

THE DEBATES

OF THE

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OF BRITISH GUIANA.

OFFICIAL REPORT

OF

*PROCEEDINGS AT THE FOURTH SESSION OF THE THIRD
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.*

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

FRIDAY, 21ST OCTOBER, 1938.

The Fourth Session of the Third Legislative Council of British Guiana was opened in the Council Chamber, Guiana Public Buildings, at 11 a.m. on Friday, 21st October, 1938, with customary formalities and ceremonials.

PRESENT :

The President, His Excellency the Governor, SIR WILFRID JACKSON, K.C.M.G.

The Honourable F. DIAS, O.B.E. (Nominated Unofficial Member).

- „ J. S. DASH, Director of Agriculture.
- „ E. A. LUCKHOO, O.B.E. (Eastern Berbice).
- „ E. G. WOOLFORD, K.C. (New Amsterdam).
- „ E. F. McDAVID, M.B.E., Colonial Treasurer.
- „ F. J. SEAFORD, O.B.E. (Georgetown North).
- „ M. B. G. AUSTIN, O.B.E., (Nominated Unofficial Member).
- „ M. B. LAING, Commissioner of Labour and Local Government.
- „ G. O. CASE, Director of Public Works and Sea Defences.
- „ H. P. CHRISTIANI, M.B.E., Commissioner of Lands and Mines.
- „ F. O. RICHARDS, Comptroller of Customs (Acting).
- „ J. ELEAZAR, (Berbice River).
- „ J. GONSALVES, O.B.E. (Georgetown South).
- „ J. I. DE AGUIAR, (Central Demerara).
- „ PEER BACCHUS, (Western Berbice).
- „ E. M. WALCOTT, (Nominated Unofficial Member).
- „ H. C. HUMPHRYS K.C., (Eastern Demerara).

The Honourable C. R. JACOB, (North Western District).

A. G. KING, (Demerara River).

„ J. W. JACKSON, (Nominated Unofficial Member).

F. A. MACKAY, (Nominated Unofficial Member).

„ T. LEE (Essequibo River).

His Lordship the Bishop of Guiana read prayers.

OATH OF ALLEGIANCE.

THE PRESIDENT administered the Oath of Allegiance to the following members who then took their seats:—

The Colonial Secretary (Mr. G. D. Owen).

The Attorney-General (Mr. S. E. Gomes).

Dr. N. M. MacLennan (Director of Medical Services).

Mr. L. G. Crease (Director of Education).

PRESENTATIONS.

THE PRESIDENT made the following presentations:—

(a) The Insignia of a Companion of the Imperial Service Order—Mr. J. R. Farnum.

(b) The Imperial Service Medal—Mrs. A. Gittens, Miss A. Holder and Mr. S. Stoby.

Addressing the recipients in turn the President said:—

MR. FARNUM,—The Order which I have the honour to hand to you to-day on His Majesty's behalf is one especially established to give recognition to loyal service of the Crown given over exceptionally long periods. It is a highly prized award, for its conferment implies not only the qualities of loyalty, faithfulness in service, and devotion to duty, the qualities which above all others earn the confidence and respect of colleagues and are the foundation of the service of the Crown, but the continuous exercise of those qualities in efficient service over an exceptional period of time.

Thirty-seven years service in one Department is an exceptional record of which

you may be justly proud, and for which the Department and the Service are fully grateful. It is a great pleasure to me to have the privilege of handing you to-day this mark of His Majesty's recognition of this record.

MRS. GITTENS,—I have great pleasure in presenting to you the Imperial Service Medal as a mark of recognition by His Majesty of your long years of faithful service in the alleviation of suffering.

MISS HOLDER,—I have great pleasure in presenting to you the Imperial Service Medal as a mark of recognition by His Majesty of your long years of faithful service in the alleviation of suffering.

LANCE SERGEANT MAJOR STOBY,—This award is the recognition of thirty years loyal service and devotion to duty, years completed with an exemplary record. Such service is not only highly meritorious in itself but it is an outstanding example to others which is of the utmost value to the service of the Crown.

THE PRESIDENT'S SPEECH.

THE PRESIDENT addressed the Council as follows:—

HONOURABLE MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,—

The Session which opens to-day, concerned principally as it is with the consideration of the financial plans for the coming year as embodied in the annual estimates, invites a review of the main outlines of the economic position of the Colony as the basis on which those plans must be formulated. Three weeks ago it seemed that all consideration of our local problems would be swallowed up in the catastrophe that threatened imminently to engulf the nations of Europe and the

British Empire. To-day with deep feelings of relief and thankfulness we can turn to the analysis of our own affairs and consider in what directions we can most effectively seek to apply the support and assistance for which the forthcoming inquiry by the Royal Commission permits us to hope.

The satisfactory financial results of the year 1937 which gave a Colonial revenue of \$5,906,783 against an expenditure of \$5,674,948 (exclusive in both cases of works undertaken from the Colonial Development Fund, and special accounting adjustments) cannot unfortunately be regarded as a reflection of the normal economic situation of the Colony. The revenue in that year was augmented by especially favourable circumstances of a temporary character which led to exceptionally large importations of goods (resulting incidentally in a certain degree of overstocking), and the expenditure for various reasons had not reached the levels which it now seems clear will be demanded by the maintenance of social services at a reasonable standard, the improvement of conditions of service in certain branches of the administration, and the restoration of public properties and highways to a satisfactory condition. During the current year there was, as had been anticipated, a considerable fall in revenues, the revised estimate of which is put at \$5,528,541, and at the same time there were exceptionally heavy demands for additional expenditures, arising in part from phenomenal weather conditions which seriously affected roads and drainage systems, and in part from social conditions including measures required to cope with unrest and efforts to mitigate the effects of unemployment by the extension of the programme of public works. These conditions involved an increase in the total expenditure to a figure now estimated at \$6,186,648, involving a deficit on the year's operations of \$658,000 which will be met from surplus funds

While some of the conditions referred to were of an exceptional, and it may be hoped non recurrent character, a considerable part of the additional expenditure undertaken, notably that relating to improved conditions of service in various departments, and the additional police protection which was generally accepted

as desirable and indeed essential, must involve a permanent addition to the annual demand on the Treasury. Moreover, I think it is generally recognised that much remains to be done in improving the levels and extending the range of social services such as education and public health, including especially the question of housing, and that there is a real need for a wider expansion of effort in dealing with certain social problems, among which mention may be made of the rescue of delinquent girls. There are perfectly reasonable demands for the provision of better accommodation and facilities for secondary and technical education, the training of teachers, and various other proposals which will occur to all present. The question of improved communications is also one that is constantly impressed on our attention.

These references to the need for increased outlay on public and social services and the figures given above of public revenues and expenditures, important as they are in themselves, derive their greatest significance from the fact that they are a reflection of a general economic situation which we cannot regard without anxiety.

It is generally admitted that the economic organisation of the Colony has become inadequate to support a vigorous and healthy life for all its people, and that a widening of the basis of production is urgently called for. The causes of this decline (for so I think it must be regarded if we look to what has been attained in the past) must no doubt be sought chiefly in external conditions such as the fall in the prices of primary tropical products and the restriction of output, but let us clearly realise that the remedy must be sought in the internal readjustment of our economy by the enterprise and energy of our own people. A considerable alteration in the distribution of effort and of production may be called for if the economic life of the Colony is to be restored to full vigour and made capable of sustaining the standards at which we must aim without permanent dependence on the generosity of the Imperial Treasury. The coming visit of the Royal Commission gives us the opportunity and imposes on us the duty of formulating plans by which this fundamental change may be brought about.

It is not an easy task. The most obvious and insistent need is the expansion of our exports, and in this direction we are met at the outset by the artificial restriction which world conditions have imposed on the export of our most firmly established staple crop, an increase in which offered the readiest means of economic expansion. It seems that we must accept this for the present at any rate as an unalterable factor in the situation. Next to sugar the most obvious resource is rice, and it seems to me evident that our most strenuous efforts must be concentrated first of all on the endeavour to expand the cultivation and increase the export of this crop. I do not propose to discuss here the various internal difficulties with which the cultivation and sale of this crop have been surrounded. They are all well known and have been fully ventilated. I will only say that by one means or another it is imperative that these difficulties should be overcome, and I will refer briefly to some of the conditions which the expansion of rice cultivation demands.

In the first place it is obvious that a larger area of well drained and irrigated land must be made available; and this brings us to the consideration of a more intensive settlement on the land as a primary condition of extended rice cultivation. Engineering surveys have been completed for a number of areas, and as soon as certain inquiries in connection with the incidence of existing capital liabilities on these and other areas are completed, which it is expected will be done very shortly, I propose that a Committee should be appointed to advise which of these areas present the best conditions for intensive settlement with a view to the extension of rice cultivation, and as to the conditions under which that settlement can best be carried out.

A further essential condition for the expansion of the rice industry is the radical improvement of the technique and organisation of milling. The Council is aware that a Committee appointed last April is considering this question in particular relating to the Essequibo Coast where the need for rehabilitation of conditions is acknowledged to be most insistent, and I think it is generally known that in connection with that inquiry we

have been granted through the generosity of the Colonial Development Fund the assistance of Mr. H. Parker, Managing Director of Government Rice Mills in Malaya. Mr. Parker's inquiries have not yet been completed but he permits me to say that in his opinion very large economies in the milling and handling of the crop can unquestionably be obtained by the establishment of properly equipped modern central mills, economies which should enable a better and more stable price to be paid for padi, and a more uniform and better graded rice to be obtained for export. Export sales should also be facilitated by the establishment of central mills. In his opinion the quality of the padi grown in this Colony is excellent and the yields obtained are good. With efficient and economic milling and better organization of sales there seems to be no reason why we should not secure and retain the greater part of the Caribbean market.

In the first instance it seems advisable that a trial of this policy should be made on the Essequibo Coast where the conditions are particularly suitable for its inception, and where the need for fundamental economic reconstruction is especially urgent. If it succeeds there valuable lessons would undoubtedly be learned as to its application to other areas. For this reason the special inquiries which are proceeding in relation to Essequibo assume more than a localized importance.

These changes, viz., the provision of larger areas of well drained and irrigated land and the establishment of central mills would involve an extensive re-organization of the industry and a certain gradual movement of population. It must be frankly recognised that very substantial difficulties must be faced and overcome before these readjustments can be carried out, difficulties of finance and difficulties of organisation, but the situation of the rice industry demands fundamental measures if it is to play the part in the economy of the Colony which no other crop at present available seems likely to sustain, and which is vitally necessary to the strengthening of our economic foundations.

With these measures for the expansion

of the rice industry I suggest that there should also be combined measures for extending the cultivation of other crops, such as plantains and ground provisions, and for the raising of stock. The extension of these crops raises at once the question of markets, and this is a problem the solution of which is likely to be only gradually attained, though I believe myself that considerable improvement is possible by the better organization of internal marketing to secure a fuller return to the grower. In the meantime, however, the value of these crops as a factor in subsistence agriculture, that is to say, as crops on which the grower himself relies substantially for his subsistence, cannot be too strongly insisted upon. I suggest to you that this consideration should play a prominent part in any plans for land settlement which may be formulated in connection with the extension of rice cultivation. If the extension of land settlement should lead to a large increase in the output of ground provisions and plantains it would have an important effect in reducing the cost of living, and in the case of plantains would serve to facilitate export: but to enable them to be produced in larger quantities and at a lower price it is essential that their function as an important element in providing subsistence for the grower and his family in the first instance must be more fully recognised. It may be hoped that as the cultivation of these crops is increased wider opportunities for export may offer themselves in some cases, but I suggest that in the first instance effort should be concentrated chiefly on rice as an export money crop and that the function of the other crops as contributing to the subsistence of the grower should be primarily insisted upon in the formulation of land settlement plans.

The position of a crop like coffee is on a somewhat different footing. As hon. members are aware, the situation of this industry has been studied by a special Committee whose report will be laid before the Council. Recommendations for the grant of a measure of special assistance to keep the industry in being until the situation with regard to the export market becomes clearer have been forwarded to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, but his reply has not yet been received. As soon as this is available the proposals will be laid before the Council.

The experiments which are being made in tobacco have shewn promising results and are being pursued. There appears to be an opening for a limited development of this crop for the local market.

The raising of stock should also in my view form an important element in any settlement plans. As you are aware steps are now being taken to establish a breeding station at La Belle Alliance in Essequebo and small stations are established at Whim and Leguan. It is hoped that these arrangements may be extended. There is required, however, not only a better grade of stock but a much wider diffusion of knowledge among small stock-owners of the elementary rules for the care and pasturage of animals. The use of any communal pasture lands which may be established in connection with land settlement schemes must be regulated with a due appreciation of these requirements. There appears to be a definite possibility of extending considerably the export of stock, but the first requirement is the provision of a better quality of animal.

In this connection I cordially welcome the steps which have been taken to establish a Poultry Breeders' Association for improving the breed of poultry. While the raising of poultry may never perhaps become anything more than what may be called a minor industry it is a line of development which is well worth pursuing. The quality of the birds seen in the villages—and often I fear on the roads—under present conditions indicates that the natural conditions are not unfavourable, and minor industries such as poultry raising and the production of honey can make an important contribution to the betterment of conditions of rural life. They merit every encouragement.

For the fulfilment of these plans the first requisite is the establishment of land settlements on fertile areas suitably placed, and the effective draining and irrigation of these areas. This will involve a considerable capital outlay and I think we must rely on the support of the Royal Commission to secure for us the necessary financial assistance. By the time the Commission arrives I hope that definite plans covering specific areas will be available.

These suggestions deal primarily with the Coastal areas. That does not mean that the possibilities of more effective utilisation of the resources of the interior are being relegated to a second place. The importance to the general economy of the country of the fuller development of its forest and mineral wealth cannot be over-estimated, but the line of approach to the solution of the problems connected with this development is likely to be more gradual and to call rather for long range methods. As Honourable Members are aware a Committee was appointed in July last on the motion of the Honourable J. Eleazar to inquire and advise as to the measures which might be taken to expedite the development of the interior, and we await with interest the recommendations of that body. Meanwhile, as you know steps are being taken to deal with one of the practical obstacles in the way of the fuller utilisation of local timbers by the establishment of an extensive timber curing yard at the Public Works Depot near the mouth of the Demerara River. This work has progressed more rapidly than was anticipated and it is hoped that the land will be available for use by the middle of next year. When this ground is available there seems no reason why by far the greater part of local needs for sawn timber should not be met from local supplies and an increasing export of well cured timber to Caribbean and other markets gradually developed. Meanwhile, though there has been a slight falling off in the volume of exports to the U.S.A. owing, it is believed, to temporary causes, this has been nearly offset by an increased demand from the West Indian Islands and from Europe. The actual output of greenheart had increased up to the end of August to 538,000 cubic feet as compared with 484,000 cubic feet for the same period last year, and the volume of responsible inquiry from America both for greenheart timber and Wallaba poles indicates a promising demand for these woods.

An interesting feature of the exports of forest produce has been the increase in the export of charcoal to the United Kingdom from 491 bags last year to 6,175 bags. It is too soon to say whether this can be regarded as a permanent factor in our forest exports. The export of sawn timber to the United Kingdom has also shown increase.

A satisfactory increase in the export of balata from 81,812 lbs. valued at \$21,126 to 139,835 lbs. valued at \$42,131 also took place.

In minerals the production of gold has been maintained at 25,641 ozs. up to the end of August as compared with 24,197 ozs. for the same period last year, and there are prospects of further developments.

Arrangements are being made to assist the despatch of a party of miners to lands under control of the British Guiana Goldfields, Ltd. and if this venture proves successful as a means of providing employment for unemployed miners you will be asked to approve of an extension of these arrangements.

The production of diamonds has also been maintained at 20,813 carats for the first eight months of the year as compared with 20,310 carats for last year, but values have shewn a slight decline. With the object of assisting the diamond industry the annual rent of claims operated solely for diamonds was reduced from \$14 to \$5.

The expansion of the Bauxite industry has continued, the export up to the end of August totalling 288,000 tons as compared with 208,000 at the same date last year. Prospecting for Bauxite has been carried on in the Berbice and Essequibo districts, and in the former there are promising prospects of active developments.

The total export of minerals up to the end of August was \$2,437,409 as against \$2,126,626 at the same date last year.

An interesting development has been the grant to the Central Mining and Investment Corporation of exclusive permissions to explore for petroleum in the Northwestern and Northeastern areas of the coastlands. Active operations for the examination of these areas have not yet commenced, so that nothing can be said as to possible prospects.

Altogether, in spite of the handicap of phenomenal rains which considerably impeded mining and in some cases forest operations, the output of forests and mines has been well maintained and there are promising indications of further

developments which may lead to considerable expansion.

Plans for wider economic development must take some time to mature and to reach the stage when their results will begin to be reflected in larger financial returns. They will call for considerable capital outlay, and it seems evident that we must await the advent of the Royal Commission for the final formulation of these plans and for consideration of the means by which they can be financed. In the meanwhile we have to meet the problem of financing the ordinary activities of Government and of taking such steps as are possible to cope with the more pressing immediate needs for the improvement of conditions and to mitigate so far as practicable the difficulties arising from unemployment and from the restrictions on industry.

The figures given in the earlier part of my address indicate, I fear, only too clearly that the extent to which we can be successful in meeting these conditions must depend to a large extent on the measure of assistance which we may hope to obtain from the Imperial Treasury by way of grant in aid. There is no prospect of any rapid increase in the revenues at the present moment, and it is equally apparent that we cannot at this stage contemplate any material alleviation in the levels of taxation, or effective change in its incidence. The Departmental Committee which has been examining the position in regard to taxation as suggested by the Secretary of State has been unable to propose any important variation which would meet the conditions laid down that it should be effective in stimulating immediate development.

In these circumstances the task of framing estimates for the coming year has not been easy. The dilemma between the refusal of reasonable demands for the improvement of conditions and even for the restoration of an efficient standard of maintenance of public services and properties, and the demand on the other hand for a large increase in the grants-in-aid from the Imperial Treasury is constantly before us. An endeavour has been made to steer a reasonable middle course between these difficult alternatives.

The draft estimates which will be laid

before you provide for a revenue estimated at \$5,408,342 and a total expenditure (exclusive of works financed from the Colonial Development Fund) of \$6,363,581, involving a deficit on the year of \$955,239. Towards this deficit it is estimated that there will be available a sum of \$452,704 from surplus funds, and application is being made to the Imperial Government for a grant in aid to make up the balance. The usual memorandum covering the details of the estimates which will explain how these totals are made up will be laid before you. I will only deal briefly here with one or two outstanding general features.

No important changes in the basis of revenue are proposed, but as already explained, general conditions compel us to contemplate a considerable reduction in collections compared with 1937 and a slight reduction compared with 1938. In these circumstances it has been necessary to assume that the emergency taxes now in force, viz., the Bill of Entry Tax and the Excise Duty on Sugar will be continued in effect.

The largest increases in expenditure appear under the Heads of Education, Hospitals, Police, Transport and Harbours and Public Works Extraordinary and Sea Defences.

The increase under Education, \$24,664, is mainly concerned with the provision of additional staff in the primary schools, a need arising in part from the steadily growing demand for educational facilities, which we must contemplate as a permanent and satisfactory factor denoting progress, and in part from the establishment of what is known as the Agricultural Bias scheme as a definite part of the educational system. Experience has shewn that if this important development is to have any chance of success, the specially trained staff allotted to it must devote their energies entirely to this branch of work and cannot be detached to assist regularly in the ordinary teaching schedule. In connection with this Head, however, it should be explained that the Government has received from the Committee which is considering the Primary Education system and the Education Code an interim report strongly urging the necessity of early steps being taken to

improve the stipends of the uncertificated teachers and making certain proposals in regard to other grades. The total additional expenditure involved is approximately \$41,148 per annum. The recommendations of this report have been accepted by the Executive Council and the proposals have been submitted to the Secretary of State for the Colonies for his consideration and that of His Majesty's Treasury. Pending receipt of the reply it has not been permissible to include provision for this expenditure in the Estimates, but if they are accepted they will involve an increase in the total by this amount. The full report of the Committee has not yet been received but is expected shortly.

The increase under Hospitals and Dispensaries, \$47,349, is largely due to improvements in the conditions of service and rates of pay of nurses and attendants whose position has a claim to sympathetic consideration. Increases in the costs of dietary also involve a considerable sum (\$9,946) owing in part to increase prices and in part to additions in staff. It has also been considered necessary that the provisions for drugs and medical appliances should be substantially augmented.

While on the subject of medical services I may take the opportunity of mentioning that there are good prospects of obtaining the assistance of the Rockefeller Foundation in carrying out a malarial survey of the Colony, an inquiry which I am confident would be generally welcomed as a highly important contribution to public health progress. Inquiries are also being instituted as to the possibility of interesting the Foundation in the situation created by the discovery of the existence of jungle yellow fever in the frontier districts of the interior, and it is hoped that Dr. Soper of the Rockefeller mission in Brazil may visit the Colony before long to investigate the position.

The increase under Police (\$64,646) is as Honourable Members already know due to the expansion of the Force rendered necessary by conditions of which all are aware and which needs not be stressed here. Honourable Members were consulted as to the steps which should be taken to meet these conditions and were, as I understood, fully convinced of their necessity. It is

also proposed that the pay of County Superintendents of Police should be somewhat improved. I think it will be agreed that the responsibilities devolving upon these officers give them every claim to consideration.

The large increase in the vote under Head XLI. Transport and Harbours—\$296,000 is mainly attributable to the need for replacing the steamer "Arawana" in accordance with the programme of replacement already agreed upon, of the purchase of a new launch to replace the one recently lost in an accident and of commencing work on the reconstruction of the Best Groyne and Fort Groyne. These expenditures, though they appear in the total of ordinary expenditure, are really of a capital or extraordinary character, but inasmuch as the balances of the replacement and depreciation funds which formerly existed have been absorbed in current revenues they must be met entirely from the ordinary revenues of the Colony supplemented by grant-in-aid. The sums spent from current revenues and grant-in-aid on capital replacements have of course greatly exceeded in amount the balances of the funds absorbed, but the re-establishment of these depreciation funds in due course is a most desirable financial precaution which should be undertaken as soon as financial conditions permit.

The ordinary operating costs of the Department also shew a substantial increase of \$66,909 over the figure for 1938. Of this the larger portion is due to improved conditions of service for the staff agreed upon during the current year, and the remainder to increased costs of fuel and supplies.

The gross receipts are estimated at slightly less than for the current year, owing to an estimated falling of \$8,550 in receipts from traffic on the Bartica-Potaro Road.

In connection with the question of internal communications it may be mentioned that proposals have been submitted to London for the maintenance during the next three years of an internal air service by Mr. "Art" Williams' flying boats. These arrangements involve the payment of an annual subsidy, but pending receipt of a reply from the Secretary of State it has

not been possible to include provision for this in the annual estimates. If the proposals are accepted they will of course involve a proportionate increase in the grant-in-aid from Imperial funds.

The increase in Sea Defence expenditure (\$34,170) is included on the strong recommendations of the Sea Defence Board. It is unnecessary to dwell on the vital importance of not delaying essential precautions in this sphere, in which delay is especially likely to involve much larger expenditure at a later stage.

The programme of Extraordinary public works as presented in the Estimates involves an expenditure of \$355,000 as compared with \$256,600 in the approved estimates for the current year. It may be observed, however, that the revised estimates for this year cover an expenditure of \$408,436. In the programme laid before the Council for the coming year the provision for reconditioning buildings for certain urgently needed new buildings—apart from \$7,800 for minor works and contingencies—is just over \$100,000 as compared with \$94,250 for the current year. Of this amount \$30,000 is in respect to the completion of the maternity wing at the Public Hospital, Georgetown, work on which was begun during the current year. The amounts allotted to buildings are, I fear, by no means adequate to enable us to overtake the heavy arrears in maintenance and reconditioning which have accumulated, but the financial position imposes stringent limits on the programme which can be undertaken.

The amount assigned to the continuation of the pure water supply system in the coastal villages is the same as for the current year, and provision is made for the continuation of the drainage improvement scheme in New Amsterdam. In accordance with arrangements agreed to during the present year provision has been made for expediting the work of draining and filling the Government lands in Georgetown adjacent to the sea front with a view to the completion of this scheme in five years instead of eight as originally contemplated.

A considerably larger vote is proposed for the reconditioning of main coastal roads and bridges totalling \$180,000 as

compared with \$85,300 in the 1938 Estimates. Honourable Members will however recollect that the provision made in the current year was substantially augmented by supplementary appropriations which, including votes to be placed before you at this session, are expected to total \$61,000, apart from a large additional outlay or maintenance rendered necessary by the exceptional weather conditions. The question of providing a more durable surface for the main roads where the traffic justifies it is one of pressing importance both from the point of view of affording better travelling conditions and from that of reducing maintenance costs and avoiding the waste which temporary patching involves. The votes proposed for 1939 allow for the construction of a further 11½ to 12 miles of concrete strip roads, and I should personally like to see the programme further extended and expedited. The financial position however imposes unavoidable limitations on the extent of the work which can be undertaken, and it should be made clear that the programme now proposed is subject to the sanction of the Imperial authorities and that no undertaking can be given that the funds required will be provided. The programme must be regarded as provisional and subject to this condition.

Though the immediate outlook reflected from these statements on the economic and financial position may not seem a very cheerful one, there is nothing in these conditions to call for despondency or indeed to do anything but confirm our determination to bring about as soon as possible the changes in our economic organisation that are obviously called for. Largely owing to external causes beyond our control the economic structure which was sufficient to maintain the life of the Colony until a few years ago has been thrown out of balance; it is our task to restore that balance and if possible to place the Colony in a position to provide for the larger population and the improved standards of living which its area and possible resources justify. The resources in fertile land, great forests, and a fuller exploitation of mineral wealth are there to be developed, and there are not wanting promising signs, of a larger development. To make the best use of these resources may require a certain re-orientation of economic effort, and the opportunity is

offered by the investigations of the Royal Commission to endeavour to obtain that external support and assistance which I think it is generally agreed are required to initiate a fuller development. I venture to repeat, however, that whatever external assistance may be secured, it is ultimately on the enterprise, energy, and I will add the patient determination of the inhabitants of the Colony that the results will depend.

To achieve these results we must have co-operation of effort and harmony of spirit among our own people. In recent months we have experienced repeated manifestations of economic unrest in various parts of the Colony which, while they have happily avoided any widespread disturbance of the peace, have resulted in frequent if partial dislocations of productive effort and involved considerable losses both to employers and labour. No one will pretend that there are not many conditions which are susceptible of improvement or that legitimate causes for complaint do not arise, but I most earnestly desire to impress upon all concerned that resort to the strike method as a means of calling attention to grievances or settling disputes is or should be a last resource when other means have failed, and that it inevitably involves heavy losses not only to the employer but still more to the labourers concerned. Calculation of the losses involved to labour in recent strikes reach a large total. Recourse to this measure prematurely or on inadequate grounds is a confession of failure and is a serious disregard of the obligations of the citizen to the community.

I have no intention of expressing any opinion on this occasion as to the merits of the various causes for disagreements that have arisen. The primary duty of the Government to take all necessary measures to secure the maintenance of order and the preservation of individual rights and property—a duty which must be unhesitatingly fulfilled whatever the origins of the dispute may be—makes it essential in my opinion that the Government should maintain as far as possible an attitude of impartiality, and direct its efforts to providing means for the amicable settlement of disputes by consultation with the respective parties and by endeavouring to

bring about agreement between them. This, as you are aware, we have endeavoured to do by setting up a Department which will maintain close touch with both labour and employers and with the conditions of labour in the various industries. The efforts of this Department have already proved to be of great value in many cases in helping to clarify the issues in disputes and in facilitating a settlement. With fuller experience and more clearly defined powers I am confident that the assistance which the Department can render towards the improvement of relations between employers and labour can be greatly extended, and I earnestly bespeak for the Department and its officers the fullest measure of co-operation and confidence. Without confidence there can be no co-operation and without co-operation no lasting improvement will be achieved.

At the last session I informed the Council that legislation was being prepared to define the functions and powers of the Labour Department and to regulate the relations between employers and labour in many of their aspects. The legislation includes powers to fix standards of wages and hours of work in particular employments or areas where the necessity arises and to regulate the conditions of contract in certain occupations; and deals generally with various questions affecting the relations between employers and labour which have hitherto been covered by the Employers and Servants Ordinance, Chapter 261 of the Revised Laws. The drafting of the legislation has called for careful investigation involving considerable research, and though the first draft has now been framed it will be necessary that it should be reviewed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies before being laid before the Council. It will not therefore be ready for presentation at the present session.

In the meantime I would invite your careful consideration of the draft Ordinance which has been framed to define more precisely the position in regard to one of the special questions that arises not infrequently in connection with the labour disputes, viz., the right of peaceful picketing. This right is held to be safeguarded in principle by existing legislation, but experience has shewn that clearer definition is desirable, and on the advice

of the Secretary of State for the Colonies the Summary Jurisdiction (Offences) (Amendment) Bill which will shortly be laid before you has been prepared to cover the position.

While dealing with the subject of labour relations reference may be made to the visit of Major Orde Browne, Labour Adviser to the Secretary of State, which recently terminated. I trust that Major Orde Browne's visit and inquiries will be found to be of real value in affording to the Secretary of State and his advisers a closer familiarity with the various issues affecting the situation of labour in the Colony, and that his conversations with different organisations representing labour and employers will prove helpful to them. I may perhaps take the opportunity of emphasizing that the inquiry conducted by Major Orde Browne is of a purely departmental character and in no way preliminary to or restrictive of the investigations to be conducted by the Royal Commission. The coincidence in time of his mission with that of the Royal Commission was fortuitous. The Commission will no doubt wish to acquaint themselves with the results of his enquiries but the scope of their own investigations will be in no way limited thereby.

Other matters which will be laid before you include :

A Bill to amend the Poor Relief Ordinance (Cap. 90) by increasing the number of Poor Law Commissioners.

A Bill to amend the Cinematograph Ordinance in respect to the constitution of licencing Boards in areas outside Georgetown and New Amsterdam.

A Bill introduced at the request of the Town Council of Georgetown to limit the period during which the same person may fill the office of Mayor continuously.

There will also shortly be presented to you a measure to replace the present entertainment tax by a system of import duties on cinematograph films, a change which it is hoped will remove anomalies in the incidence of the present tax and simplify administration.

The legislation regulating control of the rice industry and dealing with the position of the Rice Marketing Board under the terms of the resolution passed by the Council at the last session is in course of preparation and I hope that it may be

ready for consideration during the present session.

The principal business of the Session, however, is financial and of course involves, as I have endeavoured to indicate, a review of the economic foundations on which the financial structure must be based. The formulation of clear views on these fundamental problems is especially called for at the present moment by the approaching visit of the Royal Commission. In accordance with the invitation which has been published on behalf of the Commission I have no doubt that local bodies and associations are giving their earnest attention to the preparation of the representations which they propose to submit to the Commission on questions relating to the social and economic situation and proposals for development. I would only venture to urge upon them that as the ground to be covered is very wide, the Commission a comparatively large body, and the time available limited, it is highly important that the memoranda and other documents compiled for attention of the Commission should aim at the greatest possible brevity and precision in statement and suggestion. It is always possible to supplement proposals which need elucidation by oral evidence. The opportunity offered by the visit of the Commission is one which may lead to very far-reaching results, and I am confident that the most earnest effort will be made to facilitate and expedite their work.

I now commend the business of the session to your earnest consideration and I pray that your deliberations may be fruitful in advantage to the welfare and progress of the Colony.

Mr. LUCKHOO: Sir, I have much pleasure, on behalf of the Elected Members of this Council, in expressing our grateful thanks to you for your lucid review of the Colony's affairs. There are several points mentioned in your speech this morning which will certainly receive the most anxious and careful attention of the Members of this Council. I should like to add my personal appreciation of the able manner in which Your Excellency has reviewed the affairs of this Colony, and of your able and inspiring address.

MINUTES.

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on the 7th June, as printed and circulated were, confirmed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS.

SURTAX ON TONNAGE AND LIGHT DUES.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Mr. G. D. Owen) communicated the following Messages from His Excellency the Governor to the Council:—

MESSAGE No. 2.

Honourable Members of the Legislative Council,

I have the honour to invite the Council to approve of the continuance during 1939 of the surtax of fifteen per centum levied, during the year 1938, on the amount of tonnage and light dues collected under section eighteen of the Transport and Harbours Ordinance, 1931. This surtax is not levied in respect of any vessel which lands and takes away cargo not exceeding the aggregate 500 tons, or in respect of any sailing vessel of not more than 300 tons net register.

2. Honourable Members will recall the enactment of the Transport and Harbours (Temporary Surtax) Ordinance, 1932 (No. 1 of 1932) which provided for the collection of the surtax for the first time in the year 1932 and the passing of the Transport and Harbours Ordinance, 1931, under the provisions of section 18 of which Resolutions have since been passed to enable the levying of the temporary surtax.

3. The reason for the subsequent continuation of this surtax is that it is still impossible to dispense with the additional revenue. The financial position is not such as will allow of any taxation imposed during 1938 being reduced, and I accordingly invite the Council to approve of the collection of this surtax being continued during 1939, after which the position can again be reviewed.

W. E. JACKSON,
Governor.

5th October, 1938.

IMPROVEMENT WORKS FOR WINKEL AREA.

MESSAGE No. 4.

Honourable Members of the Legislative Council,

In March, 1935, the Central Board of Health drew attention to the unsatisfactory sanitary conditions existing in the Winkel area of New Amsterdam. On this being represented to the New Amsterdam Town Council, that body at first took the view that it had no jurisdiction over the Winkel lands but after further discussion it was finally agreed that the lands were within the municipal boundaries and so formed part of the town of New Amsterdam and came under the jurisdiction of the Council. The Council represented, however, that it was not in a financial position to carry out the works necessary to establish better conditions in these lands and asked Government to render some assistance in this connection. It was agreed by my predecessor when visiting New Amsterdam that some assistance towards putting the

area in order in the first instance might reasonably be rendered by Government.

2. With the consent of the Executive Council, expenditure to the extent of \$316.68 to meet the cost of drainage improvements of these lands, has been approved as a charge against Head XLVI. Public Works—Extraordinary, sub-head 19, Improvement of Drainage System of New Amsterdam

The sanitary improvements consisted of:

- | | |
|--|-------------|
| (i) Digging and grading trench on both sides of road—445 roods | ...\$ 35 60 |
| (ii) Cleaning and regrading inter-lots drains | ... 16 00 |
| (iii) Filling ponds, bushing of lots, parapets, etc. | 250 00 |

	\$ 301 60
5% Contingencies	15 08
	<hr/> \$ 316 68

3. In the interest of public health, however, it is necessary for scavenging and other carts belonging to the Town Council to serve the Winkel area and to enable them to do so it is necessary to surface the earth dam which runs through the area and is incapable of carrying any traffic in rainy weather with road material and erect a bridge at each end of it. The estimated cost of this work is \$860. The works referred to do not, however, form a proper charge against the appropriation for the drainage scheme of New Amsterdam, which revenue is fully allocated to works included in the scheme approved, and in the circumstances it is recommended that a special grant of this amount be made to assist the Town Council of New Amsterdam in putting this area into a more sanitary condition.

W. E. JACKSON,
Governor.

18th October, 1938.

FREE GRANT FOR RICE INQUIRY.

Professor DASH (Director of Agriculture) communicated the following Message from His Excellency the Governor to the Council:—

MESSAGE No. 5.

Honourable Members of the Legislative Council,

I have the honour to inform the Council that in July last the Colonial Development Advisory Committee on the recommendation of the Secretary of State for the Colonies made an offer of the services of a rice expert to assist in the inquiry which had been instituted in connection with the re-organization of the industry in Essequibo, and provided a sum of £1,000 as a grant to cover the cost of the visit.

2. The offer was one which was cordially welcomed and readily accepted by the Government as it was evident that an expert examination of the situation would not only be of great assistance in dealing with the local aspects of the rice industry but might prove to be of deci-

sive importance in supporting any application for the provision of capital for any scheme of reorganization that might be framed as a result of the enquiries. The expert's inquiries and examination will of course not be confined to the Essequibo situation, but will cover the industry throughout the Colony.

3. Mr. H. Parker, General Manager of the Government Rice Mills, Perak, Federated Malay States, was selected to conduct the inquiry and a grant of £1,000 to defray the cost thereof was made by the Colonial Development Advisory Committee.

4. I have no doubt that Honourable Members will readily confirm this arrangement by the necessary form of authority covering the financial transaction involved.

W. E. JACKSON,
Governor.

17th October, 1933.

GRATUITY TO MISS C. R. PETERS.

Mr. CREASE (Director of Education) communicated the following Messages from His Excellency the Governor to the Council :—

MESSAGE No. 1.

Honourable Members of Legislative Council,

I have the honour to invite the Council to approve of the grant of a compassionate gratuity of \$90 to Miss C. R. Peters, an uncertificated teacher who has been pronounced unfit for service on the grounds of ill-health.

2. Section 5 of the Teachers' Pensions Ordinance, Chapter 197, provides for the grant of a pension to an uncertificated assistant teacher with 30 years' service and over, but there is no statutory authority to grant either a pension or gratuity where service has been less than 30 years.

3. Miss Peters is now 55 years of age. She has completed over 27 years' service, most of which has been in schools in remote areas. In view of her age and the medical report on her state of health, I recommend for the approval of the Legislative Council the payment of the proposed gratuity which is the equivalent of six months salary. Provision for this payment has been included in a supplementary estimate to be considered by the Council.

W. E. JACKSON,
Governor.

30th September, 1938.

EXTENSION OF TENURE OF CENTENARY EXHIBITIONS.

MESSAGE No. 3.

Honourable Members of the Legislative Council,

I have the honour to inform the Council that Government has had under consideration a proposal to extend the tenure of Centenary Exhibitions, established under the authority of

Legislative Council Resolution No. XI., dated 24th March, 1933, beyond the original period of 5 years, in order to enable exhibitors who are granted extensions to sit for the British Guiana Scholarship Examination.

2. It is proposed that before the tenure of an exhibition is extended the exhibitor shall produce from the principal of his school, evidence that he is qualified in every respect to sit for the British Guiana Scholarship Examination and that his work and conduct as an exhibitor have been entirely satisfactory throughout.

3. I recommend, for your approval, the proposal set out above in which Executive Council concurs.

W. E. JACKSON,
Governor.

17th October, 1938.

PAPERS LAID.

The following documents were laid on the table :—

Draft Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the year 1939.

Explanatory Memorandum for use when considering the Estimates for 1939.

Report of the Committee regarding Transport and Harbours Department Services.

List of articles not exempt from duty which have been specially exempted by the Governor in Council under Article 2 of the Fourth Schedule of the Customs Duties Ordinance, Chapter 34, during 1938.

Schedule of applications for gratuities from dependants of deceased teachers.

Report of the Inspector General of Police for the year 1937.

An Account of the Administration of the Patoir Fund for the year 1937.

Report of the Post Office Savings Bank for the year 1937.

West Indian Fruit and Vegetable Conference. Report of the Postmaster General for the year 1937.

Report of the Commissioners of Income Tax for the year 1937.

Report of the Principal, Queen's College, for the year 1937.

Report of the Government Industrial School for the year 1937.

Report of the Liquor Licensing Committee.

Report of the Colonial Treasurer for the year 1937.

Report of the Deeds Registry for the year 1937.

Report of the Inspector of Prisons for the year 1937.

Report of the Official Receiver for the year 1937.

Report of the Government Analyst for the year 1937.

Report of the Prisoners' Aid Society for the year 1937.

Report on the working of the Joint Colonial Fund for the year ended 31st March, 1938.

Annual Report of the Comptroller of Customs for the year 1937.

Report of the Immigration Agent General for the year 1937.

Report of the Director of Agriculture for the year 1937.

Report of the Committee of the Trotman Trust Fund for the year 1937.

Report of the Directors of the Widows and Orphans' Fund for the year 1937.

Report of the Directors of the New Widows and Orphans' Fund for the year 1937. (*The Colonial Secretary*).

GOVERNMENT NOTICES.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr. S. E. Gomes) gave notice of introduction and first reading of the following Bills :—

A Bill intituled an Ordinance to amend the Poor Relief Ordinance, Chapter 90, by increasing the number of Poor Law Commissioners and by providing for the appointment of a Deputy Chairman.

A Bill intituled an Ordinance to amend the Cinematograph Ordinance, Chapter 105, with respect to the constitution of Cinematograph Boards in parts of the Colony other than Georgetown and New Amsterdam.

A Bill intituled an Ordinance to amend the Summary Jurisdiction (Offences) Ordinance, Chapter 13, in respect of acts of wrongful interference with the exercise of rights.

A Bill intituled an Ordinance to amend the Georgetown Town Council Ordinance, Chapter 86, by providing conditions under which a Mayor or an Ex-Mayor may be re-elected as Mayor, and by making provision as to the enforcement of contributions from Co-Proprietors of a lot in the event of payment of Rates or Taxes by one of the Co-Proprietors.

ESTIMATES, 1939.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY gave notice of the following motions :—

That, this Council approves of the Estimates of Expenditure to be defrayed from Revenue during the year ending 31st December, 1939, which have been laid on the Table.

SURTAX ON TONNAGE AND LIGHT DUES.

That, with reference to the Governor's Message No. 2 of the 5th of October, 1938, this Council approves of a surtax of 15 per centum being levied on the amount of tonnage and light dues which shall be collected during the year 1939 under Section 18 of the Transport and Harbours Ordinance, 1931.

IMPROVEMENT WORKS, WINKEL AREA.

That, with reference to Governor's Message No. 4 of the 18th of October, 1938, this Council approves the expenditure of the sum of \$860 for carrying out improvement works in the Winkel Area.

FREE GRANT FOR RICE INQUIRY.

Professor DASH gave notice of the following motion :—

That, with reference to the Governor's Message No. 5 of the 17th of October, 1938, this Council approves of acceptance from the Colonial Development Fund of a free grant of £1,000 to cover the cost of an inquiry into the Rice Industry of the Colony.

EXTENSION OF TENURE OF CENTENARY EXHIBITIONS.

Mr. CREASE gave notice of the following :—

That, with reference to Governor's Message No. 3 of the 17th of October, 1938, this Council approves of the extension, by the Governor, of the tenure of Centenary Exhibitions beyond the period of 5 years, to enable exhibitors who are granted extensions to sit for the British Guiana Scholarship Examination.

UNOFFICIAL NOTICES.

DAIRY PRODUCTS FACTORIES.

Mr. JACOB gave notice of the following motion :—

Whereas there are possibilities for improving the breed of cattle in the Colony, and attempts are being made at the present time in the county of Essequibo ;

And whereas there has been increased importation from various countries of condensed milk, butter, margarine, cheese and ghee during recent years ;

And whereas the import value of these commodities was \$307,813 in 1936 as compared with \$376,208 in 1937 ;

And whereas there is great scope for erection of one or more Dairy Products Factories in the distressed areas of Essequibo and the Berbice River, and the Mahaica/Mahaicony district for the manufacture of these products ;

Be it Resolved,—That this Council respectfully recommends to His Excellency the Governor the appointment of a select committee of the Council to go into the whole question with a view to the erection of one or more Dairy Products Factories as promptly as possible.

INDIAN AGENT IN BRITISH GUIANA.

Mr. JACOB gave notice of the following questions :—

1. The Government of India having readily accepted, in September last, the appointment of an Indian Agent in British Guiana and other Colonies, will Government state if any communication has been received from the Government of India and/or the Secretary of State for the Colonies? If so, what is the nature of the reply that has been sent?

LABOUR UNREST AT PLNS. BLAIRMONT
AND BATH.

1. Did Government receive a report from the District Commissioner of Berbice that the labourers of Blaimont and Bath estates had declined to work in the canefields of those estates during December, 1937, and January, 1938, because the management of those estates had reduced the rates of wages of the labourers? If so, will Government state how long the strikes lasted, and how they were settled?

2. Did the Blaimont sugar factory suspend operations?

3. Was an armed party of policemen stationed on those estates under Inspector Bovell-Jones and Sub-Inspector Halstead? If so, how many policemen were on each estate, how long they remained there, and who paid the cost of keeping those policemen on the estates?

4. Was an assurance given by the management of the Blaimont and Bath estates that labourers concerned were free to state their grievances to members of the Legislative Council and that no action would be taken by the management at any time to penalise them in any way in the future? If so, how many labourers have been given notices to depart forthwith from the estates and how many labourers have been evicted by the estates during the last four months?

5. Is it a fact that during the last four months one of the District Secretaries of the Man-Power Citizens Association which has been registered under the Trades' Union Ordinance, Chapter 57, and several other members of the Association have been given notices to depart forthwith, and to give up forthwith, possession of premises occupied by them at Bath and Blaimont estates?

6. Will Government take early steps to introduce legislation so as to protect labourers who make requests for increased wages from being victimised and intimidated by proprietors of all estates?

7. In view of the fact that there is a good deal of unemployment in the city of Georgetown, the town of New Amsterdam, the villages, and estates, and agricultural labourers and others cannot find employment, will Government take immediate steps to lay out suitable sites for planting suitable crops and the rearing of cattle?

RICE CROPS AND EXPORTS.

1. What acreage of rice it is estimated has been planted for reaping during the months of September to November, 1938, in the following districts, together with the estimated production of rice:—

The Essequibo Coast, including the Pomeroun.
Tiger Island.
The Islands of Leguan and Wakenaam.
The West Coast of Demerara.
The West Bank of Demerara
The East Bank of Demerara.
The East Coast of Demerara, from Kitty to Mahaica.
The East Coast of Demerara, from Mahaica to the Abary Creek.

From the Abary Creek to Rosignol, including Pln. Blaimont.

The East Bank of Berbice.

The Corentyne Coast from New Amsterdam to Pln. Springlands and including the Canje District.

The Corentyne river from Pln. Springlands.

2. Similar figures to be given for the Spring crop, 1938, as regards acreage reaped and quantity of rice obtained, and for Spring and Autumn crops during the years 1932, 1933, 1934, 1935, 1936 and 1937.

3. What quantity of rice has been exported during the years 1932 to 1937, each year separately, and the estimated quantity to be exported in 1938?

4. What quantity of rice has been consumed in the Colony during the years 1932 to 1937, each year separately, and the estimated quantity to be consumed in 1938?

FREIGHT RATES TO MORAWHANNA.

1. What is the freight by steamer on a bag of flour of 196 lbs. from Georgetown to Morawhanna, a distance of about 155 miles?

2. Is Government aware of the fact that the freight on a bag of flour of 196 lbs. from Toronto, Canada, to Georgetown by the Canadian National Steamships is only 50 cents.

3. In view of the fact that a regular fortnightly steamer service is operated between Georgetown and Morawhanna, and Georgetown and Canada, does Government think that the local charge is reasonable?

4. If the reply is in the negative will Government consider the advisability of reducing all freight rates to Morawhanna especially as there is so much distress and lack of employment in the Morawhanna district?

5. What is the freight on a bag of rice of 180 lbs. from New Amsterdam, Berbice, to Georgetown by ferry steamer and by rail, and what is the distance in miles?

6. What is the freight on a bag of rice of 180 lbs. from Georgetown to Morawhanna by steamer, a distance of about 155 miles?

7. What is the freight by steamer on a bag of sugar of 250 lbs. from Georgetown to Morawhanna?

8. What is the freight by the Canadian National steamships on a bag of sugar of 250 lbs. from Georgetown to Halifax, Canada?

9. When a comparison is made between the answers to Questions 7 and 8, does Government think that the local rate is reasonable?

10. Is Government aware of the fact that although repeated requests have been and are being made for steamers to transport crabwood and other logs from Morawhanna very little attention has been and is being paid to these requests with the result that one shipper has about 1,900 logs on hand awaiting steamers?

11. Is it a fact that an ordinary steamer cannot transport more than about 170 logs together with other goods from the district.

12. If the reply is in the affirmative, how long will it take the Transport and Harbours Department to remove the logs on hand at present from the several shippers?

13. How many trips have the "Lady Northcote," "Pomeroun" and "Tarpon" made during this year to 31st August, each separately

14. What amount has been collected by each of these steamers during the last 3 months ended 31.8.38, each trip separately, from Georgetown to Morawhanna, and from Morawhanna to Georgetown, freight and passenger, each separately?

15. What is the running expenses per mile of each of the three steamers mentioned in Question No. 13, wages and salaries of crew, and fuel, each separately?

16. If it is calculated that the Morawhanna Service is being run at a loss, how is the cost of this service calculated?

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT CONTRACTS.

Mr. LEE gave notice of the following questions:—

1. Will Government state whether the extension of the Bartica Hospital and the repairs to the Bartica Police Station were done by contract or by the Public Works Department?

2. If the work was done by contract will Government give the names of the Contractor, the amount paid to him and whether any guarantee was given by him?

3. Will Government state whether the painting of these buildings was done by contract, and if so, will Government state the price contracted for and with whom?

4. Will Government state whether tenders were called for by advertisement for the performance by contracts of the abovementioned, and if not, why?

5. Will Government state who was the officer who approved of the work being performed and under whose supervision was it carried out?

6. Is Government aware that the Public Works Department is not considering the claims of the unemployed in the several districts in which work is being done, and if not, why?

Will Government state if any carpenters and painters from Bartica were employed in the work done there under the aegis of the Public Work Department?

7. Is Government aware that wood could have been purchased at Bartica for at least one cent per foot cheaper than purchasing wood in the city, and did Government consider this when effecting the work recently done at Bartica?

8. Will Government accept the principle that where works of a public nature are being done that artisans and labourers in the various districts in which such work is being performed should have first claim and preference?

9. If it is the intention of Government that all works of a public nature should be performed by contract, will Government have a Board constituted (the personnel of which must not be confined to the staff of the Public Works Department) which Board will be responsible for the consideration of contracts?

Will Government state what works were done by the Public Works Department over the whole Colony by contract from January, 1938, to 30th September, 1938, the names of the contractors and the amounts paid in connection with each contract, state each separately?

10. Will Government state how many meetings of Boards or Committees appointed by Government fell through failure to form a quorum in the year 1937, and up to the 30th September, 1938, the names of the Boards or Committees and whether excuses were received from the members thereof and the names of the absentees from the several boards and committees, each separately for the abovementioned periods?

11. Will Government state how many vacancies occurred in the Civil Service in the year 1937 and up to 30th September, 1938?

Will Government give the names of the persons appointed to fill such vacancies either acting or permanently and what qualifications the persons appointed held?

12. Is Government aware that orders were given and contracts entered into in the year 1937 by the District Engineers of the Public Works Department for the supply of burnt earth for surfacing roads, and that great hardship was created through the said Engineers not taking over the heaps contracted for and paying for same until some time in the year 1938?

Is Government aware that if tenders were called for in the several districts to supply burnt earth, the cost to Government would be cheaper?

PRODUCTION IN ESSEQUEBO RIVER.

1. Will Government state what is the acreage under cultivation in Division No 12, Essequibo River in—

(a) padi

(b) coconuts

(c) other agricultural products.

State value for the years 1935, 1936, 1937, respectively, and the estimated value for 1938.

2. What was the amount of rice produced in the islands of Leguan and Wakenaam for the aforementioned years and the value thereof?

3. State the amount of cattle at present in Wakenaam, Leguan, Great Troolie Island, Hog Island and other parts of Division No. 12 for the years 1935, 1936, 1937 and 1938?

4. Did Government estimate the quantity of milk produced in the aforementioned islands for the said years and if so, state value?

PETITION.

Mr. LEE laid on the table a petition from John Adolphus Parris, assistant teacher, Lodge Congregational School, praying that consideration be given to the question of his emoluments.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move that this Council adjourn to Tuesday next at 11 o'clock, when the motion standing in my name in connection with the Draft Estimates for 1939 will be taken, and it is hoped to have the Second Supplementary Estimate ready for presentation to the Council on that day.

Mr. ELEAZAR: Your Excellency, must the Council come here on Tuesday just for what has been mentioned by the hon. Colonial Secretary?

THE PRESIDENT: That is the usual procedure.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I think it is a very unusual procedure. The usual procedure is that we meet on this day and adjourn for a fortnight at least. That has been my experience for years.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I have looked up the procedure, and it is quite in order to adjourn from Friday to the following Tuesday, when I shall move that motion in connection with the Draft Estimates, and after hon. members have spoken on it, if time permits, deal with any Supplementary Estimate which may be before the Council. It may also be possible to deal with one or two of the motions on the Order Paper on the same day. The principal business is to move the motion on the Estimates. I propose to ask for a Select Committee of the Council to be appointed to consider the Draft Estimates.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: I do not think that what has fallen from the hon. Colonial Secretary is substantially correct. Following on the remarks of the hon. member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar), what I believe is the practice is that Government undertakes the appointment of a Select Committee to consider the Estimates, and after that the discussion ensues on the Estimates. If the hon. Colonial Secretary moves the motion on the Estimates next Tuesday, it does not afford sufficient time for the required consideration of the Estimates. I think it is asking hon. members to attempt more than they can possibly do. What I think the hon. member desires to know is whether it is intended to appoint the Select Committee. If that is so, then a reasonable adjournment of the Council should take place.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The hon. member is quite correct. There have been occasions on which the Budget Statement has been made, and then the Select Committee appointed to deal with the Estimates, which afterwards came back to the Council and the motion was taken. I have seen it in the Hansard. It has been done in both ways. Personally I think it is most satisfactory to deal with the Budget Statement on Tuesday, and continue the debate after the Select Committee reports.

THE PRESIDENT: I think the hon. Colonial Secretary's proposal meets substantially what the hon. member suggests. He would make his own informal statement on the Estimates and then the Estimates would be referred to the Select Committee.

Mr. LEE: I think the usual practice is for hon. members to be given two weeks within which to consider the Estimates.

THE PRESIDENT: You mean before submitting it to the Select Committee?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: That is so, sir. It must be moved first on Tuesday.

THE PRESIDENT: There is no desire to hurry the consideration of the Estimates by hon. members.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: I think what brought my friend to his feet was that the hon. Colonial Secretary stated that the debate would follow.

THE PRESIDENT: I do not think the hon. Colonial Secretary anticipates any full-dress debate on the Estimates on Tuesday, but he merely proposes to move that the Estimates be dealt with in Committee. I am afraid that it is essential that the Council should meet formally on Tuesday to put itself in order for the consideration of the Draft Estimates. How much further it may go is a matter for the Council. I repeat that there is no desire whatever to hasten unduly the consideration of the Estimates beyond the usual time.

Mr. WOOLFORD: I beg to point out that there has been a procedure in this Council to which no reference has as yet

been made. It has been the habit of some hon. member to move the adjournment of the debate in order to discuss Government policy as disclosed in the President's speech. I feel, sir, if that is the intention of any hon. member he should give notice of it to the Colonial Secretary, for when we meet here on Tuesday and any member takes that view it will not be possible to reach the consideration of the Estimates on that day.

It may be that some member will move the motion and discuss generally the policy of Government. In usual circumstances the Select Committee is confined to the Elected Members, and the Heads of Departments attend that Committee.

It is not known how far the Council's deliberations will continue from day to day after Tuesday, and any member who wishes to discuss Government's policy should give notice of it.

THE PRESIDENT: That is so. I think that has emphasised what I intended. As it stands, I am afraid it is necessary that the Council should meet on Tuesday, when it may be decided what the subsequent procedure should be. Ample time would be given hon. members for deliberation by the Select Committee. The Council now stands adjourned until Tuesday at 11 o'clock.

The Council adjourned accordingly.