

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**THURSDAY, 25TH JULY, 1946.**

The Council met at 2 p.m., His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government, Mr. W. L. Heape, C.M.G., President, in the Chair.

PRESENT :

The President, His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government, Mr. W. L. Heape, C.M.G.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Mr. D. J. Parkinson (acting)

The Hon. the Attorney-General, Mr. F. W. Holder.

The Hon. the Colonial Treasurer, Mr. W. O. Fraser (acting).

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

The Hon. C. V. Wight (Western Essequibo).

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

The Hon. H. N. Critchlow (Nominated).

The Hon. J. B. Singh, O.B.E. (Demerara-Essequibo).

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

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

The Hon. Peer Bacchus (Western Berbice).

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

The Hon. J. W. Jackson, O.B.E. (Nominated).

The Hon. T. Lee (Essequibo River).

The Hon. A. M. Edun (Nominated).

The Hon. V. Roth (Nominated).

The Hon. C. P. Ferreira (Berbice River).

The Hon. T. T. Thompson (Nominated).

The Hon. W. J. Raatgever (Nominated).

The Clerk read prayers.

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on the 19th of July, 1946, as printed and circulated, were taken as read and confirmed.

PAPER LAID

The COLONIAL SECRETARY laid on the table the following document :—

Report of the Committee of the Legislative Council appointed to consider the Electoral Districts as at present defined.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES**MOTOR VEHICLES AND ROAD TRAFFIC BILL**

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL gave notice of introduction and first reading of the following Bill intituled :—

“An Ordinance to amend the Motor Vehicles and Road Traffic Ordinance, 1940, to provide for the grant of licences to use hire cars and goods vehicles on a road and otherwise to regulate the operation of such vehicles in any prescribed area.”

NOTICE OF QUESTIONS**WORKING HOURS OF WATCHMEN**

Mr. CRITCHLOW gave notice of the following questions :—

1. Is Government aware of the fact that Watchmen are working about 136½ hours per week at business places which close at 3.30 p.m. on Fridays and open at 8 a.m. on Mondays; and about 117 hours per week at business places which close at 11 a.m. on Saturdays and open at 8 a.m. on Mondays; and about 105 hours per week at business places which close at 4 p.m. and open at 7 a.m.; and about 174½ hours per week during Easter Holidays?
2. Is Government not aware of the fact that an organised Section of Watchmen have made representations to Private Commercial Employers and to Government for a reduction in those hours of work,

and have not had satisfactory results in the majority of cases ?

3. Would Government consider the appointment of an Advisory Committee, under the Labour Ordinance, to go into this matter and make recommendations to Government limiting the daily hours of work to 8 ?
4. Would Government be prepared to make legislation on the recommendations of the said Advisory Committee ?

ORDER OF THE DAY.

BASTARDY (AMENDMENT) BILL

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL : I beg to move the second reading of the following Bill intituled :—

“An Ordinance further to amend the Bastardy Ordinance, Chapter 147.”

In doing so, I wish to point out for the information of hon. Members that under the existing provisions of the Bastardy Ordinance, Chapter 147, as amended by Section 14 of the Principal Ordinance of 1943, a collecting officer who has to make payment to an applicant through a post office sends both the original and the duplicate orders to the postmaster. It is considered that a better arrangement would be to send the original order to the postmaster and the duplicate to the payee. This Bill seeks to make the necessary provision for this arrangement and also for the recovery from the collecting officer of amounts paid by the postmaster. It is also sought in clause 3 of the Bill to make provision whereby a constable or the person to whom the warrant is addressed can receive the money which is payable by the putative father of the child, on the execution of a warrant which has the purpose of bringing the putative father before a Magistrate on failure of distress, so that payment of the amount due would obviate his appearance before the Magistrate and avoid the expense of a journey which may take him across the country or to wherever the post office is situate.

Experience has shown that in several cases a putative father is ready at this stage to make payment but under the existing provisions there is no power for the con-

stable to receive the amount. In other words, the putative father has to go to the Court and make payment at present, since he cannot do so to the constable or the person to whom the warrant has been issued. I think this new provision is a very desirable one and I recommend it to hon. Members.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded.

The PRESIDENT : The motion has been moved and seconded; does any Member wish to make comment ?

Mr. LEE : I desire to speak not on the Bill, but as to the procedure that was being adopted by Government. It is rather surprising to me—knowing the number of hard cases that have been brought to the attention of Government—that Government delayed so long in rectifying something that should be put right. Following a recommendation of the West India Royal Commission, a system was introduced in the Bastardy Ordinance whereby Government undertook to collect the money from the putative father and send it to the mother of the child, but Government would not adopt the procedure whereby the money could be paid by the putative father to the constable or the person to whom the warrant has been issued, so that in case of arrest the putative father would be released on payment at the Police station. Before this Council adjourned on the last occasion, I pleaded with Government to pass this Bill through all its stages because I knew of a very hard case where a certain man from Bartica was arrested and detained in Georgetown for several days because he had to appear in Court at Bartica and the Court was not being held there until two weeks later.

On leaving this Council I found that there were several other such cases, one being a case on the West Coast, Demerara, where a man was arrested and had to be sent to Essequibo to appear before the Magistrate although the money was forthcoming. After all, the collection of the money is the essential part of the whole proceedings and I think a remedy should have been provided before. I ask that this Bill be taken through all its stages today, so

that relief could be given to those poor unfortunate men who have to suffer as a result of the existing law. All of us—especially lawyers—know that if a wicked mother desires to make trouble she can go to a collecting officer in Berbice and ask that her money be collected there and if the putative father is in Essequibo he would have to be taken to Berbice in order to appear before a Magistrate there and pay the money. I feel that a grave wrong was being done to these men, many of whom could not make their payments when due on account of economic conditions. I also know that Magistrates have expressed the view that many of them do not understand the procedure.

The PRESIDENT : Does any other Member wish to address Council? Mr. Attorney-General do you wish to reply?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL : I think the criticism of the hon. Member (Mr. Lee) is merely asking that the Bill be taken through all its stages today. He has approved of the principle and only regrets that the Bill was not introduced before. With the indulgence of hon. Members I think we can take it through all its stages today.

Motion for the second reading put and agreed to.

Bill read the second time.

Council resolved itself into Committee and considered the Bill clause by clause, without discussion.

Council resumed.

The PRESIDENT : No amendment having been made, I will ask the Attorney-General to move the third reading of the Bill if Members agree.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL : I take it that hon. Members agree to the third reading being taken now. With the consent of Council, I beg to move that the Bill be now read a third time and passed.

Mr. WOOLFORD seconded.

Motion put, agreed to.

Bill read a third time and passed.

FARMERS' GUARANTEED MINIMUM PRICES

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : I rise to move the following motion standing in my name :—

"That, with reference to the Officer Administering the Government's Message No. 5 of the 4th of July, 1946, this Council concurs with the recommendation of the *ad hoc* Marketing Committee that the Government Produce Depot minimum prices guarantee, as set out in the Message, should be extended for a further year from July 15th, 1946, to July 14th, 1947."

Certain price modifications have been proposed and these are set out in the Message. The renewal of the guarantee has been recommended by the *ad hoc* Marketing Committee and I propose, with the permission of the Council, to ask the hon. Member for Central Demerara who is Chairman of that Committee to explain in detail all the grounds on which the recommendation has been made.

Mr. de AGUIAR : First of all, I would like to second the motion so as to put myself in order. This Message seeks to continue the principle and the policy of Government which was finally accepted by this Council and whereby the *ad hoc* Marketing Committee guaranteed farmers' minimum prices for certain local produce. The prices they guarantee will continue until July 14, next year. In other words, this guarantee is for a period of one year. Bearing on the details of this Message, I desire to remind hon. Members of Council that in addition to these minimum guaranteed prices there is also another set of guaranteed prices by Government much lower than those stated here in the Message. If the Council accepts this motion, the position would be that the prices stated in the Message would become the minimum guaranteed prices which farmers would receive next year for the produce named in the Message. On the other hand, if the motion is not accepted the question of supply and demand would come into the picture it is true, but in so far as this Government is concerned there would be no guarantee to farmers except the lower prices guarantee which was passed some time ago.

The important alteration in the prices now before the Council is the withdrawal of the subsidy on one particular item—cassava—which it was thought necessary to introduce last year. Hon. Members will recall that Government guaranteed to buy cassava at 1¼ cents per lb. and to fix and control the selling price at 1 cent per lb. There was good reason at the time for Government's decision to subsidise cassava, but it is now considered that those conditions no longer exist and therefore, although the minimum guaranteed price of 1¼ cts. remains the maximum selling price has been removed and it will now be 2 cts. per lb. to the consumer.

In making that change there is a distinct advantage which Members would like to hear about and it is that although the minimum guaranteed price of 1¼ cts. per lb. is the lowest price the Depot must pay the farmer for his cassava, in view of the rise between that guaranteed price and the control selling price of 2 cts. per lb., it would be possible provided the supply is there, to pay the farmer a higher price than 1¼ cts. As a matter of fact, the position is today that the Depot is paying 1½ cts. per lb. for all the cassava delivered there. That decision was made in respect of all the items stated here in the schedule, so that what I have said about cassava applies equally to the other items named in the Message, because there is a margin between the minimum guaranteed prices and the control selling prices and so opportunity is given to vary the minimum guaranteed prices as circumstances warrant.

Hon. Members would, no doubt, be interested to know what all this would mean financially. Well, sir, in the Message it is stated that the loss involved is likely to reach \$50,000 but I would like to mention that this is only a tentative figure. It all depends upon the circumstances between now and the expiring date of this guarantee. Last year when a similar Message came before this Council it was anticipated that the loss would have been \$65,000 but, as stated here, it is now held that that figure would not be reached as the loss was only \$45,000. I think hon. Members would more concern themselves, perhaps, with the principle that underlies this Message and I am sure they are in agreement with

the policy which Government has adopted whereby the prices of the farmers' produce as listed here would be guaranteed over a period of 12 months. I have no doubt, sir, that this Message will receive the same sympathy as those Messages which have gone before and received the approval of this Council. If there is any further information that hon. Members may wish to ask for in regard to details, or if there is anything that I have omitted to mention, I shall be very pleased to do so on request.

Mr. EDUN: I am in favour of this Message, especially as it aims at improving the living standard of the farming population of the Colony. The Message is of such importance to the farmers that I hardly think any Member of this Council would oppose it except, perhaps, in detail. The idea of subsidising farmers in this Colony is a very good one indeed and I think it should go very much further. Instead of subsidising flour to the extent of \$1,000,000 and amounts like that, if it was practicable to subsidise the local farmers to that extent it would be the best thing for this country. I do not think this Message goes far enough. For instance, if we take flour—a carbo-hydrate in itself—and compare it with cassava, one would find that the price of flour as sold in this Colony is far higher than that of cassava. Therefore, the Message has not gone far enough, but one always has to see how much money such a project would involve. I am of opinion that this matter of food production is one of such vast importance that Government should have instructed every local Food Production Committee as to its central policy. For instance, when the central Food Production Committee decided in principle and in detail to have more food production, the District Committee of West Demerara should have been imbued with the same ideal. Par. 4 of the Message states:—

"4. It is considered that these guarantees have caused material improvement in—

- (a) The total food supply;
- (b) The variety of foods available;
- (c) The living standard of the farming population."

I admit that there has been "material improvement" indeed. The Food Production Committees all over the Colony have done a fine job in accelerating the Colony's food supply and I have no doubt that the living standard of the farmer has risen to a certain extent, but that is not good enough. I would ask hon. Members of this Council to bear with me this afternoon as I rehearse a cruel story of the wanton destruction of cultivation measuring 60 x 1 rods of plantains, bananas and cassava, by no less an authority than the Chairman of the local Food Production Committee on the West Demerara, not very many days ago—on Tuesday, 23rd July.

I want this cruel incident in the history of that Administrative District to be recorded here. This morning I visited the scene myself and saw how much destruction was done. I was accompanied by an important agricultural officer of that district. I was asked to do so by a man who has a piece of land attached to his padi field—12 rods on the East and a little less than 50 rods on the South of that field. He had been planting that piece of land since 1935, and he was supposed to be the best farmer in that area at Windsor Forest. By a strange irony of fate this man was commended for his cultivation by no less a person than His Excellency Sir Gordon Lethem in the year 1944. As I saw the destruction this morning it was enough to make the heart of any man bleed with pain. Not less than 153 "stools" of bananas and plantains each containing 4 or 5 suckers—and these suckers bearing, some ripe, some half-ripe, some young, some very young — had been cut down by twelve employees of that estate of Windsor Forest at the orders of the Overseer acting under the instructions of no less a person than the Chairman of the Food Production Committee. I invite every Member of this Council to go there and see for himself this destruction, and I ask the Press to go and see for themselves. I could not believe when I saw it that man could be so cruel, and I started to ask in my mind what is the policy of this Government, whether it supports such a policy by a District Commissioner or an Overseer who is managing an estate of Government. It is indeed a very painful episode. When I saw the destruction this

morning I advised the man that it is no use taking away the plantains; that he has the remedy in his hands and that I am sure any legal practitioner will be able to bring against the District Commissioner, against the Overseer and against those persons who had cut down those trees a charge of malicious damaging of growing crops and succeed in a Court of Law. That was all I could have advised that poor man to do.

I asked myself this morning what was the reason for the destruction. Was there any reason that could be advanced to convince me that this destruction on a part of that small piece of dam was in the interest of the estate, in the interest of drainage? Could that dam be of use to anybody? When I investigated I saw what was behind the whole tragedy. It was simply this: This man happens to be a very successful cultivator; he takes a keen interest in his cultivation and wants to see that he gets water and other facilities so that his cultivation can succeed. As an interested farmer—every farmer should be interested in his crop—he took exception to conditions at a period when water could not be had for his cultivation and his crop would have been damaged, and wrote the District Commissioner telling him that if he did not get water he would claim compensation and damages. That was on the 22nd March, last year. Because this man was one of those persons who took an interest in his own affairs and had the temerity to write the District Commissioner about damages, he has had to pay the penalty on the 23rd day of July this year. He had been given notice on the 18th February to quit the land by the 1st June. That notice is not worth the paper on which it is written.

I do ask Members of this Council to take this matter seriously. It is my privilege as a Member of this Council to bring an incident of this kind to the attention of this honourable Council, because we are voting the taxpayers' money in the interest of the farmers by way of guaranteed prices. Here you have a man on his own volition planting and, officers of this Government behaving in a manner like that of Hitler. This little "Dictator" thought this man should get off that land by the 1st June, and because he did not get

off that piece of land which is near his rice land which he has been cultivating successfully since 1935, because he did not fall down and worship at the feet of this "Dictator", on Tuesday morning a set of vandals was sent on that land and his crops were levelled to the ground. When I spoke to Mr. Laing, Commissioner of Local Government, about it, he said he could not believe a District Commissioner could be guilty of such a heinous crime at this juncture in the history of this Colony's food production. The temper of the people at Windsor Forest is high as the result of this act. It is good that I did go there and ask them to bear with me until I ask this Council to take cognizance of the incident and to ask Government to see that this little "Hitler" toes the line.

I am pained at this incident because it involves a producing man, a man who has been working all these years on his cultivation and you yourself in your Message have given him credit for his work. I invoke all the equity I can muster in the interest of this man, and I invite Members of this Council to go and see the damage done. Nobody can prove to me that there is need for that piece of land. There is no traffic on that dam. There are bits of cultivation on the dams surrounding the whole area at Windsor Forest, otherwise bushes cover them all over the estate. The taxpayers' money will not be used to cut the bushes but must be used to destroy ruthlessly food which the people of this Colony need, which the people of Trinidad need at this juncture. You yourself said that. In view of that and in view of the unsatisfactory food situation in the world at large would you or anybody want to make me believe that this District Commissioner does not know the food situation at large? Is it possible for any Member of this honourable Council to think that a Chairman of a Food Production Committee will not know there is a dearth of food throughout the world? 600 bunches of plantains and bananas besides cassava and tomatoes were destroyed, and I asked one of the labourers why they did it and if they could not have advised their superior officer to think it over rather than hastily order the destruction of those crops. He said in reply: "I was ordered to do it and I had to

do it, as it was my job to do it". I am not going to say a word more. (Turning towards the Press table) I ask the Press to take a photograph of that destruction and tell the world how some little "Hitler"—

The PRESIDENT : The hon. Member should address the Chair !

Mr. EDUN: Very well, sir; I feel strongly about it. I happen to be a Member of the Legislative Council Food Production Committee, and the hon. Member who seconded the motion can tell you how hard we have worked in order to bring order out of chaos on that Committee and to see that Government does exceedingly well in this matter. I think I have done my duty. Before I sit down I want to warn every little "Hitler" in the districts to take care. I shall ask every man of Windsor Forest to support this man in bringing a criminal charge against the District Commissioner, the Officer of Government who manages that estate and the employees of that estate, and I hope he will succeed before the Magistrate. I do not know whether that will be enjoyable to them.

Dr. SINGH: I am surprised to hear the statement made by the hon. Nominated Member. I feel there is something wrong at Windsor Forest and Hague. Last week while I was at this Council 25 men came to me from Hague with a grievance. I met them in the gallery and took them to Mr. Laing. Fortunately that matter was settled. Now there is something that could have been avoided if proper care had been taken. It is the first time I have heard about it, and I consider it a serious matter.

Mr. LEE: As a member of the Essequibo River Food Production Committee I would like to ask this Government to be good enough to instruct the Chairman of that Committee to summon meetings more often and to have more joint meetings between the representatives of the two islands of Wakenaam and Leguan, because at those joint meetings as the Representative of the people in that area I get to know what is being done in each Island. Your Excellency, I can assure you that the little help the farmers do get from the Food Production Committee assists them materially. The records will show that the

money was not badly spent, but to the contrary that it was spent in digging drains, clearing kokers and the like, and the results have been very satisfactory; even unto my representation that there should be a depot at Wakenaam for the purchase of provisions from the farmers of the two Islands is being considered by the Marketing Officer. I must thank Government for the assistance given to the people in those two Islands.

Mr. JACOB: I am not very happy over the food situation in this Colony. I gather from the remarks of the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Edun, that the Food Production Committee has done exceedingly well. I do not share that view at all. I think the Food Production Committee has done some good work, but I hold it has not tackled the problem in a proper manner, although His Excellency Sir Gordon Lethem was Chairman and devoted a good deal of his time to it, time which I think should have been devoted to other things. Executive Officers of Government should have paid some attention to food production in this Colony. I gathered some time ago that everything was all right, there was a lot of food in the Colony and the Food Production Committee had done well and we were saved the possibility of any shortage in the future. I do not think that is correct. I think there is at the moment an acute shortage of ground provisions and this will continue to be so long as the present methods are adopted.

I was not surprised to hear the remarks of the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Edun, in regard to the destruction of crops at Windsor Forest. That has gone on for years and years in some form or other. It is done by Government Officers, it is done by sugar proprietors; it is done all the time. Prosecutions have been brought and by virtue of the laws in existence all those prosecutions have failed. I have devoted a good deal of time to these matters. I attempted to give free advice in the Magistrates' Courts but nothing happened and the result is we find ourselves in this unsatisfactory condition. Perhaps it is thought that I represented those people in the Magistrates' Courts and acted as their lawyer. I do not pretend to be a lawyer. I do know what I am, but I do know I am not

a lawyer. My Trade Union has assisted tenants and the hon. Member for Essequibo River has done his very best too in the matter, but the set-up is such that it is impossible to make progress, particularly legal progress. I am sure the man whose crops have been destroyed will find that it is held that he had no right to plant there, although it is Crown Land, and that an Officer of the Crown had the absolute right to destroy his crops.

I propose to say something constructive. I propose to repeat what I said over ten years ago in this Council. I had urged on Government to do some substantial work in regard to food production, but up to this moment Government has failed completely to do real progressive work for the Colony.

The PRESIDENT: The hon. Member is making a general statement!

Mr. JACOB: I am going to give you details. Possibly I would be limited to half an hour, but I intend to give details because I came prepared to talk on this matter. I hope the Chairman of the *ad hoc* Marketing Committee will not go away. That is what I am here for as an Elected Member of this Council. Before I leave the West Coast matter I desire to say that the Guiana United Trade Union has been receiving complaints very regularly about the attitude of the Overseer of the district of Windsor Forest, Hague and La Jalousie. This gentleman has not been very kind and has been playing the bully towards the farming population there. Perhaps he has something to do with this matter. Only on Monday last I received more complaints about the attitude of this Overseer. I make that statement to support the statement made by the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Edun.

In regard to these prices referred to in the motion, I have a communication dated 11th July from the Coverden Improvement Association on the East Bank Demerara, which caters for the farming community from Land of Canaan to Clemwood, Demerara River, which suggests the following prices—

"Plaintains—4c. per lb. instead of 2c.
Sweet Cassava—4c. per lb.
instead of .. 1¾c.

Sweet Potatoes—5c. per lb.	
	instead of 2½c.
Eddoes... 5c. per lb.	1¾c.
Tannias... 6c.	3¼c.
Yams... 10c.	4¼c.

I am not going to agree that these suggested prices are reasonable. They are not. But that is the communication that has been sent to me, and I have been asked to make mention of it here while this matter is being debated. While I was speaking Your Excellency said that I was making a general statement and you want certain particulars. I will give them now. In Governor's Message No. 3, dated 8th July, 1944, of the Tenth Session of this Council, His Excellency Sir Gordon Lethem made these remarks about the East Bank Demerara, the place where this representation has come from:—

“It is proposed to make recommendations with regard to the area—Craig to Coverden. A survey extending from Craig to Garden of Eden was first made by the Consulting Engineer some time ago. The Land Settlement Committee asked for an extension of this survey up to Coverden. The plan of the survey from Garden of Eden to Coverden has now been completed. The area has not yet been visited by the Land Settlement Officer nor the land valued. As soon as the necessary action has been taken and estimates prepared proposals for acquisition of suitable areas will be submitted.”

Your Excellency will recall that I was appointed a member of the Land Settlement Committee. I regret I have to say that the Land Settlement Committee is making absolutely no progress. Before I accepted the appointment on the Land Settlement Committee I made it perfectly clear to Sir Gordon that I was not going to accept the appointment unless the Committee was going to do practical work. Sir Gordon assured me that it was going to do so. The Message I have quoted referred to the purchase of Cove and John, Vergenoegen, *cum annexis*, Bush Lot or No. 28, Corentyne, and the portion of the East Bank Demerara reference to which I have just read. May I ask what progress has been made in this direction up to the present time? I can reply to that—absolutely nothing. I have been talking to this Government while I was a Member of this Legislature and before I joined it nearly twenty-five

years ago. This Government has turned a deaf ear to those proposals—proposals which were not only made to this Government but to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. The East Indian Association, the Trade Unions and nearly every interested organisation working in the interest of the Colony made repeated representations, and those representations have fallen on deaf ears.

I am pained to listen to statements made from time to time not only by Government but by the Secretary of State for the Colonies always putting the blame on the people. It is time that this Government accepts responsibility, and it is time that the Secretary of State for the Colonies accepts responsibility for having done nothing. They have done practically nothing to give these people assistance. We have been told from time to time that the people are not willing to do this and to do that and to help themselves. I ask in the name of all that is right, all that is proper, is it the people's business to lay the land out, build roads, make waterways? Certainly not. Time and again the East Bank road from New Hope to Coverden has been closed by the Public Works Department to all kinds of traffic. It is essential that people should be able to travel in some form. Yet you are saying this Government is doing all it can, is doing its best in regard to food production. I say it is not. This Government will not do the right thing.

You now ask this Council to vote \$50,000. What can this Council do but vote it? I hope that in addition to voting this money this Council will insist that Government must do something. Is not that a clear charge against this Government, that you have done nothing for the people on the East Bank Demerara? The people who have written that communication to me are not inspired to ask that those exorbitant prices be given. Why? It is because these people's crops are flooded out and there are no proper means of transport, and in their opinion those prices quoted are not high. If there are a proper road and proper waterways, those prices can be reduced. But Government declines to act, and incidentally when a demand is made for a committee to be appointed, all “Yes” men of the Government

are put on that committee and the matter is left in abeyance. What is the Land Settlement Committee doing? I am a member of it but I would like to know that. Has this Government settled a single individual on any land in this Colony? It has failed completely to do so and, surely, responsibility must be placed somewhere—it must be placed on the executive officers of this Government and particularly those who are Members of this Council.

I read in the *Daily Chronicle* of July 11, a full report of a House of Commons debate in which the Secretary of State for the Colonies dealt with the question of poverty. The report is intialled B.P.I. and I take it that it is a correct report of what the Secretary of State said. Under the head "Poverty", the Secretary of State says this:—

"We must find out the causes of poverty in the Colonies. It is due in part to the mal-distribution of profits, but I shall be deceiving the colonial peoples if I gave the impression that to correct this can do more than touch the fringe of the problem of colonial poverty. That problem must be attacked mainly by improving the productivity of the colonial peoples themselves. They must make a greater effort, supplemented by research and more modern methods of production, for in the long run no peoples can expect to enjoy a high standard of living without putting in a high standard of effort and achieving a higher standard of efficiency. It cannot all be provided from outside help, but having said that I recognise that it is our responsibility to try to arouse in colonial workers the desire to make this greater effort by seeing that they get a fair reward for their work. The abolition of poverty is an educational, economic and cultural problem in one."

We find these statements appearing periodically—throwing the onus of poverty on the people—but I think this Government should give practical suggestions as to how these things should be done. The time has come when we must face this problem and we—the Members of this Council who have been elected by the people—have to make our position perfectly clear. Whether my brother Electives want to make their position clear is a matter for them, but I cannot co-operate with this Government in an attempt to deceive the

people and I do not believe the Secretary of State wishes to do so either. Government seem to be constantly saying "We cannot get this or that done", but the time has come when we must get something done. This Council is being asked to impoverish the people of the Colony still more by voting this money and while we must vote it, I say the time has come when we must keep pace with better means of production.

I do not know if my time—half an hour—is up, but I intend to make full use of it. I must say all I can in half an hour on account of this new Order, but we will talk about this limitation of speeches later on—possibly in February or March next year. Whilst I was in Montreal a few weeks ago, I found that we can sell our rice and our sugar to Canada and yet no efforts are being made in this direction.

The PRESIDENT: The hon. Member is wrong. We might be able to do it in future, but at the present moment we are under the direct control of the Combined Food Board and we cannot send food wherever we want. The hon. Member goes on saying "Send our rice to Venezuela and to Canada", although I explained to him that we are powerless to export to Venezuela or anywhere else except by the direct permission of the Combined Food Board. The time might come when the Combined Food Board would not be able to dictate to us, but at present we are under its control and authority.

Mr. JACOB: This Legislature is the supreme authority for the people in British Guiana.

The PRESIDENT: Not on the question of marketing food. So long as the Combined Food Board exists we have no voice in that matter.

Mr. JACOB: So long as this Legislature exists I would decline to take cognizance of any Food Board in any other part of the world. It is not correct to say that I said our rice should be sold to Venezuela—it is not absolutely correct. We import food from Canada and we have to pay for that food; why should we not have a reciprocal trade agreement with Canada so that we could sell her some of our pro-

duce in return? We have a reciprocal agreement but that is for the sole convenience of the other side. Why should we have to pay Canada for her goods and not ask her to buy our rice and other produce? It is a foolish arrangement if we have to be guided by some foreign power—no matter who it is—in the marketing of food. I am representing the poor, half-starved people here and I do not see why our rice should be sold by the Rice Marketing Board so cheaply in the West Indies—at some thing like 5 cts. per pound—while we have to pay dearly for Canadian goods here. What kind of hypocrisy is that?

I am proceeding to the United Kingdom shortly and I am going to see the Secretary of State in this and other matters. Your Excellency will get certain papers from me—I am collecting those papers—and I am going to ask the Secretary of State what he means when he makes these statements and yet allows certain people from outside to tell us what to do as regards earning our livelihood here. I am a single individual in this matter and, perhaps, I am going to be told that I am arrogant and rude, but I am not going to allow these people abroad to look at the poor people like those in Essequibo and the North West District and dictate how they should live. These people are in a most deplorable condition now—they cannot make two ends meet. All the members of the local Food Production Committee should be very disturbed over this matter, because I know that the position of the local producer is serious and is going to become worse unless we help him to market his produce to the best possible advantage.

MR. C. V. WIGHT: I do not propose to be long, but I think I may inform the hon. member—not as an inducement to favour local subsidisation but to respect the resolution which has been passed by this Council—that I do not think it can be disputed that the resolution passed today binds every hon. Member and that the moment it becomes a standing rule it binds every Member of this Council. It is natural that we must respect it if we want to be constitutional and respect the wishes of the majority. I think the hon. Member has

always indicated that we should give support to some of his thoughts, but some of his thoughts are not expressed with any care and perhaps the sentiments he expresses in the interest of the community are not worded as correctly as they may be. If, perhaps, he could restrain himself a little he might receive some support in many of the expressions that come from him. I refer particularly to his mention of the BPI *communiqué* and the remarks of the Secretary of State for the Colonies. If I interpret him as I think I should have done, then I would say that I entirely agree with him. It seems to me that we are coming down to mere verbiage and I think he would be well advised—if he would take sane, cautious advice—to word any despatch or communication to the Secretary of State along the lines suggested and I feel sure he would find agreement and support.

MR. JACOB: To a point of explanation; may I inform the hon. Member that I do not want any support from him. He has his own job to do and let him do it.

MR. WIGHT: What an hon. Member! I have not offered him my support. I do not want to be associated with the hon. Member too much, but I would like him to go right. His methods are so objectionable that they do not earn respect from me, therefore I am going to keep clear and it is not that I was offering my support to him, I have a lot to do than to offer support to the hon. Member in his methods which I deprecate and which I am entirely against. I have never been accustomed to his methods. However, if he thinks they would add to his usefulness let him continue. They most certainly would not find favour with many in his own Colony of British Guiana. However, let me return to what I was going to say. These words of the Secretary of State for the Colonies are important words. They are asking this Government to accept a most difficult task—to assume greater liability—and I think the point should be pressed that this Government should be given much more elasticity in forming its own policy than at present. This is just the sort of phraseology that is used by these gentlemen, be they of whatever party or colour—Conservative, Liberal or Labour,

This is just the sort of phraseology they use to create false impressions in the minds of the people in these Colonies. Indeed, one can hardly do anything more than take in one's breath on reading what the Secretary of State says in that paragraph. In the one breath he says we need capital and on the other side we see a policy of taxing the small capital we have so that we cannot get any benefit from it and cannot expand. It is evident that we need more capital for development here, but the Secretary of State for the Colonies has not given us our just due under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act. Nobody who was born in this colony and hopes to see it progress can deny that.

This is one of the Colonies expected to expand, possibly along the lines of food production generally, and yet we are left with a paltry sum in comparison with other places whose development, I submit, has practically reached the zenith. Those places have been given larger sums than we have got. Can it be said that with development this Colony cannot produce more food? We want assistance—we must have capital—and I do not think it is fair for hon. Members to look for money from the head of this Government or the Executive of the Government who happens to be in office, or any other Executive. Perhaps we might give some consideration to this point which was brought to my notice the other day—and I am afraid the Income Tax Authorities are looking to scramble every form of income tax, instead of investigating the possibility of giving some latitude in certain directions so as to allow development to flow on.

I refer to food production on rice estates, for instance. A man breaks in his rice lands and that immediately comes against him as capital expenditure. Do you mean to say the Income Tax Authorities cannot realise that for a couple of years they should give him some grace? There are other little things at which they can wink their eyes and I think Government is doing nothing besides paying officials in matters of this kind. As regards the motion before us, it seems to me that Government is powerless to do anything

else and I would ask hon. Members to pass it unanimously.

There is, perhaps, one other thing I might say; I had forgotten to mention it whilst developing the question of capital. It seems to me that the only thing the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Colonial Development and Welfare people are concerned with is the extension of the franchise. When they have given us that and they see what happens they would say:—"Go ahead, we are finished; the whole thing is in your hands." It seems to me that that is the only thing they are concerned with.

Mr. JACKSON : I rise to support the motion before the Council and I would like to say that I have been associated with the Food Production Committee from its inception and that there has always been an effort on the part of Government and that Committee to do the best they could for the farmers, in order to increase production and obtain better prices for their products. I am pained to hear Members speak derogatorily of the work done by the Food Production Committee and I am satisfied that in their heart of hearts they know that some good has been done for the people—for the producers and for those who are the consumers. I say it pains me to think of the manner in which certain Members endeavour to deride Government in and out of season, and also to close their eyes towards the attention Government has paid to this problem for the benefit of the people in general.

I want to say also that I was a little surprised at the remarks made by the hon. Member on my left (Mr. Edun) with respect to a matter which I thought should not have been mentioned in the Council at this stage. I understand it is a matter which is engaging departmental attention and I think it would have been very much better if he allowed the investigation which is being carried out at the present time to proceed and then, perhaps, if the results were found to be unsatisfactory this Council could have been approached. Now, there are two sides of every question and if one side is put and the other is not heard, then, perhaps, the opinion formed by those who have listened to the one side, might be dwarfed when the other side is heard.

As I understand it, sir, an individual was squatting on a portion of Crown land and he was instructed to approach Government in order that he might receive legal permission to occupy that land. I understand that he refused, definitely, to do so; and while I do not say that the move adopted to bring him to his senses is the correct one, I do think, sir, that when people act in defiance to the proper course directed to them, they should not be punished. It is this sort of thing that causes many people to become reckless—when they openly defy lawful authority and receive support from those who ought to know better. They then feel that they could always sit upon those whom they should respect and always do what they like. I hold no brief for the persons to whom reference has been made, because I feel that in the proper course of investigation they would be told whether they acted rightly or wrongly, but I do protest against hon. Members coming into this Council and making statements against Officers when those Officers are not here to defend themselves.

I think a matter such as this should have been mentioned to the proper authorities and that the result of the investigation should have been awaited. I do not think it is the best thing to come here and flaunt views before this Council—alleging this, that and the other against men who are not here to defend themselves. The incident referred to is one which should be inquired into, and not one which this Council should take up at the present time. I support the motion before the Council and hope sincerely that it would be passed because it is for the benefit of all concerned.

The PRESIDENT: Does any other Member wish to speak? Before asking the Colonial Secretary to reply perhaps he would prefer that I ask the hon. Member (Mr. de Aguiar) to do so because the matter is within his particular province—I would say that the accusation or the representation made by the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Edun, is of a very serious nature and I have listened carefully to what he has said. I have listened very carefully also to the last speaker, and much of what

he has said I am in agreement with. I do not think one should make capital of such incidents and use them as a stick for beating Government. We all make mistakes and if a mistake has been made I think it is a matter for Government to see that justice is done. I, personally, have no knowledge of the matter and so I have asked Mr. Laing (Commissioner of Local Government) to come. Perhaps he has first-hand knowledge already and if he says this incident did take place it would entirely be up to his Department to enquire into all the circumstances. I suggest that he be permitted to do so—if hon. Members desire that he should make enquiries—and inform me later.

The PRESIDENT: Mr. Laing, will you make a statement?

Mr. LAING: Yes, sir; I will.

Mr. EDUN: Before you ask Mr. Laing to speak, sir, in view of the fact that the last speaker made certain observations relating to the privileges of Members of this Council, I should like to refer to hon. Members to the directions given by the Chairman to the Advisory Committees. This is a document which ought to enlighten—

Mr. ROTH: I rise to a point of order. I understood that these directions of the Chairman to the Advisory Committees are distinctly confidential. They are really from the Governor to the Members of this Council and I say it is improper for any Member to get up and make reference to such a confidential document.

The PRESIDENT: The hon. Member need not have any fear. I do not know what the hon. Mr. Edun was going to say, but I do not think there should be any fear about his quoting from the document. The accusation or representation he has made is of so serious a nature that I have asked Mr. Laing to come and answer it. I have not got the instructions before me; are they confidential?

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: No, sir; there was nothing on the covering letter.

Mr. EDUN: I have the letter from Government here and it is not confidential.

The PRESIDENT: Does it really matter now? You see, I have Mr. Laing here.

Mr. EDUN: The question of the privilege of this Council having been raised.—

The PRESIDENT: I do not know that the question of privilege has been raised. Serious attention is being given to your report and I have got Mr. Laing here to reply to it.

Mr. LAING: I would like to say first of all, sir, that the man in question, Mr. Deonaraine, was and is in illegal occupation of the land which is part of the Government lands at Windsor Forest, Hague and La Jalousie. The drainage and irrigation of the lands have recently been reconditioned at a cost of some \$50,000 to this Colony. It is therefore desirable that we should maintain these estates in a proper condition. An important part of the administration system of these estates on which rice is planted is that there should be a proper system of irrigation. That system of irrigation depends on two things — the supply of water and the ability to conserve that water between the high level dams of what are known as the middle walk or irrigation trenches. In order to protect those dams there is a reserve on both sides of the irrigation trench dams on which no one is permitted to plant. If those reserves are planted the dams are weakened and the irrigation system which is necessary to the cultivation of rice may be destroyed. The reserve is also there for another purpose. When the irrigation trench is required to be dug there must be space on either side to place the spoil from the trench.

With no one's permission and against the advice of the Superintendent of the Government Estates, Mr. Deonaraine planted the reserve which is opposite to his rice bed. He was asked frequently to remove his crops. This he refused to do and continued to plant. This was going on since 1942, and eventually after persistently refusing to stop planting the District Commissioner issued him with a notice to leave the land at the end of June. He neglected to do so and, I regret to say, very drastic action has been taken to make him get off. My investigation stops there.

As to the illegality of the notice which has been issued, and the legal process necessary to remove Mr. Deonaraine from the land, I will naturally have to obtain the advice of the Law Officers of the Crown and, therefore, sir, I prefer not to make any further statement until I am advised as to the legal position. I may add that Mr. Edun rang me up on Tuesday afternoon and reported the matter to me. I informed him that I would be out of town on Wednesday with Your Excellency but I would have enquiries made and inform him of the results today. Unfortunately I did not get an opportunity to tell him the result of my investigation. He did tell me that some 600 trees were involved. That is, however, an over-estimate.

Mr. EDUN: That is not so. I went there myself and saw the stools myself.

Mr. LAING: The trees were counted by the Rangers on the estate, and there were only 150 stools of plantains and bananas. They have been reckoned by the Rangers, and that is the estimate I have been provided with today. I can only repeat, sir, that I prefer to have the legal position of this matter examined by the Law Officers of the Crown before any further action is taken in this matter.

The PRESIDENT: I thank you, Mr. Laing. I hope the hon. Member who brought this matter to the notice of Government would agree that this is a matter on which we should continue investigation. In due course the hon. Member will be informed and also this Council as to the result of the investigation. As Officer Administering the Government my sole concern is that justice should be done in the matter.

Mr. de AGUIAR: Sir, the hon. Members who have spoken on this motion have agreed entirely with it and have indicated their full support of the motion. The hon. Member for North-Western District, although he stated that he was in agreement with it, made some observations of a general character in that arrogant spirit we have all become so accustomed to see him in on certain occasions. I think it is just right and proper that I should deal with some of the points he endeavoured to

make. He started off by saying that the Government did not tackle the matter in a proper manner. Well, sir, to use a Churchillian phrase which I think most hon. Members have heard before, I think the hon. Member missed the bus. He waited until 1946 to accuse the Government of not tackling this matter in a proper manner.

Mr. JACOB: I rise to a point of correction! I have always said this food production business is not being tackled in a proper manner.

Mr. de AGUIAR: He may be right; he has always said Government is wrong. But that does not say he is right. I still maintain it is somewhat late in the day to say that. Government had been endeavouring ever since the war started to encourage food production in this Colony, and what is more important in the necessary evil is Government endeavoured to make a good job of it, it is true, without the assistance of the hon. Member. He wants to know what Government has done. I do not promise I will be able to give him at this juncture a complete record of Government's efforts in this direction, but whilst he was speaking I jotted down a few notes at random to remind him of some because there are several more which I am about to collect. In the first place Government had formed a Legislative Council Committee, and I challenge the hon. Member to say whether as a first step Government was not right in doing that. There were objectives behind it. It was felt, and quite rightly too, that after those Members of the Legislative Council Food Production Committee sat and considered the various projects, various ideas put up by Government Technical Officers, and agreed upon them, as those projects involved the expenditure of Government funds it was only reasonable to expect when the matter came up for discussion and approval in this Council those Members who had the opportunity of going into the details would support the measure in this Council. Then there was the formation of District Committees. I am sure the hon. Member is not serious when he says Government was not correct in establishing or creating those Committees in the several rural districts of the Colony. It gave the people

themselves an opportunity to make representations to the main body and, what is more, it gave them an opportunity to appeal for assistance, advice and encouragement which, I venture to say, despite what the hon. Member for North-Western District thinks about it, were very gladly given to them on every occasion.

On the other hand Government appointed a special Food Production Officer whose main duty was to go into the districts and give advice on matters of agriculture—the type of food crops to be planted — and to investigate applications for assistance and, as far as I know, no genuine application for such assistance either in one form or another has been refused. I challenge the hon. Member again to inform this Council of any question which may have been brought to his notice where an application of that kind was refused with no reasons for such refusal.

Mr. JACOB: Wrong method!

Mr. de AGUIAR: The hon. Member has retorted it is a wrong method. If that method is wrong, it is up to me to ask him if he has ever approached Government to show the right method. I am not aware of any effort on the part of the hon. Member to show this Government where those methods were wrong and, what is more, I have not yet heard either in this Council or outside the hon. Member putting up a method himself. It is very easy to come here and criticize. Is he going to deny that financial assistance was offered the people of the districts to increase their production? Is he going to deny that planting material was given to those people? Is he going to deny that in cases where drainage problems arise assistance in one form or another was given to them? If he denies all these things, then there is only one answer—the hon. Member is not familiar with the subject. It is a very simple matter for Members to rise in this Council and criticize in a destructive manner the efforts that Government is making to better the position in so far as the inhabitants of this Colony are concerned, more particularly the farmer. I am ashamed as a Member of this Council to have sat here this afternoon and listened to the hon. Member for North-Western District repeat

over and over again that this Government made very little effort and did not tackle the matter from a correct angle to assist the farming community of this Colony. Before I pass on I should perhaps add that even in the marketing end of their produce Government came to the assistance of these farmers.

Mr. JACOB: Wrong again!

Mr. de AGUIAR : I have heard him say "Wrong again", but I do not think he knows anything about it. I would like to ask him a few questions, as out of those questions we would see how much or how little he knows about the activity of the *ad hoc* Marketing Committee. I venture to suggest that he will not be able to cite a single instance of the work that is being done by that Committee. I do not think he knows anything about it. I challenge him to say he knows anything about it. I doubt very much whether he knows — he is very good at figures — how much it cost Government to keep that organisation in being. I do not think he knows even that, although the figures appear in Council every once in a while. Then, sir, he talks about representation made to him in regard to the prices. He talks about a letter sent to him and then quotes prices which he himself has admitted are exorbitant.

Mr. JACOB: Perhaps!

Mr. de AGUIAR : I do not know what the hon. Member means by "perhaps," when he himself admitted they were exorbitant. If he does not think that way, then I must give him this answer: There again he did not take the trouble to find out whether they are exorbitant or not before coming to this Council and making a loose statement in so far as the prices are concerned. I would like to tell him this: I have not had an opportunity to examine the prices he quoted, but I want him to know that they bear no relation whatever to the cost of production of the items he has named. I am sure he will agree with me that in examining the prices, which ought to be paid promptly after, such consideration will be an examination of the cost of production in order to ascertain whether the prices suggested

are true, fair and a reasonable return to the farmer. In making that examination I want him also to bear in mind that whilst we are here to do all we can for the farmer we must also bear in mind the position of the consumer. It is painful that an Elected Member like the hon. Member for North-Western District should give me cause to speak in this Council of one of my colleagues on such an important matter in the way I am doing. I do ask him whenever he wishes to criticize Government policy always to take care that he is fully seized with the facts and, what is more, that when he rises to speak in this Council he speaks not only with knowledge but with conviction. He must see that the words he is using on behalf of the persons who represent the matter to him are true, fair and properly put in this Council.

In the course of his remarks the hon. Member introduced the question of rice. I do not want to go into a rice debate. Your Excellency has told him about the Combined Food Board. With all due respect to the hon. Member I do not think he knows anything about it. Is the hon. Member aware of the fact that the Combined Food Board controls the goods that are exported from this Colony? I do not think the hon. Member is aware of that. He has probably heard of some system of control in Canada and elsewhere, and allows himself to believe that the Legislature of British Guiana are the only people with a voice in so far as the food situation of the world is concerned. I would like to tell him, sir, even the Houses of Parliament are concerned over the situation and have to bow in obedience to the decisions made by the Combined Food Board. But I want to say that nothing I have said must be interpreted to mean that representations cannot be made and representations in their proper and true perspectives. I would like to tell the hon. Member that representation in the form that he puts up to this Council today will not have the slightest hope of receiving any consideration whatever. This, perhaps, will illustrate to the hon. Member with greater force what I have been telling him. He knows what I am talking about now. I would just like to remind him that not many months ago when an offer was being

made to permit the purchase of flour from Canada on a commercial account as the result of this same Board, which he is talking so much about and knows so little about, it was found—

Mr. JACOB: May I rise to a point of correction ! I never referred to any Board. Your Excellency made reference to the Board and I replied.

Mr. de AGUIAR: Your Excellency gave a reply to the remarks made, but I am afraid the hon. Member did not accept it. That is why I am dealing with the matter. I am not surprised about that. It is not the first time. The hon. Member never accepts anything coming from the Chair. The hon. Member is quite aware of the fact that although the pressure was strong for flour to be imported on a commercial account the ultimate decision was that Government purchases had to continue. There was no option. Putting it bluntly, if this Legislature had met and passed a pious resolution that flour be imported into this Colony on a commercial account, the result would have been that there would have been no flour in this country. That is one instance which, I am sure, the hon. Member must be aware of. It is not a question of power. It is more a question of pooling of ideas, pooling of resources. This question of food is not a local matter. It is a world matter, and the operation of the Combined Food Board is only a pooling of ideas, a pooling of supplies, a pooling of resources and a distribution of those supplies which is very important. That is the reason why the hon. Member was told it would not be an easy matter for British Guiana rice to be sent to Canada or elsewhere; it is because British Guiana rice was apportioned to certain parts of the world. The hon. Member talks about "Yes" men. Again I am surprised at him. Is he suggesting that the hon. Member, Mr. Edun, is a "Yes" man ? I am not going to refer to myself. He may think I am a "Yes" man but, I think, he knows better than that. I would just ask him whether he seriously suggests the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Edun, is a "Yes" man.

Mr. JACOB: May I ask if he is on the Rice Board ?

Mr. de AGUIAR: If the hon. Member did not interrupt I was going to say he is a member of the Legislative Council Food Production Committee, the same Committee which we are discussing, and I am sure the hon. Member will agree that Member is not a "Yes" man. I would tell him quite frankly that as a member of that Committee myself I have listened with very great pride and pleasure to the representations made from time to time by that same Member, and I have also had the good fortune or misfortune, whichever does not matter much, of hearing him resist certain actions and plead the cause of the farmer. We get too much of this sort of thing in this Council. It has gone further now. It is no longer playing to the gallery. I have heard Members of this Council talk about another Member playing to the gallery. But it is no longer playing to the gallery in the case of the hon. Member for North-Western District. I venture to suggest very mildly that in his case it is a question of habit. He is so accustomed to seeing the bad things of life that he can look at any subject in this Council in that same way. It is, however, not too late, I hope, for him to mend his ways, and I once more—I think I have done it before—urge upon him—

Mr. JACOB: I never heard that since 1935.

Mr. de AGUIAR: I once more urge upon him the necessity of contributing to a debate in a more constructive manner, so that we may obtain some benefit from his intelligence, however much that may be.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Sir, I am indebted to the hon. Member for Central Demerara for his assistance in supporting this motion and replying to the debate. He dealt so very fully with the subject that I do not think there is much I can usefully add. I would however like to say just one word on the wider aspect of the matter. Although the war is over the shortage of food is still very much on, and there can be no sharper reminder that such exists than the recent decision of His

Majesty's Government of the United Kingdom for the rationing of bread. As the hon. Member for Central Demerara has said, our local problem is part of a wider problem of common interest. As long as the emergency continues, we must make for ourselves some sort of central control. I hope this motion has the unanimous support of this Council, and I proceed to formally move—

That with reference to the Officer Administering the Government's Message No. 5 of the 4th of July, 1946, this Council concurs with the recommendation of the *ad hoc* Marketing Committee that the Government Produce Depot minimum prices guarantee, as set out in the message, should be extended for a further year from July 15th, 1946, to July 14th, 1947.

The PRESIDENT: I will now put the motion to the Council. Those in favour say "aye" and those against say "no".

Motion carried unanimously.

ERECTOR. NEW POST OFFICE

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I beg to move the following motion standing in my name:—

"That, this Council approves of the erection of a building to accommodate the Post Office and other Government offices at a cost not exceeding \$700,000 and, further approves of the cost being met from the funds raised under the Public Loan Ordinance, 1945."

Your Excellency, this motion which now comes before Council for approval seeks to obtain a decision in regard to the erection of a building to accommodate the Post Office and other Government offices at a cost not exceeding \$700,000 and the provision of the necessary funds for financing the project. Hon. Members are aware that consequent upon the destruction of the General Post Office in the fire which occurred on February 23, 1945, several branches of the Post Office have had to be scattered over Georgetown, with a certain amount of consequential inconvenience to the public and the staff of the Post Office. I would say that both have appreciated the difficulties and have accepted them with a spirit of understanding.

The necessity for the erection of the Post Office as soon as possible has been emphasized again and again by hon. Members in this Council. At the present time the staff activities of the Post Office are spread over seven buildings which are:— the upper flat of the Regent Hotel where there are the Administrative Offices, the Accounts Branch, and the Stores Branch with records, stamps and postal orders; the Town Hall basement in which there is the Mails Branch, while in the shed in the Town Hall compound there is the Parcels Branch; the Cornhill Street Post Office to which the counters of the General Post Office were removed; and on the lower flat of this building— the Public Buildings— where the Savings Bank Branch is being carried on.

Perhaps it is desirable for me to inform hon. Members of the area of the General Post Office when the fire took place. The ground area was 25,336 sq. feet which included the floor area in a four-storeyed building, with a two-storeyed Parcels Branch as an annexe. The proposed area of the new building according to the Development Plan which is part of the Town Planning (Georgetown Fire Area) Ordinance, 1945, is 16,182.27 sq. feet. The Postmaster General has informed Government that he requires a ground area of 27,480 sq. feet, and a floor area of 36,000 sq. feet.

It will be appreciated that it is imperative from every point of view that the Post Office proper, so far as its activities are concerned, should be contained in a single flat for the convenience of both the public and the staff. The Postmaster General also emphasises the desirability of so constructing the building as to allow for any expansion in future. It will be within the recollection of hon. Members that in Section 4 of the Town Planning Ordinance provision was made whereby the Development Plan which was placed before hon. Members was approved and became the Development Plan of the area, while in Section 4 (2) it is stated that:

"(2) There shall be a re-planning scheme in respect of the Area, and for the purposes of this Ordinance the re-planning scheme which is marked or otherwise indicated on

the development plan is hereby approved as, and shall be, the re-planning scheme in respect of the Area."

I would emphasise that hon. Members have had the report of Messrs. Watkins and Partners, architects in their hands for the past week which I hope they have studied, and if I may be permitted to refer to this report — in connection with the advice given to Government—it would be seen in par. 1 that the area allocated to Government buildings in the approved plan contains two blocks, each 80 x 198.39 ft., separated by a roadway 38.9 ft. wide and bounded by North Street—the printed copy has Church Street as stated in the report, but this is a mistake and it should really be North Street on the North, Robb Street on the South, and by two streets on the East and West. Paragraph 2 of the Report states:

"2. Consultations with the Acting Postmaster General and the Director of Public Works indicate that it is essential for the proper planning of an adequate General Post Office that the sites allocated should be converted into one by the omission of the proposed separating east and west roadway."

I hope hon. Members would bear that in mind because it means that instead of having a roadway between the two sites for the use of the public, the whole area will be utilised for the erection of the Post Office and other offices which Government proposes to accommodate there. Paragraph 3 of the report goes on to say:—

"3. It was also suggested that instead of this roadway, the carriage-way of Church Street on the north of this site should be retained to allow circulation of traffic around the site, instead of being closed to vehicular traffic as in the approved plan (the sections of Church Street north of William Fogarty Ltd. and the Hand-in-Hand Insurance Coy. would still be blocked to vehicular traffic as in the approved plan)."

Then paragraph 4 says:—

"4. In order to provide a pavement to the east of William Fogarty Ltd., and to the east of the Hand-in-Hand Insurance Coy., which I consider most necessary, I suggest that the new roadways referred to above to the east

and west of the proposed Government building should be increased from 40ft. to 45 ft. in width with a carriage-way 25 ft. wide, and two pavements each 10 ft. wide. This will leave a site measuring 188.395 ft. by 198.95 ft., having a total area of 37,480 sq. feet."

Paragraph 5 says:—

"5. The Acting Postmaster General has prepared a schedule of his requirements, all of which must be accommodated on the Ground Floor. As a comparison, it is useful to know that the area of the General Post Office in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, is 39,980 sq. feet. This was designed 10 years ago and allows no opportunities for expansion."

The PRESIDENT: May I interrupt to say that the words "very approximate" (used in relation to figures in paragraph 6) mean "very close"? I do not know whether they really mean "very close", or "very loose". The point I am making is whether the architects mean that a very approximate estimate is very close or very loose.

Mr. FERREIRA: May I ask who drew up that estimate?

The PRESIDENT: The architects.

Mr. FERREIRA: I think it is the contractors' job to draw up an estimate.

The PRESIDENT: But it is the architects' job to give a preliminary estimate.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Reverting to the report without dealing with the figures in paragraph 5, it will be noticed that paragraph 6 gives details of the Buildings, Floor Space available, and the cost, at a total of \$700,000—the amount which has been stated in the motion now before the Council. A diagram accompanies the figures given. The report continues:—

"In my opinion it is out of the question to construct on such an important site a single storey building incapable of expansion upwards, which means that Scheme "A" is impracticable.

"It will be more economical to construct all three storeys (Scheme "C") in one operation, but if your Council cannot arrive at an early decision on this, it would be possible to

obtain tenders for a building as "B" which would be sufficient to induce Contractors to undertake it in conjunction with other buildings in the area, and in the meantime it would allow your Council time to come to a decision about the upper storeys before construction commences."

That is the report and I hope hon. Members have studied it with care and attention, because the question is asked:—"How far is this Council prepared to go having regard to the requirements of the Post Office in addition to an upper storey for use as Government offices, and whether this Council is prepared to erect a building of three storeys which would mean an expenditure of \$700,000 or a figure in that neighbourhood." As I have already pointed out, the change as set out in Messrs. Watkins and Partners' report means that there will have to be an amendment of the Town Planning Ordinance, 1945, owing to the decision to develop the Post Office area as a single unit—as one block—two sites in the area which were marked for the Post Office and for Government to deal with as they think fit.

In addition to that, consideration will have to be given by hon. Members to the question of the uses of the building—whether you wish it to be restricted to Post Office activities only, or whether it should be enlarged for the purpose of housing other offices which are at present scattered over the Town. Hon. Members should consider it desirable now that you are building not only a Post Office in keeping with your requirements, but you are also utilising a very valuable site in this area for the purpose of housing other offices and so releasing those buildings now occupied as offices for other purposes. Another point is whether you would have a building of two storeys or of three storeys. You will see that figures have been given for both alternatives. His Excellency has indicated that firm figures have not been given, but these figures may be taken as an indication of the probable cost of the buildings.

The second part of the motion deals with the method of financing the project and thus the approval of the Council is sought with regard to the method of obtaining the funds. Hon. Members are

aware of the fact that under Ordinance No. 5 of 1945—the Ordinance making provision for the raising of a loan not exceeding \$5,000,000—the money raised could be appropriated and set aside for the purposes mentioned in the Schedule. Hon. Members would know, therefore, that they have to give their approval for expenditure on any other public service in connection with this loan.

Perhaps it will not be inappropriate if I remind hon. Members that some time ago—in 1943, I believe—there was a Committee of which the hon. Members for Western Essequibo and Central Demerara, along with the Postmaster General, Mr. Sharp, were members, and they pointed out the necessity for changes along the lines now being recommended by Messrs. Watkins and Partners. Among the things they said was that the General Post Office should occupy the whole site and that the staff and the public should be provided with separate entrances. It will therefore be seen that consequent upon the fire a new Post Office is required and it is desirable that when we build we should endeavour to satisfy the requirements of the Colony with a view to any possible extension. We should also endeavour from the economic point of view to provide suitable accommodation for certain other offices which, as I have said before, are housed all over the City. It would be a matter for Government to decide what other offices should be accommodated in this new building.

I think I have put before hon. Members all the essential points in connection with this matter and it is only a question, I suggest, as to whether this Council is prepared to go to the extent of \$700,000 and agree that the commitment be made under the Public Loan Ordinance, 1945, in which case the decision would, of course, have to be approved by the Secretary of State for the Colonies. With these observations, sir, I beg to move this motion.

Mr. WOOLFORD seconded.

The PRESIDENT: I would just like to add for the information of Members that Government propose to employ these particular architects because the firm is being employed by other people who are

building in the Area. Hon. Members would readily appreciate the advantage of having one architect doing all the buildings. Mr. Gray who is the representative of this firm proposes to leave for London on July 28 in order to discuss with interests there the type of building we want and what contractors should undertake the work. It is very desirable that Mr. Gray should have some idea of what Government wants in the shape of a new Post Office and I am asking hon. Members to decide this afternoon or tomorrow and give Government a definite idea as to how much money they want to spend, how that money should be found, and whether the Post Office should be a three-storey building or a two-storey building. It is quite obvious that no Member would want a one-storey building, because all the other buildings are going to be two-storey ones and it would be more economical for us to put up a two-storey building while we are about it. A post office in order to be efficient must be accommodated on the ground floor. A one-storey building of sufficient size to accommodate the post office must be an expensive building because of the foundations which cover a large area. It is your town and your post office and once you have constructed good foundations covering a wide area, you have provided a building which can be made into a two-storey or a three-storey building at will, and in accordance with your needs. I do not want to go over what the Attorney-General has stated. I just want to summarize the position.

Mr. FERREIRA : I think, sir, the remarks you have just made certainly put the correct view on the situation.

Mr. EDUN: With all due deference to the hon. Member, sir, I beg to second the motion.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: It has been already seconded.

Mr. FERREIRA: What I am looking at is that this is one of the best sites in Georgetown and although I am not a resident of this City it is the capital of the Colony and if a building is to be erected I think the best possible economic use should be made of this site. We have

heard about buildings of two or three storeys, but I would go even further and say let us have one of four or five storeys if that is possible.

The PRESIDENT: That is not possible.

Mr. FERREIRA: Then if we can go up to three storeys we should go the limit. I think this a very good chance to do our best, so that out of the ruins of the fire we could build something of which Georgetown and the Colony as a whole would be proud. I think every hon. Member should address his mind to this fact and see whether we should not make the best possible use of this site and erect a three-storeyed building. As regards the question as to how the project should be financed, I do not know what is at the back of Government's mind but my view is that the money question is a secondary one. If Government spend \$1,000,000 they will get support from us as long as we are satisfied that the money has been well spent. I am heartily supporting this motion.

Mr. JACOB: I think it is the consensus of opinion in this Colony that we want a Post Office worthy of the name of British Guiana and that it should not be in any way inferior to the Post Office in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad. I should certainly like Government to approve of a plan and get local contractors to put up this building. I think we have men in the Colony who can put it up and I am looking forward to the day also when local contractors would do all the work for the Colony, so that even if money is overspent the Colony would get some of it back through income tax and other taxes.

The PRESIDENT: Does the hon. Member want local contractors to build the Post Office then?

Mr. JACOB: Contractors; not the Public Works Department. When the Public Works Department gives out jobs we do not know what happens. A reliable firm of contractors could be asked and we might be able to tell whether they made much profit out of the job. I should sug-

gest that the design and plans be accepted and local contractors be given an opportunity to tender and do the work. I think the Architect, or the representative of the Architect, is going to London to get the design and plans. It has taken us seventeen months—my hon. Friend has a long life to live, but I have a short one; the hon. Member for Central Demerara simply glories in delays—for this Council to decide and erect a building worthy of the name of British Guiana. I see that several buildings have been erected on this site in the fire destroyed area and people are carrying on business there, and that you have the General Post Office distributed all over the City at places named by the hon. Mover of the motion and we are paying a large sum in rent for those places. I would like to be advised when building operations will begin.

The PRESIDENT: I cannot tell you. The building operations cannot begin any minute, but directly this Council has reached a decision I will telegraph the Secretary of State for approval. We will then decide on the contractor and if one contractor is appointed to undertake all the buildings in the burnt out area it should be cheaper. I do want a decision on this question this afternoon if possible.

Mr. JACOB: I would like to know when building operations will commence.

The PRESIDENT: I cannot tell you.

Mr. JACOB: Is the site available? When is it estimated to complete the building? We are paying a large sum in rents and, I think, the building should be constructed in such a manner that it can be occupied before finally completed. I think the building is going to be a large one to accommodate not only the Post Office but other offices. The Post Office should vacate the premises it now occupies as soon as possible and enter its new premises. I have no desire to speak at length about it. We are all agreed that it is necessary to have this Post Office building over, as the people have been greatly inconvenienced. The quicker the matter is decided the better it is for all of us.

Mr. LEE: What I would like to find out is this: We are going to borrow money. What interest charges will we have to pay?

The PRESIDENT: It is borrowed already.

Mr. LEE: What I would suggest—I hope my fellow Members would agree—is that we have a three-storied building. Let us take the East Coast Demerara. If a person has to do business at the District Commissioner's Office he has to go to Enmore; if he wants to see the Superintendent of Police he has to go further up the Coast, and if he wants to see the Magistrate or to do business at the Magistrate's Office he has to go to Vigilance. It is for that reason I would suggest that a three-storied building be erected so that we can have in Georgetown other essential offices housed with the Post Office in the same building, whereby persons having to do business can easily visit the several Government offices opened to the public in a general way. In that way not only will you have a building of which British Guiana can be proud, but persons from abroad can do much of their business with several Government offices in the same building rather than to be walking all around the City to the several Government offices. I support the motion.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: I am glad to see there are two Members advocating a three-storeyed building, and I hope there will be several more supporters. It is my personal view, I have very strong views on it. I think we should have a three-storeyed building, as it is only a matter of an extra \$100,000. It seems to me that if we are going to have a building worthy of being called a Government building, we should have a huge structure which would strike people immediately on approaching it. We must remember there are quite a few offices which are at the present moment housed all over the City. These can be removed into this one building and so release for the purpose of residence the houses they now occupy. Taking a progressive view for the future a three-storeyed building is essential for the Colony.

Mr. EDUN: I took the opportunity to second this motion for the reason that

when a visitor comes to this country and sees the Public Buildings for instance, we can take some pride in its architecture. The same thing can be said of the Victoria Law Courts and the Magistrates' Court. I think the General Post Office building should be a landmark in Georgetown. I can remember visiting Martinique in 1928 and seeing the Post Office there. It was a monument of architecture and one of which the people of Martinique can justly be proud.

The PRESIDENT: Was it not the Court of Justice building in Martinique?

Mr. EDUN: It was a unique building, sir. I assume that this new building will be of stone.

The PRESIDENT: Reinforced concrete.

Mr. EDUN: I think we ought to take into consideration not only the architecture and the monetary value but the utility, accommodation, etc. afforded. I think we should add another \$300,000 and so make the amount \$1,000,000 which we would put as the ceiling expenditure. After all, the money is coming from a loan. It is capital expenditure. The value will be there in stone and concrete. I think we ought to take the step forward and do something of which this Colony can be proud.

Mr. GONSALVES: I am supporting this motion. I do think, all things considered the building should be a three-storeyed one. Members have already made the point which I had in mind, and that is the prevention of the distribution of Government Offices all over the town as exists at the present time. A very important Department, which to my mind is not properly situated, is the Education Department. I think that one of the floors of the new building may well be made available for that Department. Whilst I am supporting a three-storeyed building I have not seen or known what the design is, but I do hope there will be a lift installed. I am sure some of us here will find it difficult to go to the Director of Education on the third floor of the building. A lift will be useful for that purpose.

With regard to the motion, the hon. Member who has just taken his seat spoke of a ceiling figure, which reminds me that the term was used recently in regard to the Wortmanville Housing Scheme. In this motion the ceiling figure of \$700,000 is given. Hon. Members have all had experience of contractors and their figures and will probably see that this \$700,000 is not a ceiling but a ceiling *pro forma* to be put in order later. If we are to get a proper building constructed, if it is to comply with what I have in mind, that will be found to be so. I am sure Government will not freely pay for something that does not justify the expenditure, nor will this Council. I do think we should endeavour to have a building befitting the City. If we are going to erect on that site the sort of building or buildings we had there previously, it will not be so favourably accepted by everyone. I support the motion and agree to the money being spent in erecting a three-storeyed building.

The PRESIDENT: I think I ought to make it clear that \$700,000 is for a two-storeyed building. How can hon. Members tell Government they want a two or three-storeyed building unless they have some idea of the cost? I am not going to fool Members by saying if they want a three-storeyed building they can get it for \$700,000.

Mr. GONSALVES: I indicated in my remarks that probably the amount may be increased.

Mr. CRITCHLOW: I am strongly supporting a three-storeyed building. I am very anxious to see our Post Office building looking probably better than that in Great Britain, even if I have to put up the money.

Mr. de AGUIAR: Your Excellency, I think that there is need for haste in making this decision and I would be the last person to retard the progress of the negotiations which I know are now proceeding in regard to the rebuilding of the Post Office. But there is one point I am very much concerned about, and I am going to advise caution. Although we may reach a decision on the principle, I still consider it advisable to say that some caution should be exercised in regard not

only to the size of the building but the height of the building. I know that the majority of Members who have spoken so far have expressed the wish that the Post Office building to be constructed should be a three-storeyed one. For myself I would also like to see not only a three-storeyed building but, perhaps, a five-storeyed building, if it is practicable, but I am a little bit doubtful as to whether it would be wise, having regard to the condition of our soil, to construct of reinforced concrete a building three storeys high. In fact there are no designs so far as I know. I have not seen the papers indicating the height of the proposed building and, for that matter, the weight of the building. In fact there are no technical details. Not that I am an engineer nor am I posing to be one, but I do know that the experience in constructing buildings of reinforced concrete in this Colony has not been a very happy one. Whilst it is true that engineering difficulties in this modern world are things that can be overcome, I still think it is necessary to advise caution.

Your Excellency has got the consensus of opinion of Members of this Council that it is desirable that the Post Office building to be constructed should be a three-storeyed one, but I do urge that the best possible advice that can be obtained be secured on this question of construction before a final decision is made as to whether the building should be of two or three storeys. I am not going to say that the three-storeyed building is the best. My own view at the moment, perhaps is that a two-storeyed building is the better one, but I know I am in the minority. I want to repeat, I am not happy having regard to our own local conditions—the type of our soil. I am very unhappy in reaching a decision myself as to whether I can from my seat get up here and say quite definitely that the Post Office building should be constructed as a three-storeyed one. I wish it to be clearly understood that if it is at all possible to do so economically and without any risk of—I would not like to say destruction—

The PRESIDENT : Subsidence !

Mr. de AGUIAR : And things of that sort, by all means let us have it. I am

in entire agreement that the fullest use should be made of the site that is available, but I will not blind my eyes to what I know exists in this Colony as regards structures of that kind. I repeat we should proceed with caution before making a final decision. In other words, what I am saying is this : So far as I am concerned Government should proceed cautiously but make such arrangements that are necessary to have this Post Office built as soon as possible. I know it is not possible for Government to proceed without the necessary authority from this Legislature, and as a Member of this Council I am prepared on this occasion to say to Government "Go ahead and do the best thing possible." But to ask me to express an opinion as to whether it should be a two or three-storeyed building I regret sincerely I am unable to give expression to that view. On the other hand I repeat, Government should make the fullest use possible of the land available, but I am afraid I cannot do more than say "Go ahead with the project and come back and report to me."

Mr. GONSALVES : On a point of explanation! I hope that I am not being inveigled by this Government, following the remarks of the hon. Member who has just taken his seat, to vote for a motion of \$700,000 to erect a three-storeyed building when Government knows it is not practical to put up a three-storeyed building.

The PRESIDENT : I take strong exception to that. Do you think I can sit in this Chair and allow that? The word "inveigle" is not a happy one.

Mr. GONSALVES : I assume Government has been advised by the Architect that it is possible to put up a three-storeyed building. If that is so, then I withdraw the word "inveigle". But I do say, if Government is going to encourage me into voting \$700,000 when it is within the knowledge of Government that it is not possible to put up a three-storeyed building, it is not correct. I make this remark because of the remarks of the hon. Member for Central Demerara, who is not only a Member of this Council but a Member of the Executive Council as well.

The PRESIDENT : I think I had

better clear this matter up. The Architect wants to know whether the design and plans should be for a one, two or three-storeyed building. In asking that question he has told us that in his opinion a three-storeyed building is perfectly all right, but he cannot say further than that. He has told us he is going to employ—and we are going to pay the fees—a building soil expert, Dr. Terzaghi of Harvard University, to come down here to make the soil analysis and advise whether a three-storeyed building can be properly constructed on the site. All of that will be gone into. No one can say at present what the final decision will be. The Architect cannot put pen to paper on the plans until he knows what we want. If we want a three-storeyed building he will design it, provided it can be erected. I hope hon. Members understand the position now.

Mr. GONSALVES : If that is so, then there will be an additional expense and the figure in the motion is not a definite one. That is all I want to know.

Mr. JACOB : May I move a slight amendment to the motion? That the words "a three-storeyed building" be inserted. I suggest that, so that we will know exactly what we are voting for, I can see no difficulty in having a three-storeyed building there. I think where the Royal Bank of Canada is at the present time there was a three-storeyed building.

Mr. de AGUIAR : To a point of information! It is not a three-storeyed reinforced concrete building.

Mr. ROTH : Your Excellency has taken the wind out of my sail. It was my intention to make that explanation you have just made. I was going to say that it is rather amusing in a way that the hon. Member for Central Demerara has more than once accused Members for getting up and speaking without a knowledge of what they are speaking about. He has been hoisted with his own petard in this case.

Dr. SINGH : Since the Post Office building will take up a large area, I feel it should be a three-storeyed building because it can house many of the Departments which are now housed in private buildings.

We must have a long range policy. Perhaps the hon. Member on my left, the hon. Member for Central Demerara, feels this three-storeyed building may collapse. But, as you say, sir, the experts are going to see that the soil is made good enough or the foundation made so good as to make the erection possible. I support a three-storeyed building.

Mr. THOMPSON : Last but not least I rise to support a three-storeyed building. I am not here on an electioneering platform, but I am delighted to find Members expressing views that I have submitted to an important gentleman in the country along similar lines. I have done it on the quiet because I think there is necessity for it. I do not see why the Director of Medical Services should have his office at the Victoria Law Courts and the hospital to be where it is. I have communicated my observation to that gentleman, and it is time we get these Government Offices together and so prevent a person having to wander about the town when doing business at those offices. You have the Lands and Mines Department housed at the Victoria Law Courts, the Agricultural Department in another building at the other end of the town, the Geological Department in another building in another part of the town. It is time that we have these offices in one building and that as early as possible. Having the Post Office and other Government offices housed under one roof will be a definite improvement to the City. I support that most heartily. I do not question the suitability of the soil because I cannot think that Government will venture out on such a large expenditure without making sure that everything will work right. I have the fullest confidence in Government and I support the erection of a three-storeyed building.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL : I think the point raised by the hon. Member who suggested an amendment to make provision for a three-storeyed building, particularly having regard to the other observations of other hon. Members, has been met. It is not desirable to include that in the motion because you will in effect be tying yourself down to a three-storeyed building. The whole point is, as this Council has now given expression to the view that

it is desirable to have a three-storeyed building, the project will be pursued from that point of view, but Government will have to obtain expert advice, as Your Excellency has said. If you tie the motion down to a three-storeyed building and the expert advice goes against it and you have to erect a two-storeyed building instead, the matter will have to be brought back to this Council. The views of Members of this Council are that a three-storeyed building should be erected and, I take it, Your Excellency will communicate that as an expression of views to the Architect who will prepare the plan of the building accordingly. Therefore, I do not think it is necessary to put that in the motion. The record is there of the views of all hon. Members in connection with that.

The object of this motion is to get the views of this Council in so far as whether we should go further than a one or two-storeyed building. This Council has expressed itself in favour of a three-storied building, and the project will be proceeded with along that line. I accordingly suggest to the hon. Member for North-Western District that it is not necessary to proceed with his amendment.

So far as the cost goes, it will be appreciated the expression used in the motion is "at a cost not exceeding \$700,000." I will ask leave to amend that to say "estimated to cost \$700,000". That will be in accordance with the report which hon. Members have before them and which I have referred to. With your permission, sir, I ask that the words "at a cost not exceeding" be amended to read "estimated to cost."

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion amended accordingly.

Mr. JACOB : I have always held the view that we must be somewhat precise

and definite in what we do. This Legislature is doing something today. Next year we do not know what the position will be. If there is an indefinite statement as to the cost and size of the building and a one or two-storeyed building is put up you will be able to say "When the Legislature discussed this matter it did not make a definite statement and it was impossible to act on the debate."

The PRESIDENT : While I appreciate the hon. Member's point we would not get unanimity if he wants his amendment made. If you want unanimity my advice is to leave the motion as it is. If you want the amendment we may have to sit tomorrow.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT : Now that Government has the expression of opinion of this Council that we want a three-storeyed building it will ask the Architect to provide for it. As a matter of public importance we want the best for this country. Are we going to be told now that the soil here is so bad that as soon as you build on it the structure is going to be washed away? We should think of the country in better terms. This is an economical motion.

The PRESIDENT : I advise the hon. Member for North-Western District not to press his amendment and in return I give the assurance that the Architect will be asked by this Government to make plans for a three-storeyed building.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL : I now, formally, move that the motion as amended be put.

Motion as amended put, and carried unanimously.

The Council then adjourned until Wednesday, 31st July, 1946, at 2 p.m.