

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Thursday, 11th November, 1937.

The Council met at 11 a.m., His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government, Mr. E. J. WADDINGTON, C.M.G., O.B.E., President, in the Chair.

PRESENT.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, (Acting) (Major W. Bain Gray, C.B.E.).

The Hon. the Attorney-General, (Mr. J. H. B. Nihill, K.C., M.C.).

The Hon. F. Dias, O.B.E. (Nominated Unofficial Member).

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

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

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

The Hon. F. J. Seaford, O.B.E., (Georgetown North).

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

The Hon. M. B. Laing, District Commissioner, East Demerara.

The Hon. G. O. Case, Director of Public Works and Sea Defences.

The Hon. B. N. V. Wase-Bailey, Surgeon-General (Acting).

The Hon. L. G. Crease, Director of Education (Acting).

The Hon. H. P. Christiani, M.B.E., Commissioner of Lands and Mines.

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

The Hon. J. Eleazar (Berbice River).

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

The Hon. H. C. Humphrys (Eastern Demerara).

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

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

The Hon. Peer Bacchus (Western Berbice).

The Hon. S. H. Seymour (Western Essequibo).

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

The Hon. T. Lee (Essequibo River).

The Hon. H. G. Seaford, O.B.E., (Nominated Unofficial Member).

The Hon. W. S. Jones (Nominated Unofficial Member).

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

MINUTES.

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on the 10th November, as printed and circulated, were confirmed.

PAPERS LAID.

The following documents were laid on the table:—

Report of the Director of Education for the year 1936.

Correspondence relating to the Coffee Industry of the Colony (C.S.M.P. No. 142).

(Colonial Secretary).

ORDER OF THE DAY.

ESTIMATES, 1938.

The Council resolved itself into Committee and resumed consideration of the Estimates of Expenditure to be defrayed from revenue for the year ending 31st December, 1938.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON COFFEE INDUSTRY.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Major Bain Gray): Before we proceed to discuss the Estimates I would like to refer to the subject of the coffee industry. Certain correspondence was laid on the table to-day, and the view of Government is that that correspondence should be referred to a Select

Committee of this Council to discuss it and make recommendations. I therefore move the following motion:—

That a Select Committee be appointed to consider the proposals relating to the Coffee industry of the Colony which are contained in correspondence (C.S.M.P. No. 142) which has been laid on the Table, to advise whether any financial assistance should be given to this industry and, if so, what form such assistance should take.

Mr. DIAS seconded.

Motion put, and agreed to.

THE CHAIRMAN: A Select Committee will be appointed, and I will announce the personnel of the Committee later.

ANALYST.

Item 9—Allowance to officers for analysis of milk on Sundays and Holidays—\$350.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I am of the opinion that \$300 is quite enough to remunerate these gentlemen. I do not think it is necessary for them to work every Sunday in the year in order to be able to analyse milk samples. I do not know that officers receiving monthly salaries should receive \$25 per month roughly for analysing milk samples. There is certainly a lot of talk about bad milk, but this is not the way to stop it. If the Police and the Magistrates would respond and get equal with those people this expenditure would not be necessary. If a man who adds water to his milk was given a couple of months in gaol there would be no need to spend so much money. This extra money paid for the analysis of milk is unfair to the general taxpayer. These officers are paid salaries, and when they have to do extra work they must get extra pay. I think there should be peremptory imprisonment in cases of milk adulteration, at least for the second offence. Now there is a sort of hide-and-seek between the offenders and the Police. I hate flogging, because I consider it the most barbarous method known, but some stringent punishment should be meted out to those offenders. Children are dying slowly from starvation on account of the adulterated milk they drink. I move that the item be reduced to \$300.

Mr. LEE: I have already expressed my views in Select Committee, and seeing that

an additional assistant has been added to the Department, I certainly endorse the remarks of the hon. member.

Item put, and agreed to.

AUDIT DEPARTMENT.

Mr. JACOB: I would like to make a few remarks under this head. I understood in Select Committee that the report of the Auditor was not yet issued. I think that is very undesirable for many reasons. I thought this Government was being run on business lines, but here we are considering estimates for next year and we have not got the Auditor's report and his comments on the expenditure for this year. Last year I read the Auditor's report with very great interest, and I was able to make comments and recommendations. I am glad to see that several of those recommendations have been carried out, and I hope with benefit to the revenues of the Colony. Business concerns have to submit their audited accounts to the Income Tax Office before April 30, and here we are on November 11 without the Auditor's report on the accounts of the Colony for last year. It is very undesirable, and that is another reason why the Estimates should not be proceeded with, because Government itself is not ready. We should have the opportunity of scrutinizing—that is our main function—and seeing that things are in order. I look upon the Auditor as one of the persons to help me in following the accounts of Government. It is very regrettable that his report is not available, and I hope in future it will be published long before the annual session starts. I know that things are not going right in some departments, and I am strongly urging on Government that the Auditor's report should be laid on the table to dispel doubts in our minds. I have serious doubts on very many things, because very many officers believe they can do what they like. They do not realise that they are public servants and that their accounts must be scrutinized.

Mr. LEE: I suggest that Government consider the question of having a member of the staff of the Audit Department stationary at New Amsterdam. In my opinion it would save expenditure on subsistence and other allowances. In addition I suggest that the Audit Department should audit all village accounts and those

of other departments over which Government has some control. I think the public would be more satisfied if such audits were carried out by the Audit Department.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: With regard to the main question raised by the hon. member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob), I can assure the Council that the Auditor's report is in process of being printed. It was actually being printed when the Select Committee was sitting, and will be laid before the Council at the very first opportunity.

COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I must confess that after all the years I have been here I am yet to find out the ways of Government. Somebody makes a suggestion, somebody else finds it a wise suggestion and then forthwith Government puts it into execution and comes to the people's representatives to provide the money. This item (a) is the essence of Crown Colony Government. We pay taxes, Government spends the money and we have not a word to say about it. This is a clear example of that. Some little time ago there was some unrest among the labourers in this Colony—nothing of very great importance, because it concerned only a few individuals here and there, and wherever there was anything beyond the ordinary it was because some people made it so. The result was that a Commission was asked for, and I think its decision has very much to do with this proposed appointment of a Commissioner of Labour and Assistant Colonial Secretary for Local Affairs.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think the hon. member should wait until we reach that item.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I am sorry, sir, I am two pages ahead. (laughter).

THE CHAIRMAN: In view of that the hon. member will not repeat what he has said. (laughter).

Mr. ELEAZAR: I will continue where I stopped. (laughter).

Item (o)—Duty allowance to officer performing the duties of Clerk of the Legislative Council, \$240.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move the deletion of the item which has already been transferred to the head Legislature.

Motion for the deletion of the item put, and agreed to.

COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE—LABOUR, LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND IMMIGRATION.

Item (a)—Commissioner of Labour and Assistant Colonial Secretary for Local Affairs, \$4,320.

Mr. ELEAZAR: When those who asked for the Labour Commission got what they wanted they thought they did not want it at all, and they deserted the enquiry, allowing the virtual defendants to appear in the role of complainants and get a decision in their favour. That decision is largely responsible for this head being found on the Estimates to-day. One can hardly conceive of the necessity that exists for the appointment of a Commissioner of Labour and Assistant Colonial Secretary for Local Affairs in a country where there are all free labourers. Capital will exploit labour where it can. In every country where there is free labour Government steps in and prevents an employer from exploiting his servant, even though he is under contract, by fixing a minimum wage by legislation, and the hours of labour. Government has not introduced in this Council a Bill to fix a minimum wage for labour and the hours of work, conditions which have been asked for by those who are most concerned but, I must confess, not in a constitutional way. A paternal Government should not, however, wait until labourers come and ask for those things. If Government had been doing its duty in that way we would not have been asked to vote nearly \$16,000, but to pass a Bill instead. The Attorney-General would have put a Bill through in a jiffy, because these are not the days when we have to wait for years to get a Bill through.

We had and still have a skeleton of the Immigration Department. Why couldn't that Department be charged with doing work of this nature and somebody appointed who is capable of doing this work? I know a gentleman, and Government ought to know its servants. I have named him before, but I will not name him to-day. Make one Colony Commis-

sioner, a man who would be able to pull his weight, and let him keep in touch with the village communities and let Government know what is transpiring. But Government has decided to create a separate department with a Commissioner of Labour to judge between the labourers on the estates and their employers on matters in which he will be told that the labourers are under contract. No man has the right, contract or no contract, to make another work 16 hours a day for a single day's pay, and unless there is legislation limiting the hours of labour that will continue, and of what use will this Commissioner of Labour be?

It is a palpable untruth to say that there was no reduction in wages. I should say it was prevarication of the worst kind. It is true that the day's wage was not very much reduced, but a man could only get three days' work in a week, which made a good deal of difference. That was the trouble. Even those who were employed had to live on a mere pittance—less than half of what they earned before. All the remedy Government could find after an elaborate enquiry, for which the exploiters paid handsomely, is the appointment of a Labour Commissioner with an elaborate staff. In the country districts there are no labour unions with whom the Labour Commissioner will be able to deal. He will have to go to the managers of the estates and ask how the labourers are getting on. It is stated in the explanatory memorandum on the Estimates:—

“This officer will organise and supervise a labour inspectorate and take over such functions of the existing Immigration Department as are still statutorily necessary under the Immigration Ordinance, Chapter 208, and at the same time will assist the Colonial Secretary especially in his capacity of Chairman of the Local Government Board, by dealing with the bulk of the questions arising in connection with village and country districts administration.”

An Inspector of Labour—what does that mean? What is he going to inspect—what Government has not got? Somebody in his wisdom suggested that we should have a Commissioner of Labour. Where is the need for one to-day, with the Local Government Board decentralised and its officers in different parts of the Colony? I certainly cannot agree that there is necessity for this special department. The officer who is capable of doing this work—and there is more than one such officer in the

Government Service—should supervise the other District Commissioners and be able to advise Government on labour matters. We are getting too many petty departments which grow and become very expensive in the end. They grow out of proportion to their usefulness to the community, and that is the reason why we are paying such heavy taxation. I am very much disappointed over this attitude of Government in trying to foist upon us another department and give it a misnomer. The Select Committee seems to have passed this proposal without challenge because something plausible was put to them.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The hon. member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar) took such a flying start of two pages that he managed to anticipate some of the things I was going to say. I am sorry he did not help us in Select Committee, because the general aspects of the matter were very well threshed out. Perhaps I may dispose of one minor point, and that is the title of the officer who is to be in charge of the department. It was criticised in Committee, and perhaps elsewhere, on the ground of being rather cumbersome. It is certainly not a very easy name to say at one time, and Government proposes to shorten it to Commissioner of Labour and Local Government, which we think expresses in the shortest terms the functions of this officer.

On the general question whether this Government and this Colony need a Labour Commissioner I do not think there is any serious division of opinion. There was very little division of opinion in Select Committee, and from such discussions as I have heard outside I think all those interested in the progress and welfare of the working classes are agreed that some department of this nature is essential. It is an anachronism under modern conditions for Government to be without a department of this particular kind. There is at no point in the present organisation of Government any officer or group of officers whose particular concern it is to deal with labour questions as they arise. Those of us who have lived some time in the Colony are inclined to think of labour questions as referring only to the working of the sugar estates. It is true, but true only up to a very definite

point. Modern conditions of labour have gone beyond that, and we now have in our community people working in other occupations and under other conditions who require the help, assistance, and guidance of Government and of its officers.

For many years there have been a considerable number of Labour Conventions which have been the subject of discussion among the nations of Europe, and which must be given effect to in the Colonies of the Empire if the British Empire is to continue as a sound organisation. I am not suggesting that everyone of these modern pieces of labour legislation should be transported here, but even under our more liberal conditions we feel sure that the best opinion in the Colony is that we must have someone who will study labour conditions and advise Government as to how far those changes, which are very important in the modern world, should be transferred to the daily life of this Colony. The question was raised in Select Committee, and has been raised again in this Council, as to how far this new department should be a separate department of Government. There are arguments on both sides. At the present moment the opinion of Government is that it is best associated with the main organisation of the central Government, the Secretariat. It will be a distinct branch of the Secretariat, but it is essential that the Colonial Secretary, who is directly responsible to the Governor for the administrative side of the Colony's affairs, should be in the closest possible touch with this new officer, and the intention is that he should work directly under him and be his principal adviser on those important problems that arise from day to day.

The hon. member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar) referred to the Immigration Department and the possibility of expanding it. To a certain extent that is what is being done. The present functions of the Department are being taken into the new department, because the new officer will discharge the statutory duties of the Immigration Agent General. The hon. member also referred to the problems of local government. I think everyone in this Council has had some dealing with the problems of local government in this Colony at one point or another, and we all know how difficult they are. They become more

difficult from one year to another, and if we all think it is essential that they be conducted efficiently it is equally essential that there should be a strong connecting link between the local and the central Government, and it is through this officer we hope to provide it.

For some years the Colonial Secretary has been discharging the duties of Chairman of the Local Government Board, and as I am only the temporary holder of the office I can say it is a burden which it is not really fair to ask the Colonial Secretary to carry. There are very few days which pass that some difficult problem of local government does not arise, which has to be attended to by the Colonial Secretary under present conditions, and I would urge members who are anxious that the Government of the Colony should be conducted as efficiently as possible, as we all desire, to give the Colonial Secretary this much-needed help in the shape of an officer who has specialised in local government. That is, of course, not a mere matter of administration, but goes to the root of the well-being of the working classes of the Colony—that the labour conditions should be thoroughly understood by Government; that there should be someone responsible for studying them and advising Government when the time comes for action to be taken.

There is one mistake which seems to me to be frequently made in considering this question. It has been suggested that there is little work for this officer to do except when labour unrest has begun or is about to begin; that he will be a kind of fire brigade which is not called out unless there is a labour conflagration. This is a fallacy. His function is very largely preventive. It is more that of a health department than of a fire brigade and, like the health department, is not merely busy in a spectacular way when some economic difficulty or epidemic comes along. His chief function is to forward the economic well-being of the Colony. He is, in fact, the economic health officer for the Government and for the Colony as a whole. (applause).

Mr. ELEAZAR: The acting Colonial Secretary has made a very able defence for this department and the officer to be appointed. I quite agree with him that the Colonial Secretary should not be Chair-

man of the Local Government Board, but Government has been told that over and over again. More often than not he gets sixth-rate information on which to decide questions, and that has led to a good deal of unrest in those village communities. To take this away from the Colonial Secretary is absolutely correct policy. Again, to appoint an officer who is going to be a sort of second Colonial Secretary is a necessity, and should have been done long ago. If that had been done we would have had the Director of Education in his place now, and he would not have been called upon so often to fill the office which he now fills with such great satisfaction and ability. He would have been looking after his own department which wants a lot of looking after, and which his deputy cannot handle so successfully.

The last Governor decided that a part of the Colonization Fund should be devoted to the development of the Colony in certain directions, and in that respect the Assistant Colonial Secretary will be useful. But if the Labour Commissioner is to do all that, it means that he will be given work which he will not be able to do. When this breaks down, like the others, some of the people who are putting this additional burden on the community will not be here for me to say "I told you so," (laughter). If an officer as Assistant Colonial Secretary is needed to relieve the Colonial Secretary of some of the burdens which should not be thrown on him, I do not think this new department will meet the case.

Mr. JACOB: I have listened with very great attention to what the Colonial Secretary has said, and while I have been convinced to a point I do feel that the functions of this officer, at least for the present, will not meet the case. I am inclined to agree that there is necessity for a Commissioner of Labour, but to have a Commissioner together with an Inspector of Labour and a Secretary to the District Administration will, I believe, spoil the whole case. There have been disputes in the past between capital and labour, and if it is the intention of this Government that the appointment of a Commissioner of Labour will obviate disputes in future I think Government should appoint an officer in whom both capital and labour will have implicit confidence, and that officer should be divorced from all other duties. He should not be mixed up with the Local

Government Board and District Administration, but I will concede that he ought to be under the supervision of the Colonial Secretary. This is an experiment, and we should go very cautiously about it. We should not spend as much as \$8,561 right away, and even if we spend that amount of money next year we all know what will be the result. We are spending money on something that is unproductive. The officer will find there is need for this and that, but no provision will be made to fill those needs. We ought to start with one officer alone. If Government proposes to eliminate the District Administration service, or to make this officer chief of the District Commissioners, then the whole scheme is going to collapse.

I know it is very difficult for the Colonial Secretary to discharge the duties of Chairman of the Local Government Board, but I think that could be done by the District Commissioner for Georgetown, who ought to be more familiar with the administration of the several districts. I therefore suggest that the chief District Commissioner, resident in Georgetown, be Chairman of the Local Government Board, thereby relieving the Colonial Secretary of those duties, and that this new officer be appointed merely for the purpose of looking into labour affairs. I should like to state definitely that it would not be well to have this officer doing all the duties enumerated by the Colonial Secretary. It would not create confidence, and would not serve the purpose for which he is intended.

As regards the appointment of the officer, Government has had certain suggestions. I know there are several suggestions, but I am not prepared to say anything at the moment. I know it is within the province of Government to make appointments, but we are all interested in the progress and development of the Colony, and anxious to see harmonious relations between capital and labour. It is therefore essential that the officer should have the implicit confidence of both sides.

Mr. H. G. SEAFORD: In Select Committee item (b)—Inspector of Labour—was questioned, and I think there is some confusion in the minds of members as to what transpired as between items (b) and (c)—Secretary, District Administration. Perhaps a statement by the Colonial Secretary might enlighten us on the subject.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: As the hon. member said, there were certain questions raised in Select Committee regarding the need for a Commissioner of Labour, items (b) and (c), and the possible relationship between them. I informed the Committee that the view of Government was that when this new department settled down the need for continuing the post of Secretary, District Administration, would disappear. I could not say it would be done at once, but Government contemplated that when the department was in full working order a Secretary would not be required.

Mr. F. J. SEAFORD: I should like to congratulate the Colonial Secretary on his very able and lucid speech. I am sure every member of the Council was very interested and appreciated the points made by him. When the hon. member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar) began his speech I thought he was putting up a very able plea for the appointment of this officer, because after hearing all that the poor labourers are suffering I felt sure he was asking that someone be appointed to look after their wants, and I was going to congratulate him. I feel that every member of this Council agrees that the position which used to be held by the Immigration Agent General should exist to-day, but that it should not only exist for East Indians but for all labourers throughout the Colony. I think the hon. member said that we were always starting something new, but surely this is not something new. It is something that has been done in all parts of the world, and we are only following in their footsteps because we have seen what good results have been obtained. I desire to congratulate Government on having decided to establish this department. I am sure it can do nothing but good here. Although some of us may hold the view that two officers are too many, I am not going to vote against any at the moment, because I do not want Government to come back at a later stage, if anything goes wrong, and say it had not sufficient staff. I desire that Government should have full play in the matter, and if we are not satisfied after a year we would be able to say that Government had the full support of the Council. I will vote for the items as they stand.

Item put, and agreed to.

Item (b)—Inspector of Labour (\$2,400 by \$120 to \$3,120), \$2,400.

Mr. LEE: After listening to the remarks of the hon. member for Georgetown North (Mr. F. J. Seaford) I would like him to consider the fact that an Inspector of Labour is a new post and will be on the Fixed Establishment. If he desires that we should put no obstacles in the way of Government I move that this item be put below the line and given a trial. If it is not successful the officer would go. I take it that as it is a new post someone from outside the Government service will be appointed. If it is the intention of Government to appoint an officer in the Civil Service who is already on the Fixed Establishment I would have no objection. I read in the newspapers that questions were asked in the House of Commons about this matter, and the reply was given that it was being attended to in the several Colonies.

Dr. SINGH: As far as I can remember, in Select Committee most of the members present were against this item. I am totally against the appointment of an Inspector of Labour. When the District Administration scheme was introduced it was known that the District Commissioners would undertake the duties of Immigration Agent, and to-day we not only have District Commissioners but Assistant Commissioners, and I think the work of an Inspector of Labour could be easily carried out by the District Commissioners and their assistants.

Mr. DIAS: I happened to be present at the Select Committee on the occasion when this item was discussed, and the discussion, I believe, lasted a couple of days, or part of two days. I would like to say that while some members disagreed with this particular appointment there were others who agreed with it. I for one thought the appointment should be made, and I gave reasons. The hon. member who has just taken his seat explained that he had no objection, provided the appointment was made below the line. In view of the experience one has gained, that many a concern has been wrecked by reason of there being no understudy to take charge when the head goes, I think it will pay the Colony to employ an Inspector of Labour who, I presume, will be the

understudy of the Commissioner. Just picture what would happen if there was not a second officer, and the Commissioner was unable to carry on his duties. Government would have to take somebody who was entirely green and who would take some time before he could be of use to the office. That should not be allowed to take place, and I think it would be a very grave mistake to appoint a Commissioner alone.

It was mentioned in Select Committee that the Commissioner of Labour should not have anything to do with the District Commissioners. If members desire to keep him away from the District Commissioners as much as possible—although I cannot see how he can do without conferring with them frequently—such interviews can be reduced to a minimum by giving him an assistant. I do not think we can get a proper man or the best results by appointing an Inspector below the line, without any prospect of promotion unless the Commissioner disappeared altogether. I think the Council would be well advised to support the measure and give it as good a send-off as it possibly can.

Mr. PEER BACCHUS: I was present at the meeting of the Select Committee when this matter was discussed, and I think the suggestion was made that this item should be deleted. I would, however, support the amendment of the hon. member for Essequibo River (Mr. Lee) that the post be put below the line as a compromise between the elected members and Government. I think the suggestion is worth considering, because the Colonial Secretary has said that these officers will be in close touch with the District Commissioners. The Inspector's salary is below that of the senior District Commissioner, and I do not think he will at any time be placed above the Commissioners in the various districts.

Mr. JACKSON: There is, in my opinion, no merit in the suggestion to place this officer below the line. During the discussion in Select Committee it was suggested that there was no need for an Inspector of Labour working in collaboration with the Commissioner of Labour, and I remember that in the course of the discussion it was mentioned that ultimately it might be necessary to dispense with the office of

Secretary to the District Administration. That, to my mind, satisfied the members of the Committee, or at least most of them, as regards the necessity of having a second man, and I think if an officer is to be appointed Inspector of Labour at the salary suggested, there is need for that officer to be placed on the Fixed Establishment. Members of this Council should not cut the ground from under their feet by suggesting that someone might be appointed who is not already in the Government service. Personally I cannot see the necessity of going outside of the Service for an Inspector of Labour. According to my way of thinking it would be a slap to the country if someone could not be found in the Government service to fill the post, and regarding the suggestion that the post should be placed below the line, it might be found that the officer selected is already on the Fixed Establishment. I submit that there is need for an Inspector of Labour, and I am going to support the proposal to place the post on the Fixed Establishment. Like the hon. member for Western Berbice (Mr. Peer Bacchus) I cannot conceive of that officer being placed above the District Commissioners, whose salaries are above his; his status would not warrant it.

Mr. SEYMOUR: There is a certain amount of gate-crashing. This is an experiment, yet we are to have an army of colonels and other officers, but no privates. I do not think it is *infra dig* for the Commissioner of Labour to inspect labour; it is essentially his job. I do not anticipate that there will be a lot of work for the Commissioner to do. I opposed the appointment of District Commissioners, and I can well see that there is going to be jealousy and antipathy between the Inspector and the District Commissioners. It is going to be a question of who is going to be top-dog. By all means have the Commissioner of Labour. It is essential, I agree. Labour is not organised; if it were there would be no necessity for a Commissioner of Labour. The trouble in this country, not only with Government but private individuals, is that we bite off more than we can chew. I do not anticipate much labour trouble in this country, but even with a Commissioner of Labour we may have trouble; they may not agree with the Commissioner. I think Government

should go slowly and try out this experiment.

Mr. JACOB: I move the deletion of the item.

THE CHAIRMAN: Your motion is a direct negative; you can vote against the item.

Mr. F. J. SEAFORD: I do not know who will be appointed to this post, but I cannot imagine Government appointing anyone outside the Service, and if an officer who is on the Fixed Establishment is appointed he cannot be put below the line. If someone outside the Service is brought in I am inclined to agree with the hon. member for Essequibo River (Mr. Lee) that the appointment should not be pensionable. The hon. member for Western Essequibo (Mr. Seymour) pleaded with Government to go slowly. However slowly Government goes I do not know of any vehicle which will go on one wheel.

THE CHAIRMAN: With regard to the question raised about placing the post below the line, it is not possible at the present time to say whether the officer to be appointed will be from the Service. No decision could be taken until the matter was considered and approved by the Council, but in all probability it will be. I can see no reason why it should not be an officer in the Service, and if it is an officer in the Service it will be an officer who is on the pensionable establishment at the present time.

Mr. ELEAZAR: This is only a red-herring across the trail. The hon. member has only given Government a chance to raise a side issue.

The Committee adjourned until 2 p.m. for the luncheon recess.

2 p.m.—

Mr. ELEAZAR (resuming): When the Committee adjourned I had much more to say, but during the interval I have been going over the ground again, and in view of the remark made by the hon. member for Georgetown North (Mr. F. J. Seaford) I agree with him that we should take care not to allow Government to come back and say that it has failed because we did not provide all it wanted. Knowing that

Government will fail in this scheme I have made up my mind not to give Government any opportunity to say that we made it fail. To be very candid, I was very strongly opposed to the appointment of a Commissioner of Labour, but after the matter was explained I thought such an officer was necessary. The only thing that mystified me was the name. I cannot see why we must have an Inspector of Labour, but if Government is determined to have him I will not deny Government the only means of making this new department a success, therefore I will remain neutral on that item.

Mr. WIGHT: I am under the impression that in Select Committee we decided to eliminate the Inspector of Labour or the Secretary to the District Administration. I gathered from the Colonial Secretary that that is not going to be the case. I am therefore going to adhere to the view I expressed in Select Committee—that I do not think there is any necessity for an Inspector of Labour. As a matter of fact I think a trial for 12 months would not do much harm, but the difficulty is that having employed the officer Government would not be able to get rid of him. I suggest that we defer the appointment of the Inspector for 12 months. My impression of the Government service is that the next in office usually fills the senior officer's place. For instance, the Director of Education is now filling the post of Colonial Secretary, and has done so very much better than the officer who filled that position some time ago. On a similar occasion Government brought in the Crown Solicitor.

Mr. PEER BACCHUS: I quite appreciate what Your Excellency said before the adjournment, and I hope that in making the appointment Government will not go outside the Service. If Government is going to draw from the Service it is unnecessary to make this appointment, because Government officers can be transferred to any office at any time. I hope Government will re-consider the matter and second an officer from the Service at least for 12 months.

Mr. F. J. SEAFORD: If an officer is seconded to do this work will he come under this head?

THE CHAIRMAN: If an officer is

seconded temporarily to do this work he will be paid from this vote.

The Committee divided, and there voted :—

For—Messrs. Jones, H. G. Seaford, Jackson, Christiani, Crease, Laing, D'Andrade, F. J. Seaford, McDavid, Dias, Dr. Wase-Bailey, Professor Dash, the Attorney-General, the Colonial Secretary—14.

Against—Dr. Singh, Messrs. Lee, Jacob, Peer Bacchus, Eleazar and Wight—6.

Item as printed, agreed to.

Item (c)—Secretary, District Administration, \$2,880.

Mr. ELEAZAR: Do I understand that the person who is now Secretary of the Local Government Board will be transferred from that Department?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: This officer will continue to discharge the duties of Secretary to the Local Government Board. When the new department settles down it is probable that this particular post will be no longer required. The secretarial duties of the Local Government Board will be performed by the clerical staff of the Department as now provided.

Item put, and agreed to.

Mr. ELEAZAR requested that his protest be recorded.

CUSTOMS.

Mr. LEE: I have not yet received replies to the questions I tabled with regard to the tax on imported confectionery. I am a lover of sweets, and so are the children. According to figures shown to me, the new tariff will create a hardship on the children. I understand that 600 lbs. of imported sweets value \$64.28—

Mr. DIAS: I do not like to interrupt the hon. member, but I do ask whether we are discussing sweets or the staff of the Customs Department? I am sure there must be some opportunity at some other time to discuss that subject at length. At the present time we are voting salaries for the staff of the Department.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member can speak on general Customs policy and suggest amendments of the Customs laws, but he must not go into unnecessary details.

Mr. LEE: I was going into details to show that the introduction of an amendment of the Customs Ordinance last year to give preference to the makers of confectionery in this Colony was a fallacy and an imposition on the public, and to ask Government to consider whether it would not be in the interest of the public to remove that imposition.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member has already tabled questions and replies will be given him in due course.

Item (k)—10 Customs Watchers, \$4,800.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The question was asked in Select Committee whether the number of Customs Watchers was sufficient. The matter has been investigated and it is now recommended that the item should be amended to read "Customs Watchers—12 at \$288 by \$24 to \$488—\$5,376." I therefore move that the item be amended accordingly.

Item as amended put, and agreed to.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I beg to move the insertion of a new item 11—"Expenses of Comptroller of Customs as delegate to Customs Conference in Jamaica, \$800." An important conference on questions of Customs in the West Indies will be held in Jamaica early next year, and it is proposed that the Comptroller of Customs should represent this Colony.

Mr. LEE: Is this Government invited to this conference, and will the Comptroller of Customs represent this Government with respect to a uniform Customs tariff throughout the West Indies? I would like to know what the Comptroller is going there to discuss. We have our problems here with respect to revenue and expenditure. What is the use of the Comptroller going to Jamaica? I would like some explanation of this expenditure.

THE CHAIRMAN: It is the continuation of a conference at which the Comptroller of Customs represented this

Colony in Bermuda three years ago when certain draft legislation was drawn up. This conference is being held to consider the final draft of that legislation, and draft regulations which have been framed as a model to work on after that legislation has been enacted.

Item put, and agreed to.

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION.

Mr. ELEAZAR: When this Department was inaugurated, like many another one, the modest sum of \$12,000 was asked for, and we were told that it would administer the whole Colony. I remember that this Council was slated not only by this Government but by the Colonial Office to whom Government complained, as if the officials there had anything to do with us. The Secretary of State of that time said that the members of the Council were standing in the way of Government, because even where Government had decided to introduce local administration the Council threw it out without consideration. We knew what we were doing when we threw it out. The expenditure of the Department has grown from \$12,000 to \$101,000, and the increase for the coming year will be \$1,964. Governors who do this kind of thing clear out and leave the burden here. They do not remain to hear "I told you so." (laughter).

There are so many new items for next year; I think Government ought to be more frank. There is too much subterfuge in the preparation of these estimates. That is my reason for protesting when new departments are introduced. Government never turns back when it has made a mistake, but tries to patch up things from time to time. The time will come when these things will have to cease. When people cannot bear taxation any longer they kick over the traces. One cannot speak with the freedom one would like when these things are brought up. We cannot persuade some people that Government is sincere. We have to preach and defend Government. This District Administration scheme is one which cannot be of any proper use to this country. It is for countries which are just marching into real civilised government. It came about immediately after the abolition of slavery, from the Bahamas, and then went to Africa, and that was because in most of

those countries the headquarters of Government are far away. In this Colony it is so easy to get from one part of the country to another. I would like to ask Government if local government is any better since the inauguration of this scheme? Government went so far as to fool the people that they would be given County Councils. It is impossible. The system under which County Councils are run is a different system altogether from this. The two things cannot be connected at all, and Government will never be able to do it. We cannot mix oil and water, and that is what Government is trying to do. It is only creating turmoil in the villages which never existed before. Yet we are asked to pay more for it. One of these days I will move that the elected members of this Council leave Government to carry on. I do not believe in threatening Government, but if Government with its cast-iron majority tries to fool us with these things, what are we to do?

THE CHAIRMAN: I think if the hon. member had studied the explanatory memorandum he would have seen that the only increase in staff for next year is one additional district constable for the Rupununi.

Mr. ELEAZAR: Yes, that is so, but that is not the only increase. I will remain in the minority of one and protest against all these new items here.

Mr. JACOB: My friend has realised after sitting here for two days that we have to work together. (laughter). He has waxed warm on this head and he thinks we should all walk out of this Council. I will support him the day he arranges to do that, and I think the time is overdue. I have a distinct recollection that there was a promise given last year in Select Committee, and I think in this Council too, that some reduction would be made in respect of the number of District Commissioners, but I see the position has been aggravated to some extent by the fact that the district I have the honour to represent has no permanent holder of the office. I do not know whether some of those gentlemen have gone on leave, and whether the new department created this morning will make some change there. I realise that

we can hardly do anything here except we change our methods, and I would like to be advised when it will be possible for the Commissioner to return to the North West District, or whether a new Commissioner will be sent there. The district is not getting the service which others are getting. It is undesirable to have a District Commissioner who is Medical Officer, Magistrate, Commissioner of Lands and Mines, County Inspector and Deputy Inspector-General, and I think a promise was given that something would be done. I do not know whether Government has come to any definite decision in the matter. I do urge that there should be three officers in the district. The District Commissioner may be a Magistrate, but there should be a Government Medical Officer and a County Inspector. I agree with the hon. member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar) that there are several new items under this head. It appears that year after year this head is going to increase.

Mr. ELEAZAR: The district which the hon. member represents is the only one, except the Rupununi, in which the District Commissioner holds several offices. It is far from headquarters, and I cannot support his suggestion that there should be several officers.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: With regard to the main criticism of the hon. member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar) as to the increase under the head in general, I am afraid he has not studied the history of the head sufficiently closely or he would realise that it has absorbed the Commissaries Department, the expenditure of which previously varied from \$35,000 to \$52,000. He will also find another large item of expenditure on Colony lands which previously appeared under Lands and Mines, and in that Department he will also find a considerable reduction in personal emoluments. Therefore his comparison between \$12,000 and the present expenditure will not bear examination. I suggest to him that he should go into the matter again and work out the true history of the increase. The only real increase is the one already mentioned in regard to the constable in the Rupununi. In other cases posts have been taken out of the lump sum vote and shown separately for the benefit of

the subordinate employees concerned. The increases under the Unfixed Establishment are such as the hon. member will sympathise with as they are all increases to junior employees.

As regards the absence of the District Commissioner of the North West District, it arose entirely from the fact that two senior officers of the District Administration service have been on leave this year, and the question of a District Commissioner returning there for duty depends entirely upon when an officer will be available for posting to that district. No decision has been arrived at that the district should be without a Commissioner.

Item (h)—Surveyors' Assistant, \$480.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move that this item be amended to read "Land Officer, Demerara River (\$450 by \$30 to \$600)—\$540. This officer and the post were overlooked when my report was prepared last year, and I invite the Council to put that right by putting him on this scale.

Item as amended put, and agreed to.

Item (1)—Allowance to Interpreter, West Demerara, with special qualification, \$60.

Mr. LEE: On page 8A of the Estimate it will be seen that the interpreter-clerk for the new Labour Department is to receive an allowance of \$120. As far as I know the qualifications of the interpreter, West Demerara, are much higher than those of the interpreter-clerk at the Immigration Department. I therefore suggest that he be given better consideration.

Mr. LAING (District Commissioner, East Demerara): The interpreter-clerk at the Immigration Department has higher qualification in Hindi and is paid an allowance at the rate of \$10 per month. The interpreter on the West Demerara merely combines a knowledge of Urdu and is paid for that.

Item put, and agreed to.

Dr. SINGH: I do not know whether I would be in order in making some remarks on the Hague road which is under the control of the District Commissioner.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member may speak on the subject under Public Works.

Item (p)—5 Rangers, \$2,910.

Mr. JACOB: I would like to draw attention to the fact that rangers in outlying districts have to travel for several days. For instance, it takes about five days from Mabaruma to Arakaka, travelling in an open canoe. These men are absent from their homes for about seven or eight days and suffer great hardships, but I observe that all the rangers rank together as regards salary. I think some consideration should be given to those rangers in the Rupununi, North West and Essequibo river. The promise was made to me recently that the question of subsistence allowances would be re-considered. I am raising it again so that the matter might not be lost sight of.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The question of travelling and subsistence allowances is being enquired into.

Item put, and agreed to.

Item (y)—Overtime allowances—Collection of Entertainment Tax, \$125.

Mr. LEE: I would like Government to give early consideration to the petition from religious denominations with respect to the Entertainment Tax.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The petition referred to by the hon. member is receiving the sympathetic attention of Government, and it is hoped that Government will be able to make an announcement soon.

Item put, and agreed to.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I wish to complete the alphabet by moving the insertion of a new item (z)—Duty allowance to dispenser-teacher, Rupununi, \$454. To meet the needs of the children in that district the somewhat peculiar arrangement has been made that the dispenser should act as a teacher. He also does clerical work for the cattle trail. A man has been found who is qualified as a dispenser and will be paid as a dispenser, but he will also receive an allowance for the additional duties.

Mr. LEE: I understand he will be

entitled to leave every two or three years. I suggest that Government consider the question of paying his travelling expenses as he is very far away from his family.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I do not know whether he has actually started work, and it is a little early to talk about his leave. That will be considered by the Director of Education and the Surgeon-General who are both deeply interested.

Item put, and agreed to.

EDUCATION.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I was wondering whether Your Excellency might not pass on to other heads and then return to this one, as there is so much to be said about it. I have tabled a motion for the appointment of a Committee, and if it is the intention of Government to carry out the promise made in three successive years, it will save a lot of what I intend to say to-day. I hardly think Government intends to put what is called a new Code into operation without giving this Council an opportunity to discuss it. On the last occasion when I tabled a motion for the appointment of a Committee Government said it would be better to await the preparation of the new Code. The Code has now been prepared.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member stated that Government promised that the Education Code would come before this Council. That is perfectly true, and that is the intention before it is put into operation. Government will also be prepared to agree to the appointment of a Committee such as has been proposed, and that will be after the debate on his motion comes forward, and it may prove the most convenient method to put the Education Code before that Committee. That I cannot say at the present time, but certainly an opportunity will be given the Council first to consider the Code and any report that may be put forward by the Committee which Government will be prepared to appoint.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I will have to keep a good deal of my ammunition back for that time. To-day I will say that we cannot spend too much on education, and I am not prepared at this juncture to oppose any item on this estimate. In some

respects I am sorely disappointed, because I do not seem to be able to get the Director of Education to see eye-to-eye with me on certain matters, and he has failed to get me to see from his point of view. I think the Council and Government will agree with me that something more is due to schoolmasters than they are receiving. I observe that an uncertificated teacher is to receive the handsome salary of \$20 per month. He has to undergo studies and live up to a certain standard on the miserable pittance of \$20 per month, while a 4th class policeman gets \$28 per month. Is a 4th class policeman of greater use to the community than a 3rd class schoolmaster? Surely it must have appealed to somebody that such an arrangement could not be proper. Some of those men will remain 3rd class schoolmasters all their lives. That seems to be the policy of the Education Department, but I do not think it is correct. The schoolmaster is everything in a village, but the policy of the Department is to break his influence. He is removed from one part of the Colony to another. Why should he have such influence in the village when the District Commissioner is there?

There was a time when it was said by Government that there were too many schools in the country. Government did not appreciate the fact that although each denomination had its own building, the room space was not more than what was required. Government closed its eyes to that and, with a view to reducing the number of head teachers and the grant, caused some of those schools to be abandoned. The result is that the children have been packed into the remaining schools like sardines in a tin. There are many schools in the Colony with between 60 and 90 children in one class. I should like the Department of Education to tell Government candidly how many schools are under-staffed to its knowledge. Government is paying miserable salaries to teachers, over-crowding the schools and under-staffing them. That can only have one result. I may be told that 3rd class schoolmasters can improve their certificates by sitting higher examinations, but I wonder if I will be told at the same time that those examinations are only held once in a blue moon, and that a candidate must get 75 per cent. of marks before he can get a certificate. I do not know

where in the world a man has to get 75 per cent. of marks in order to get a pass. This country has a system of its own, and no attempt is being made to ameliorate these hardships.

A Commission some time ago recommended that there should be larger schools built in certain centres which would accommodate all the children and eliminate some of the smaller schools. We have had only one school built in Broad street where there are about 900 children. How does Government propose to treat the school-going population? It has raised the school age from 5 to 6 years so that children between 4 and 5 years are allowed to run about the streets in danger of being knocked down by motor cars. At Rosignol the school is being carried on in a dance hall. There is no picture on the wall because there is no wall for a picture. I cannot understand how conditions of that kind can be tolerated in a civilised country. Instead of improving the schools the Department makes regulations that schoolmasters must not read newspapers.

The Council will have an opportunity to discuss the new Code, and I will not say anything to-day about what it contains. Your Excellency has kindly agreed to appoint a Committee and the schoolmasters will have an opportunity to state their grievances. A body of schoolmasters approached Your Excellency recently with respect to the conditions under which they labour. I have heard of people staging a farce and have seen one staged many times, but I have never seen a greater farce than that. The second Puisne Judge at the conference was the maker of the Code, the perpetrator of the grievances the schoolmasters complained about. They were allowed to speak, but that was all they got. They tell me they spoke and left after thanking Your Excellency for the patient hearing you gave them. You are always very patient, and I told them they got nothing extraordinary (laughter). You could not give them anything more, for obvious reasons.

That is not the only fault of the Department. School managers will tell that they are told whom they must employ. Schoolmasters are being knocked from pillar to post and are expected to be very patient under such conditions. I see

nothing in the estimates to indicate that the lot of the pupil teachers will be any better; nothing to encourage them to become teachers for all their lives. They use the teaching profession as a sort of makeshift until they can find something better to do. To-day it is against the policy of the Department to have pupils who were trained in a school as pupil teachers in the same school. In consequence those young people are removed from Essequibo to Springlands. The Director of Education is shaking his head, but there are girls in New Amsterdam who have come from all parts of the Colony. I am told by schoolmasters that their nights are not free; they have to take exercise books to their homes to correct the work of the class. Those are conditions which are palpably wrong. The Education Department is not extravagant. The public would be inclined to put up with extravagance if they were getting it back in the quality of the education received, but they are getting no benefit at all. I will touch on Queen's College at the same time. The Governors say that the College has not sufficient space.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is the hon. member speaking about Queen's College?

Mr. ELEAZAR: I am dealing with education proper and only giving illustrations about Queen's College, but if you wish me to leave Queen's College until we reach there I will do so. I have only enumerated a few instances in which attempts may be made to improve primary education. I am not going to mention some abuses in respect of particular cases, because it is always thought when that is done that somebody has been complaining, as if a member would not find out how things are going so as to be able to discharge his duty conscientiously to his constituents. When a particular case is mentioned the poor fellow suffers because he must have interviewed the member. I will speak generally. There is a school in my district in which the majority of the children are members of the Congregational Church while the building is owned by the Scots Church body. The Scots Church will not repair the building because they get no benefit from it; the Congregational Church authorities cannot repair it because it does not belong to them. The building will fall down some day. The

Education Department should know such things and right them. The children have to go to the riverside or to people's houses to get water. Every word I have said here can be verified. We have a Government that is governing without any regard at all for any appeal made by those of us who have been put here ostensibly to assist Government, but in reality for Government to govern us.

When the motion is before the Council I will ask Government to probe into the working of the Education Department and see whether the Colony is getting all it should get for the money it is expending, or whether by the expenditure of a few more dollars Government may not reap results. I do not think Government is playing the game with respect to the education of the children of this Colony.

Mr. JACOB: I am grateful for the early assurance given by Government that the motion tabled by the hon. member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar) will be considered shortly, and for the further assurance that it will be accepted. The hon. member has covered most of the ground. I have merely risen to endorse almost everything he has said, and to add a few observations of my own. It is admitted on all sides that it is all a question of expenditure, but I think it should be admitted too by Government that expenditure on education is productive expenditure. Perhaps I will be told, as I have been told with respect to Queen's College, that there is no money to erect buildings. In Select Committee it was suggested that money should be spent in erecting schools, because the longer the question is put off the worse it becomes. Half of the money expended in providing offices for the Forest Department and the construction of new buildings at the Police Headquarters, Brickdam, could have been utilised for the erection of schools in districts that require them. I know that several schools are required; their erection would help to make the conditions somewhat easier. The question of staffing ought to be gone into also. I am sorry to see that there is no great increase under this head. I would urge that something be done very promptly to provide one or two new school buildings, additional teachers and a few more educational officers.

● Of course the appointment of more

educational officers would result in taxing the schools further, but in some cases the schools can take a few more children. In many cases the children are sent to work, but I do not think it is the best policy that children under 14 years should be made to work. There is great unemployment in the Colony, and I appeal to employers of labour to refrain from employing children under 12 years of age. That would help in a way, but it may be argued that it might create hardships to some extent. I would much prefer to see hardships created than to see uneducated children. I prefer to see children in school. When the proper time comes we will have an opportunity to say how the system of education should be changed. I do not subscribe to the view that there should be drastic changes, but some changes are necessary.

Mr. LEE: I also join in the appeal made to Government which should be seriously considered. Every elected member will agree that Government should adopt the policy of building schools throughout the Colony, and if the Director of Education includes in his estimate each year a sum of money for the erection of schools I feel sure that every member would support it.

With regard to schools I would ask Government to consider the recommendation of the Medical Re-organisation Committee in paragraph 125 on page 30, which states:—

“The Committee also recommends that in Georgetown, where there are approximately 11,000 children in the primary schools, a school clinic should be established, preferably at the Georgetown Municipal Maternity and Child Welfare Clinic. At the outset, the clinic should be open on Saturday mornings, the medical officers being provided from the Government and the Municipal Health Departments under the direction of the Central Board of Health. The cost of such a clinic would be small, consisting mainly of the cost of medicines supplied. The medical history of the children attending the clinic, and any other which may be established would, over a period of two or three years, provide some definite and reliable information regarding the health of the school child in the Colony.”

I think if Government started in that small way every elected member would be willing to support Government.

Mr. CREASE (Director of Education): It seems to me that every time we discuss

the Annual Estimates there are two departments which come in for a tremendous amount of fire, the Department of Agriculture and the Education Department. I would like to suggest that perhaps the order of the Estimates may be re-arranged in future, so that some other departments might come in for the early fire of the elected members of this Council. The hon. member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar) has touched on many points with which I have a great deal of sympathy, and I think Government is also in sympathy with them. However, there are one or two remarks with which I would like to deal briefly and point out—I would not say inaccuracies—where he may have been slightly misinformed. The first question he dealt with was the question of salaries of 3rd class certificated teachers, and the deputation which waited on Your Excellency some time ago when one of the points discussed was the question of salaries. I think I am in a position to say that although they might have gone away, as they appeared to have done, rather disappointed, the question of salaries has not been entirely ignored by Government. There are certain points which are under consideration now in that respect. (Hear, hear).

With regard to the under-staffing of schools and the congestion which exists in the schools I think Government is fully aware of those two facts. The schools are in many instances congested, and they are in many instances under-staffed, and every effort is being made by the Department to relieve that congestion and that under-staffing. I would like to point out that both of those points are really and truly those which have come to the front during the past year or so. I have figures now in front of me, and if hon. members would turn to the explanatory memorandum they would see the reason for asking for an increase of grants to primary schools. The figures show that the increase in the average attendance to April, 1937, on which the estimate for 1938 was framed, was about 1,300, while the increase to date is over 1,500. The congestion is brought about definitely by the fact that the enrolment is going up by leaps and bounds, and also the average attendance, and I think I can say with a certain amount of safety that Government will have to consider some steps being taken to relieve the con-

gestion which is becoming more and more acute. (Hear, hear).

The hon. member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar) spoke a lot about the Government School in Georgetown, and said it was the only Government school established. I would remind him that since that school was opened we have opened one at Anna Regina, Beterverwagting and Rosignol. The hon. member also mentioned that the school at Rosignol was a building rented from proprietors who regarded it more or less as a dance hall. It is quite true that the building is rented and is congested, but for his information I would like to say that the question of enlarging that school has recently been submitted to Government. We are doing all we possibly can to relieve the congestion in the schools, and I am quite sure that the time is not far distant when we shall have to go to Government and ask for further assistance in order to relieve the congestion.

On the question of the employment of teachers the hon. member said that the managers of the schools could not employ teachers because the Education Department dictates who should be appointed. I would like to inform the hon. member that it is very rare that the Department has to refuse approval of the appointment of teachers. As the hon. member knows, all appointments are subject to the approval of the Director of Education, and it is on very rare occasions, and only for some specific reasons, that the Department says "No, this cannot be approved." As a rule, in 90 per cent. of the cases both the Governing Bodies and the Managers have their way in appointing teachers.

The hon. member also said it was against the policy of the Department to employ pupil teachers in the schools where they had received their elementary education. As far as I am concerned, and for some time past, I know that every effort has been made when making appointments of pupil teachers, to employ them in the schools where they had received their education. If it is impossible to do that every effort is made to employ them in schools as near their homes as possible. Occasionally it happens that a pupil teacher is unable to find employment either in the school in which he has

received his education or at a school near to his home, but in each instance the pupil teacher is always asked whether he is prepared to accept appointment elsewhere. He is never forced to go anywhere. It is definitely the policy of the Department to assist all assistant teachers, as far as it possibly can, to see them settled in the district in which they wish to be employed.

Reference was made to the question of children drinking water from muddy trenches. I know that in the past a considerable amount of difficulty has been experienced in securing potable water for the children. The usual practice is for a special container to be kept in the school. I may add that provision has been made in the estimates of the Public Works Department for a large number of schools to be supplied with water from artesian wells for drinking purposes.

Those are the chief points which the hon. member has raised. I am in sympathy with a great deal of them, but I would like to stress the point that the Department experiences considerable difficulty in attending to all these matters of extension of buildings, increasing staff and so on, with the sum available at present, and if we are to have ideal schools and adequate staffing I do not hesitate in saying that we shall have to ask Government to increase the vote in order to meet those demands.

Mr. JACOB: I suggest that in future the Estimate should show the number of teachers and the scales of salaries of all teachers.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am quite prepared to give whatever information it is possible to give members of the Council, but I think the information the hon. member is asking for is rather too complex to be included in the Estimate. The salaries of teachers vary considerably.

Mr. JACOB: I understand that the highest salary is \$110 and the lowest \$6 per month. I do not think there are more than 12 grades.

THE CHAIRMAN: That is all set out in the draft Education Code, but I do not mind giving a skeleton of it in the Estimate.

Item (k)—1 Attendance Officer (\$288 to \$480 by \$24), \$5±0.

Mr. JACOB: I think a recommendation was made in Select Committee that there should be an increase of the number of Attendance Officers, and I expected to find some addition to the vote.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The question of additional Attendance Officers has been considered, but at the present moment the view of the Education Department and Government is that we want teachers so urgently that we must defer the question of additional Attendance Officers until we get more teachers.

Item put, and agreed to.

Item 17—2 Jubilee, 5 Government Junior and 60 Government County Scholarships, \$4,939.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move that this item be amended in order to make provision for carrying on the Mitchell Foundation. As hon. members know, there is a Bill before Council which outlines the conditions on which the Mitchell Foundation Scholarships are awarded. It is obviously the duty of the Colony to provide for the continuation of the Foundations which are held by certain boys and girls under the existing regulations. It is proposed that this vote be increased in order to enable that to be done. I move that the vote be increased to \$6,000 in order to provide for 11 Mitchell Foundation Scholarships next year. That is, of course, the number of scholarships actually held at present, but it is a diminishing number because, as the scholarships expire, they will not be replaced.

Item as amended put, and agreed to.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move the insertion of a new item 18—Berbice High School for Boys—Scholarship—\$90, to provide for one boy coming from the Berbice High School to attend Queen's College after he has reached the standard that qualifies him to start a course of study for the British Guiana Scholarship.

Item put, and agreed to.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I also move the insertion of another item, 30—Attendance Registers for Primary Schools, \$250. This is a book-keeping entry arising out of an audit query on the present method by which registers are bought by the Department and issued to the primary schools. The amount will be recovered by revenue.

Item put, and agreed to.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move the insertion of another item, 31—Passages, \$112, to provide for the return passage of the Principal of the Carnegie Trade Centre under contract which will expire next year, and the passage of her successor when appointed.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I do not like this one, but as I said I would not oppose anything under Education I will let it go.

Item put, and agreed to.

The Council resumed and adjourned until the following day at 10.30 o'clock.