$1,449.

Item 37—Purchase of one Camera, \$240.

I protest against the expenditure. This morning the hon. member for New Amsterdam (Mr. Woolford) stated that a precedent would be created if the evidence of the Leonora Commission was printed. Is there not a precedent in the publication of the evidence taken by the Labour Commission? I happen to know that both the report and the evidence of that Commission were printed, and I have produced a copy. I think the hon. member for New Amsterdam was trying to point out that some very important commissions had sat and evidence taken, but it was not printed and laid before this Council, and what was really wanted was the report which was printed. I protest against responsible members of the Council misleading this Council. The report itself of the Hector Josephs Commission on the labour disturbances in this Colony was a small document, but the evidence which was voluminous was also printed. I do ask that in the interest of the public the evidence of the Leonora Commission be also printed. In the labour disturbances enquired into by the Hector Josephs Commission there was no loss of life, but in the Leonora disturbances there has been the loss of four valuable lines. The lives of four ordinary humble workers may not be worth a shilling, but the lives of four of His Majesty’s subjects have been lost. If money could have been found to print the evidence of the other Commission in 1935, I think money should be found to print the evidence of this Commission. It should be published and given the widest publicity possible, so that in future officers of Government would know that they cannot take

it upon themselves to shoot people down. It is absolutely necessary that officers of Government should realise that His Majesty's subjects cannot be shot down at will.

Mr. WALCOTT: I am surprised that the hon. member, who has just spoken, was even allowed to make the statement he did. I heard him state this morning that he was afraid to take a chance on his life by going to the scene of the disturbance, where it seems to me that the Police officers, especially the rank and file, had much to do and did what was part of their duty. I should have thought that as head of the Man Power Association whose members, it appears, had some trouble with the estate authorities, he would have been given ample protection had he gone there as his members were very much more in numbers than the Police, but perhaps the hon. member was afraid of the Police. I think he rather indicated that subsequently by saying that we would all like to see him killed (laughter). I do not know why he should make that remark.

Mr. JACOB: Perhaps, if you were in my position you would know.

Mr. WALCOTT: Perhaps so, and therefore I would have kept out of it. I consider it absolutely essential when there is trouble anywhere, not only on sugar estates, and there is likely to be loss of life among innocent people, that the Police should go there.

Mr. AUSTIN: As I pointed out this morning with respect to that report, the Planters' Association contributed \$270 odd towards the cost of printing that document, and that Body guaranteed to take a certain number of copies. They took a considerable number of copies at \$2 each. This was done not because they wanted them, but as the Chairman of the Commission said we must have the daily proceedings so that they could be studied the next morning. Government had the Official Reporter, Mr. McDougall, to take the shorthand notes.

Mr. JACOB: May I ask why the sugar estate authorities did not act in the same way on this occasion?

PUBLIC WORKS—EXTRAORDINARY.

Item 1(a)—Quarters for Administration Officer, West Coast, Berbice, \$1,525.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I beg to move the insertion of sub-head 1(a)—“Quarters for Administration Officer, West Coast, Berbice, \$1,525.” This supplementary vote is required to provide servants' quarters, \$600; extension of the water-pipe line, \$400; and an electric plant, \$525. These items had not been included in the original estimate. I think they are necessary as the officer must have electric light, and he would have to keep servants who should not be required to live in the neighbouring village but be provided with living quarters on the premises. The water-pipe line is essential.

Question put, and agreed to.

Item 33—Purchase of land for erection of Police Station, Alberttown, \$2,500.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I also move the insertion of sub-head 33—“Purchase of land for erection of Police Station, Alberttown, \$2,500.” This site is urgently required to enable a new police station—a larger one than exists at present—to be erected. The accommodation at the Bourda Police Station and Alberttown Police Station is very unsatisfactory. I do not know if hon. members know the two buildings, but I visited both of them and they are really not safe. It is essential that Government should have a slightly larger site for the new police station at Alberttown, so as to have the two police stations just named abolished.

Mr. GONSALVES: Must I understand that the two stations will be merged into one, and it is intended to buy the adjoining lot in Alberttown?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Yes; it will be the adjacent lot and there will be no station at Bourda. As you have said, the two stations will be combined.

Mr. GONSALVES: I wish to compliment Government on doing something in respect of those two police stations. Within the last few years the question has been raised here, and I am glad to see that the Bourda Police Station still stands somewhat upright and has not come down altogether. Government has gone into the question thoroughly and is now satisfied that removal from the house at Bourda is the right thing. Personally I have my

doubts in the matter. I think Bourda is central and a station there is necessary, and that as there is now a branch station at Kitty a smaller station at Alberttown will be quite sufficient. I also have some doubt whether the police station at the Town Hall should be retained or the men removed from there elsewhere. A larger police station should be erected at Bourda and provision made there for the accommodation of the Fire Brigade. If Government has not decided definitely in the matter I would suggest that the matter be seriously considered in the light of what I have said. In view of the recent erection of a police station at Kitty, which was done to relieve the work of the Alberttown Police Station, would it not be advisable to have a much bigger station at Bourda instead? I ask Government to consider that before deciding definitely in the matter.

I have heard that it is the desire of the Fire Brigade Police to have some position in Bourda, and if that is so it is a very good idea which ought to be considered. There are hon. members who are attached to insurance companies and who may express their views on this phase of the matter. I do agree that the time has come when there should be improvement in housing conditions, and Government has set the example in regard to modernizing their buildings within recent times. I am glad to see that one proper police station is to be erected, and I hope it will be something interesting to look at.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I purposely did not refer to the Fire Brigade for the reason that the matter has not been taken up with the Georgetown Town Council yet. As hon. members are aware, the Town Council put up half of the funds. If hon. members vote this money, the next step would be to take up with the Town Council the question of the removal of the Fire Brigade from the Town Hall compound. I agree with the hon. member for Georgetown South (Mr. Gonsalves) that the present site of the Fire Brigade is very congested, and the proposal is to remove the Brigade from there. If that is agreed to Government will naturally correspond with the Town Council, and as the hon. member is a member of the Town Council he will support the removal on that Council.

It is proposed that the Fire Brigade engines be housed, one section at the new building at Alberttown and the other section at the Market Police Station where there is accommodation. The Fire Brigade will thus be distributed. As hon. members are aware, it is desirable that there should be a section of the Brigade nearer Kitty, and therefore the proper place for it would be Alberttown.

If Government's scheme goes through the present building at Alberttown will be condemned as well as that at Bourda. At the Town Hall Police Station thirty men are housed in one small room, and after a fire there is no place for them to dry their clothes in preparation for their next duty call. These three police stations will be condemned and the men distributed between the new Alberttown Police Station and the Market Police Station. Those are Government's proposals, and I desire to make it quite clear, that it is intended to put them before the Georgetown Town Council for their views. I do not know how they feel about the matter.

Mr. GONSALVES: With regard to the Town Council's help in that direction, I do not see how they will be able to do it for some years, in view of the fact that they have been deprived of the collection of funds. If they are not able to collect revenue which they anticipate to collect for the next two years, I do not see where the money is going to come from. In so far as I am concerned, I cannot exactly see how I can tell the Town Council to levy more taxation in order to give Government money, when the Council had asked Government for legislation to enable them to collect revenue from which to pay for this and were denied it.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Government is not asking the Town Council for money for the Fire Brigade. There will be no new Fire Brigade Station building. One engine and some of the men will be housed in the new Police Station building at Alberttown, and the other engine and men in the present Market Police Station building. What I was referring to was the removal of the Fire Brigade, which is now housed in the Town Hall compound, and Government would like the Town Council's co-operation in agreeing that it would be advisable to remove the engines and men from where they are now.

MR. GONSALVES: I quite appreciate the position, but it will be remembered that Government asked the Town Council to contribute half of \$20,000 for Fire Brigade purposes, and that is one instance in which request for financial assistance has been made. With regard to the Police Station, I hope the day is far distant when the Town Council will be asked to assist in putting it up. We are a party in regard to the Fire Brigade Service and anything relating to its improvement, but like Government the Town Council are unable to take on these things unless they have money.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: What the Government has asked the Georgetown Town Council to give financial assistance towards, is the replacement of the Fire Float and a Fire engine. That has nothing to do with the removal of either the engines or the men. What has to be done in connection with this vote has nothing to do with whether they remain in the Town Hall compound or not.

THE CHAIRMAN: I would like to add that Government proposes to place before this Council in connection with the Estimates for next year the vote for a sum of money to provide the buildings. At the present time Government has only put the proposals forward in order to obtain the acquisition of the necessary land. There is need for expedition in that matter in order to secure the only adjacent site available to add to the existing site at Alberttown for the accommodation of the new Police Station. I may say also that all the points mentioned by the hon. member for Georgetown South (Mr. Gonsalves) have been considered in connection with this proposed change, but no definite conclusion has been arrived at. The hon. Colonial Secretary has informed hon. members of the probability of the proposals which Government is giving careful consideration to at the present time. That will be placed before this Council when the vote is proposed for the buildings themselves.

Question put and agreed to.

POST OFFICE EXTRAORDINARY.

Item 10—Purchase of telephones, \$2,500.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move the insertion of sub-head 10—"Purchase of telephones, \$2,500" in the Schedule under Head XLV.—Post Office Extraordinary. This sum of money will enable the purchase of 125 telephones. Hon. members will recollect that when the Estimates were being considered at the end of last year mention was made of the long waiting list for telephones, and it was proposed at that time to order a very limited number. I think, hon. members will agree that the time has come when we should try and supply these telephones, because they will soon pay for themselves in the rents which will accrue from their use. I hope hon. members will see their way to approve of this expenditure.

MR. JACOB: I am wondering if 125 telephones are sufficient. I think that number will be taken up within a very short time. Provision should be made for the purchase of a larger number.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Even when these 125 are purchased it will be necessary to have party lines, as the switchboard still remains the same size. The only way it will be possible to supply direct telephones is to have a new switchboard. I made enquiries about the cost of a new switchboard, when the gentleman from Trinidad, Mr. Nobrega, was here. He thought the cost would be about \$200,000, but the late Postmaster General estimated the cost at \$100,000. I think it would be sufficient if the Council vote \$2,500 to enable the Post Office Department to instal 125 additional telephones, and after that see if they can arrange for any more party lines. If they find that they can put in more lines, we can include a further sum in next year's estimates. They cannot do with more than 125 additional telephones this year.

MR. DE AGUIAR: I would like to say something about the installation of new telephones. On this occasion I am going to join my hon. friend, the member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob) in saying that in my opinion 125 new telephones will not be sufficient. I quite appreciate the point made by the hon. Colonial Secretary. We have heard the statement made so many times within the last ten years, that we want a new switchboard. I am very grateful for the

remarks which have fallen from the hon. Colonial Secretary's lips, that this expenditure in the purchase of 125 additional telephones will repay itself in a short time. If Government is satisfied that these 125 new telephones will pay back for themselves, will not Government consider that the installation of a new switchboard will also pay for itself? Everyone, who has had something to do with this subject before, will say that the installation of a new switchboard to cover the full requirements not only of the City but of the whole Colony will more than pay for itself within a very short time. I do not think it is a matter which should be shelved almost indefinitely.

I am not going to express an opinion as to what the cost will be, whether it will be \$100,000 as estimated or \$200,000 as suggested. The question Government ought to consider is whether something should not be done—and that early—in the matter. I feel compelled to make the suggestion that if \$100,000 or \$200,000 is required to instal a new switchboard to cover all requirements, a special loan should be raised for the purpose. It will be quite easy to float such a loan even locally. I venture to say that it will be floated almost immediately, and Government will have no difficulty in having an adequate telephone service and an improved switchboard.

I do not want to say anything more about telephones, as I have heard the name called so often. It is not like coming events casting their shadow before them, I hope. Government has not under consideration the selling out of the telephone service to any private corporation or institution. I would like to say now, that I consider the telephone service of this Colony ought to remain a Government institution, so that if there is any cause for complaint members of this Council will be able to represent such grievances as may arise.

Mr. JACOB: I am glad the hon. member has anticipated me. I know that the Trinidad telephone service is most unsatisfactory, and I do hope that it is not at the back of this Government's mind to go on spending small sums of money so that later on the service can be sold out to a private concern. I am thoroughly against a public

service being run by a private concern. Damaging statements about that service were made in the Trinidad Legislature and outside of it, and I do hope British Guiana will not follow the lead of Trinidad in that particular respect.

I think that a new switchboard should be purchased, if, not, at least 250 new telephones ought to be requisitioned for. As regards these party lines, I do not know if improvement cannot be made on the system. It is most unsatisfactory. You can always hear what the other party is saying, which is not at all well. I for one would not like to use a party line. I think this Government should face the problem and order a new switchboard.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I do not want to prolong the debate. It is not only a question of obtaining a new switchboard to supply all the people who want telephones. I have learnt from the Telecommunication Branch of the Department that they cannot instal a new switchboard in the present building. The matter is under consideration and is not shelved. The new Postmaster General has taken it up and is trying to get at what it will cost. It is quite impossible to do otherwise in the present circumstances than to have party lines, for which the users pay less than if they had a direct line. It is impossible to instal any more direct lines on the present switchboard. These 125 telephones will be taken up at once by persons who are glad to have a party line.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: I am very pleased to learn that the matter has not been shelved. What has prompted me to rise is to express the hope that action will not be delayed, so that next year we can have a concrete proposal before this Council. As I indicated before, this is something which has been talked of in this Council and outside of it for the last ten years. While I accept the assurance of the hon. Colonial Secretary that the matter is not entirely shelved but is under consideration, I ask that the work be accelerated. If Government brings down 500 telephones they will all be taken up.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I have been told that the people in my district cannot have a telephone because it will not pay. In

cases of illness or death they are deprived of quick communication with other areas. Government has reduced everything to a commercial basis like a shopkeeper. I thought it was Government's duty to look after the interest of the inhabitants and to provide certain things known to be public utility service, but I was told that a whole district must be abandoned because the people cannot pay for a telephone service. In Georgetown where it is different, the people are, however, to be given more telephones.

Question put, and agreed to.

PUBLIC WORKS—EXTRAORDINARY.

Item 22 Draining and filling Government lands, Georgetown, \$18,000.

Mr. JACOB: Complaints have reached a tribunal in which I am interested that a very unsatisfactory system prevails in regard to workmen particularly at the Fort. I do not know if this item refers to that work. An overseer was mixed up with the workmen in the carrying on of what is known as a "Box." Each man contributes \$1 per week and one of the number draws weekly the accumulated amount. The overseer who was the organiser or Box-holder drew the first, second and third hands, and when it came to his turn to pay the other contributors he bluntly refused to do so and the result was that some of the workmen had to leave the work. The matter was reported to the Public Works Authorities, but I do not think the wrong has been remedied. I raise the point here so that public officers may know that these things are not at all satisfactory and must not be done. A public officer should be made to understand that he is not to carry on such irregular business resulting in loss of wages to the workmen under him.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: As soon as that matter was brought to the notice of Government action was taken. An investigation was made and the whole matter settled. It will not occur again.

Mr. JACOB: I am glad to hear that.

THE CHAIRMAN: That completes the consideration of Schedule A:

The Committee proceeded to consider Schedule B.

AGRICULTURE.

Item 10—Livestock, \$440.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I beg to move the insertion of a new item under Head III.—Agriculture—as sub-head 10—"Livestock, \$440." This money is required on account of the expansion of Livestock and Poultry activities in the Colony. I am sure hon. members will welcome the news that there has been such an expansion, and will readily vote this sum.

Question put, and agreed to.

Item 22—Miscellaneous, \$130.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move the insertion of another item under the same head—sub-head 22—"Miscellaneous, \$130." There have been many demands on this vote to meet charges for the postage of seeds to institutions abroad.

Question put, and agreed to.

EDUCATION—TEACHERS' TRAINING CENTRE.

Mr. JACOB: I would like to make a general remark. I do not think the Colony receives value for the money spent in salaries to the higher officers of the Education Department. I think that most of their time should be spent in visiting the schools and seeing that the work done there is being carried on properly, but that is not the case. I do not think that should be. Now that we have not the system of payment by results, more attention should be given to such visits. I do urge that the whole matter be gone into and all the schools throughout the Colony be properly and regularly inspected, so that these officers should leave more of the office routine work in Georgetown to look after itself. Money is being spent on education, but we are not getting value for it. Large numbers of people are not sending their children to school, and it is the duty essentially of the Department to see that the children go to school.

The education system in the schools is in a most unsatisfactory state. There are large numbers of people between the ages of 15 and 30 who cannot read and write. We have a Compulsory Education Ordinance, but it has been allowed to stay in abeyance. It is the connivance of certain

people which is responsible for this state of affairs. I cannot speak too lightly about it. The educational and agricultural problems of this country require proper attention, and it is time Government takes notice of the representations of hon. members of this Council, who are conversant with these matters.

POST OFFICE.

Item 29—House Allowance to Postmaster, Kitty, in lieu of quarters, \$80.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I beg to move the insertion in the Schedule under Head XXX.—Post Office, sub-head 1, Personal Allowances, the following new item 29—“House allowance to Postmaster, Kitty, in lieu of quarters, \$80.” This provision is necessary to pay the house allowance of the new Postmaster until the building for his quarters has been erected. It should be finished by the end of the year. In the meantime the Postmaster is entitled to quarters, and there is none to give him.

Question put, and agreed to.

COLONIAL DEVELOPMENT FUND SCHEMES GEOLOGICAL SURVEY (GRANT).

Item 1—Geological Survey, \$6,000.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move the insertion of the following item, “Geological Survey, \$6,000,” under Head XLVII.—Colonial Development Fund Schemes Geological Survey (Grant). This additional provision is required to the end of the year for the continuance of the survey. This matter was dealt with by Resolution, when the Council last met. It is merely the insertion in the estimates of the sum of \$6,000 that is sought.

Question put, and agreed to.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Item 63—Grants to Local Authorities towards cost of emergency works, \$200.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I desire to re-commit Head XXV.—“Miscellaneous”—merely, however, to mention that the explanatory note in the Schedule to the item—Grants to Local Authorities towards cost of emergency works, \$200—reads:—

Grant towards the Local authorities of Woodly Park, Hopetown Golden Fleece and Paradise, Belladrum and Eldorado towards the cost of materials purchased by them for emergency works due to exceptionally heavy rainfall.

There are two other Local Authorities which should have been included—Bush Lot and Seafield. The vote of \$200 is in respect of six Local Authorities and not four as mentioned in the note.

Question put, and agreed to.

The Council resumed.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move that the original motion be amended by substituting the words “as amended in Committee” for the words “which has been laid on the table.”

Professor DASH seconded.

Question put, and agreed to.

SPECIAL PENSION TO MR. J. H. CREGAN

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I beg to move the following motion:—

That, with reference to the Acting Governor's Message No. 15 dated 26th May, 1939, this Council approves of the payment as from 1st January, 1939, inclusive, of a special pension at the rate of \$384 per annum and a gratuity of \$1,280 to Mr. J. H. Cregan, in respect of his services as Assistant Electrical Inspector, Telecommunications Branch, Post Office.

Mr. Cregan has served the Government for sixteen years, and the post he held during those years was on the Unfixed Establishment. Hon. members will remember that at the Annual Session all posts with salaries of \$720 per annum were moved above the line and became pensionable. Mr. Cregan retired as from the first of January, this year, and therefore did not benefit by that change. It is, however, felt that he should be granted a special pension calculated as if his post had been a pensionable one for the sixteen years that he held it.

Professor DASH seconded.

Motion put, and agreed to.

SUBSIDIZED INTERNAL AIR SERVICE.

Mr. McDAVID (Colonial Treasurer):
I beg to move the following motion :—

That, with reference to the Acting Governor's Message No. 18 of 17th July, 1919, this Council approves of the establishment of a subsidized internal air service in the Colony under the contract with Mr. A. J. Williams and the British Guiana Airways, Limited, referred to in the Message and further undertakes to provide on estimates the necessary funds for the payment of the subsidy.

Before dealing with the substance of this motion I would like to say a few words about Mr. A. J. Williams, the gentleman with whom this contract has been concluded. Mr. Williams is a citizen of the United States of America who holds both the air pilot and the air mechanic licences issued by the United States Government. He came to British Guiana in August, 1934, and brought with him an Ireland Amphibian plane with a Wasp 450 H.P. engine which is capable of carrying four passengers and their baggage and a pilot. He was granted a licence to fly in the Colony in October, 1934, and during the later months of that year he carried out certain experimental and advertising flights. In 1935 he put his plane into operation as a taxi service. In 1936 he acquired a second plane of exactly similar type, and from that time right down to the present he has operated a service with these two planes.

In 1935 he flew 421 hours. In 1936 his total flying time was 573 hours. In 1937 he flew 1,248 hours, in 1938, 940 hours.

As members perhaps know, Mr. Williams's service was very considerably assisted by the transportation requirements of the British Guiana—Brazil Boundary Commission which during 1936-1938 was engaged in demarcating the boundary of this Colony and the neighbouring countries. In fact, it was due almost entirely to that fact that Mr. Williams was able to make a moderate financial success of his service. At the same time the Boundary Commission admitted that but for Mr. Williams's service their operations would never have been completed as expeditiously and satisfactorily as they were. Actually, Mr. Williams flew some 2,400 hours on behalf of the Commission and I do not think I am committing an indiscretion in saying that he received the thanks of the

Secretary of State for the very valuable service which he rendered that Commission.

I think it is generally admitted by everybody that Mr. Williams has initiated a most valuable service in this Colony. In doing so he has required a unique technique in piloting his plane under the rather difficult climatic and other conditions which obtain in this Colony. He has acquired exceptional skill. In fact I think he is a most remarkable man. His knowledge of the Interior now is most immense and what is more remarkable he is highly imbued with the pioneer spirit. He boosts British Guiana whenever he can and does not spare himself in working for British Guiana's good.

But, sir, the main thing about Mr. Williams's service is, to use your own words in Your Excellency's Message in paragraph 6 :—

He has clearly shown the immense value of an internal air service as a rapid and flexible means of communication with the interior and has indicated the possibilities and indeed the need of developing the use of air communication with the interior to a much greater degree.

And so I would like to pay tribute to Mr. Williams for what he has accomplished so far. I feel sure this Colony owes him a debt of gratitude for what he has done. I would like to refer to one particular feature of his work as well, that is, his assistance to sick persons. Several persons, I have reason to believe, owe their lives to Mr. Williams who brought them down—in many cases gratuitously—to Georgetown and thus gave them the opportunity to recover their health.

In 1938 Sir Wilfrid Jackson came to the conclusion that it was necessary and important to do everything possible to retain Mr. Williams's services in the Colony, as there was some danger of Mr. Williams having to abandon his service when he lost the revenue he was deriving from the Boundary Commission owing to the completion of the work of the Commission. Sir Wilfrid Jackson appointed a Committee of three business men with myself, perhaps I may say four business men including myself. We investigated the position very fully and made a report to the Governor. The investigations of that Committee were based on a report

which was prepared by Messrs. Fitzpatrick, Graham & Co., Chartered Accountants, who went very carefully into the financial results of Mr. Williams's operations. The Report of the Committee was finally dealt with by a Committee of the Executive Council who actually carried out the negotiations with Mr. Williams and his business representative, Mr. J. H. Hunter, M.B.E., and it is upon the recommendations of that Committee that the terms of the contract have been drawn up.

As regards the terms of the contract I would ask the Council to turn to Paragraph 4 of the Message which I communicated yesterday. In that paragraph the main provisions are summarized. Very briefly they are :—

- (a) The contract to be for a period of three years commencing from 1st October, 1939.
- (b) The Contractors to operate an internal air service in the Colony with the two 450 H.P. Wasp Ireland Seaplanes now in use or approved substitutes.
- (c) The Contractors to carry for reward in the seaplanes passengers and cargo offering.
- (d) The Contractors to maintain the seaplanes licensed air-worthy and to provide licensed pilots, one plane and a pilot to be always available for service if the other is not actually in flight.
- (e) all supplies (including new seaplanes) imported for the service to be admitted free of customs duties.
- (f) Government Departments to take and pay for at the rate of \$60 per hour a guaranteed minimum of 30 flying hours per annum.

As regards the subsidy which is the most important part of the Message, the Government is to pay the Contractors the maximum sum of \$21,600 per annum, but that subsidy is subject to a proviso which requires a rebate of \$20 for every hour flown in excess of 200 hours. The Government is to have first call on the services of the seaplanes, and the ordinary rate to be charged for commercial flights is not to exceed \$60 per hour except with the prior approval of Government. Lastly, Mr. Williams's service as pilot is to be continued throughout the duration of the contract which does not come into operation until the Council approves of the establishment of the service and provides the necessary fund for the subsidy.

The effect of the subsidy is this, if only 200 revenue flying hours are flown then the full amount of the subsidy is to be

paid. If, for example 500 hours are flown then the subsidy is reduced to \$15,600. If the flying time goes up to 600 hours the subsidy goes down to \$13,600. If the flying time gets as high as 1,000 hours then the subsidy is reduced to \$5,600. Eventually if the service is able to obtain a total flying time of 1,280 hours then the subsidy disappears entirely. I do not suggest of course that it is possible that the service will in the first year or even the second year obtain 1,280 hours. It will however be remembered that Mr. Williams did obtain as much as 1,248 hours in 1937. It is remarkable that he has always had the opportunity of making special flights. For example, this year (1939) he made several special flights for the Royal Commission and the Jewish Commission and it is possible he may get special work again in the Colony. There is every reason to hope that the flying time will go up to such a figure as to considerably reduce the subsidy. Those are the main provisions in the contract.

I would like to draw attention to one or two rather important features about it. It will be noticed that the contract does not call for a regular service from any one point to another. It will still be a taxi-service, but there is no reason why, if future developments justify Government asking the contractor to run such a service, it cannot be arranged. Lastly I would remind the Council that the contract is for three years only. That period is fixed, because it is long enough to enable information to be obtained as to the possibilities and requirements for establishing a permanent service, and not too short to enable Mr. Williams to carry out the service as he should. I hope I have said enough to convince the Council that it is a most desirable step to take. I beg to move the motion standing in my name.

Dr. SINGH: This Council is asked this afternoon to subsidize—

Mr. JACOB: I was getting up to second the motion.

THE PRESIDENT: The motion has been seconded already.

Mr. AUSTIN: I did rise too to second the motion.

Mr. JACOB: I think Government

should be congratulated for arriving at an arrangement for the establishment of an air service in this Colony. Although we have not seen the whole contract, I do hope that adequate safeguards are provided for life and property, and that full insurance will be carried. While this means of communication should be installed and everything done to have a satisfactory service, I would recommend to Government that provision be made in the contract for a Government representative to be on the Board of the company to see that its affairs are properly conducted, that the funds of the taxpayers are well looked after, and that the Balance Sheet of the company is laid on the table of this Council.

I am quite in favour of this subsidy being given, because I am in favour of Government helping and assisting private enterprise, but I do feel that when reasonable profits are being made those who give assistance should get some of those profits. I do not therefore think it is unfair to make such a demand. If it happens that all the nice things said by the hon. mover of the motion do not materialize, I think we will have to give a larger subsidy. On the other hand if our anticipations materialize, then the subsidy will be reduced. I do urge that adequate protection be given to the Colony for the subsidy which is going to be paid for the operation of this service. I do not know whether that point has escaped the businessmen who advised Government on the contract. Not having seen the contract, it is not possible for me to go into more details.

Dr. SINGH: We are called upon to subsidize an internal air service. The question is: Reviewing the present financial position of the company, can we afford to do so? It is true that an air service will do a lot of good, and will place us on progressive lines, but there is the question of £.s.d. We are not in a position to do so. There are so many other things we can do with that money. If we subsidize this air service we will be doing it at the sacrifice of other important factors which are to the benefit of the people. If we were financially better off we could make better arrangements for our hospitals wherein at the present time we have many floor beds. Floor beds are really a nuisance to nursing and clinical

observation. Then we could erect country cottage hospitals to give first aid in cases of emergency. The case of expectant mothers during the last days of pregnancy is very important; a little kindly help will assist them to overcome their difficulty.

It is also very important that in this country we have not got a Government Orphanage. If we were financial money should be found to have such an institution, because by not having one there is unbounded hardship among our young generation who have to go about unprotected and without proper guardianship. Then there are our roads to be attended to. With that money we can keep them in order thereby relieving unemployment. If we can find the money for new projects such as this one, I think we should be able similarly to find money to assist our people in finding employment. At the present time the people are eking out a hand-to-mouth existence. There is so much we can do for our people. Life-saving devices and other important social problems can be tackled with the money instead of giving this subsidy. I know it is a very good service to have, but it is all problematical and it is left to be seen whether it will work out or not. There are so many important factors for the welfare of the Colony that we have to look after, that at the present moment we cannot afford to support the project.

Mr. JACKSON: I am a little surprised at the opposition raised by the hon. member, who has just taken his seat. I had thought the project would have received the whole-hearted support of this Council. We were reminded a little while ago that we are living in a modern age and should not be archaic. I think the service already rendered by Mr. Art Williams is an indication of what benefit this Colony will receive from an internal air service. The hon. member has enumerated a host of things we can do, perhaps with \$21,000, and feels that as we cannot do all those things we ought not to take a step forward. The project is an exceedingly happy one, and personally it will have my support.

Mr. ELEAZAR: A single minute remains before the adjournment, and if I have to live my life over I cannot approach

a matter of this nature and say all that I want to say in one minute. I can only say a small fraction of what I want to say. I suppose I will have to leave over some for the next occasion. I cannot help congratulating Mr. Art Williams for what he has done for this country already. I endorse every sentiment which has fallen from the lips of the hon. mover of this motion, but when all that is possible to be said has been said I do not think that Mr. Art

Williams in the wildest flight of his imagination expects this impoverished country to be able to pay him \$21,600 per annum to fly to the Mazaruni district of this Colony. The work is useful, and what he has done in the past has been praiseworthy.

The Council adjourned to Tuesday, July 25, at 11 a.m.