

## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

*Thursday, 18th November, 1937.*

The Council met at 10.30 a.m. pursuant to adjournment, 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. A. Luckhoo, O.B.E., (Eastern Berbice).

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

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

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

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

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

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. J. Eleazar (Berbice River).

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

The Hon. Peer Bacchus, (Western Berbice).

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## MINUTES.

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on the 17th November, as printed and circulated, were confirmed.

## COFFEE COMMITTEE.

THE PRESIDENT: With regard to the Select Committee to investigate the question of assistance for the coffee industry, I have to announce that I have appointed a Committee as follows:—

Professor J. S. Dash, Director of Agriculture, (Chairman).

Mr. J. I. de Aguiar (Central Demerara).

Mr. C. R. Jacob (North Western District).

Mr. A. G. King (Demerara River).

Mr. W. S. Jones (Nominated).

## PAPERS LAID.

The following documents were laid on the table:—

Annual Report of the Auditor to the Director of the Colonial Audit and to the Government of the Colony of British Guiana, for the year 1936.

Despatch to the Secretary of State for the Colonies forwarding the Auditor's Report together with a memorandum containing observations thereon.

## 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.

TRANSPORT AND HARBOURS.

THE CHAIRMAN: Hon members may make any comments they wish with regard to the Department generally.

Mr. F. J. SEAFORD: I would like to draw Government's attention to the manner in which the accounts of the Department are kept. It will be observed that the deficiency for this year is put down at \$79,000; last year it was \$203,000 and next year it will be in the neighbourhood of \$200,000. The reason for this variation of the deficiency appears to be that last year the Board purchased a new steamer at a cost of \$135,000. This year there has been no steamer purchased, and to the ordinary individual it seems rather misleading unless the facts are known. An ordinary business concern which had to outlay capital expenditure would not put it down in one year and charge it to ordinary maintenance account. As the Department has a definite programme of getting one steamer every year I think it would be simpler to charge it to capital account and write off so much for depreciation every year, which an ordinary business firm would do. Although there is actually nothing down for this year, we know that that amount is going to be spent next year. Couldn't the amount be spread over two years instead of one? It would make budgeting for the Colony's revenue and expenditure very much simpler, because in one year there will be an expenditure of \$150,000 which does not occur the following year, and if we have to cut our coat according to our cloth it would mean a great deal of difficulty in imposing increased taxation to meet that \$150,000, or in cutting down expenditure to suit. We are rather fortunate in being able to get loans to carry on, but this is bad budgeting in my opinion. I am asking Government if it is not possible for the Transport Department to arrange its accounts so as to get over that difficulty. The Colonial Treasurer can explain the position very much better than I can, but I feel it is wrong to charge the whole of that amount to one year. It is definitely capital expenditure. The Department buys a new steamer and increases its capital by doing so. I am not satisfied

that the Treasurer is correct, although he may be able to advance very good reasons.

Mr. McDAVID (Colonial Treasurer): I am afraid it is inevitable, under present circumstances, that the accounts of the Transport Department must show ups and downs. That is what the hon. member complains about. The first criticism I must make on his remarks is that the expenditure to which he referred is definitely not capital expenditure. For example, if one looks at the item for a new ship in the current year's estimate, he will see that it states definitely "Cost of new ship to replace the *Haimara*." It is replacement expenditure, and while I admit or agree that it is a better procedure to spread the cost of replacement over a long period, that period should synchronise with the life of the ship being replaced. In this instance the charge should have been spread over the period of the life of the *Haimara*, the ship being replaced. Unfortunately, there is no reserve fund at the moment to cover that cost. Had there been a reserve fund or a replacement fund the difficulty would not have arisen. I do not wish to detain the Council by going into the history of the replacement fund, and the reason why it does not now exist, but I will say this: that when the steamer service was started in 1914 Government instituted a replacement fund scheme and accounts were rendered in that way up to about 1929, I think, and then those contributions ceased because the Department came to the conclusion that the fund existed at a sum which, left by itself, would accumulate a sufficient amount to replace the fleet when the time came. I cannot at this stage say whether that hope was realised; I do not think so.

In 1930, when the Colony was in great financial difficulties, the balance of that fund was appropriated to revenue. We must have no illusions as to what that fund amounted to. In 1930 the amount taken into revenue was \$176,000. The fund had already borne the charge for one steamer, the *Tarpon*, to replace another steamer that had gone out of commission, and as I said, the only sum taken into revenue was \$176,000, a figure which was not sufficient to pay for two steamers. The present position is that the fleet has

to be replaced, and the charge for that replacement is a charge on the accounts now; it cannot be spread over future years. The only charge that can be spread over future years is the cost of replacing the second fleet. In other words the cost of replacing the *Lady Northcote* can be spread over future years, but not the cost of replacing the *Haimara*. I understand that the Department is working on a definite programme of replacement, and it would be quite proper if that cost is spread over the period of replacement. By that I mean that if it is understood that one ship is going to be purchased every two years it would be quite proper that each year should bear half the charge. For example, in the current year's estimate there is no provision for a ship, but it is quite possible that in 1939 a new ship will be required, and it would have been reasonable to charge half the cost in 1938, but I could not agree that it is proper to spread the cost of that new ship over a period of 15 or 20 years from 1938. What should be borne by the years from 1938 is the cost of replacing the new ship itself. The cost of replacing the ship that has now gone out must fall on the revenue of the current year.

Mr. SEAFORD: I am not quite clear yet. I understood the Treasurer to say that it would be possible to spread the cost of the ship over two years. If that was done we would not have had these ups and downs. I am very grateful to the Treasurer for his explanation. I am not suggesting that we should build up a reserve again, because it might be appropriated again (laughter), but I am asking that the cost of the ships be spread over the life of the ships, or if that cannot be done, that it be spread over two years. I am asking Government whether that cannot be done this year.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I am not sure that we have any right to deal with this Department except to find the money to run it at the end of each year when it has not collected what it expected. When it cannot show that its receipts have exceeded its expenditure we have to vote the deficit, and that seems to be all the business we have with the Department. That seems to be the idea of Government. According to the report on the salaries of unclassified officers the majority of the employes

in this Department are not "employed directly by Government." They are under a Board of Commissioners and therefore are not Government servants. Government does not recognise them at all. I differ very widely from that principle. Here is a department belonging to Government, but in its wisdom Government conceived the idea of running it under a Board of Commissioners and shirks its responsibility. The Department shares Government's view in some respects and has men in the lower branches of the service without any hope of advancement. You have only to make a casual observation along the railway line and you will see men who are supposed to be stationmasters living in rooms about 10 ft. square, because Government in some instances has taken away portions of their dwellings and converted them into post offices. Those men are living in hovels.

Let us see how the Commissioners are carrying out their commission. Year after year they give monthly excursions to raise money, but they cannot improve the West Coast railway so as to make it pay, and they suggest that it be abandoned. They cannot see that while the Corentyne Coast is begging for a transportation service and ramshackle buses are running, the Transport Department can import a fleet of buses and run them along that Coast so as to collect revenue for Government and incidentally assist the Department. That has not occurred to them at all. They prefer to stick to the railway line and save money at the expense of the lower men. Some of the employees are given 3 and 4 days' work per week, so that there appears to be no reduction in their pay. There are stationmasters getting \$30 per month but nothing to look forward to, because they are employed by a Board and not by Government. Those are subterfuges that are unworthy of Government. The desire of Government is to get the Transport Board to do what Government itself has been doing—and very subtly too—to effect retrenchment at the expense of the under-dogs of the service. Those men are part and parcel of the Government service; the service is purely a Government service. Mr. A. S. Cooper was allowed as an act of grace to look over our railway. I think that was how it was put. On the question of pensions Mr. Cooper wrote:—

"I notice that the pensionable staff is strictly limited to Heads of Departments and Principal Assistants. I would recommend that no departure should be made from this policy, as any considerable pensionable establishment is quite unsuited to a public utility organization. I have seen the inconvenience of it in other Colonies."

Mr. Cooper knows that other Colonies are giving pensions to railway employees, but he thinks it inconvenient for this Colony to do the same. In other Colonies the inconvenience is not regarded as sufficient to warrant abolition, but in British Guiana it is sufficient to prevent certain employees of the Transport service from being given pensions. I think Government should make these Commissioners take their position seriously and deal justly by those employees, not hiding behind the idea that they are not Government servants. It is said that they are not "employed directly by Government." In whose employment are they in—the Commissioners? If an accident occurs and an employee is awarded damages, would the Commissioners be asked to contribute? If such a policy were announced next week there would not be one of those Commissioners. A man who is paid \$60 per month and has given Government faithful service over a number of years ought not to be thrown on the road and be told that he was not directly employed by Government. It is an intolerable position, and more consideration should be shown these employees. I am asking Government to impress upon the Commissioner the advisability of looking first of all into the accommodation provided for station-masters, secondly, into the salaries they are paid, and thirdly, and most important of all, that they should have something to look forward to when they retire.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: I had intended to pursue the very interesting point raised by the hon. member on my right (Mr. F. J. Seaford) but unfortunately the hon. member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar) rose before I had an opportunity of doing so. I should like first of all to say that I was very disappointed that the Colonial Treasurer did not give us the history he referred to. I would not have been tired listening to him. I am always interested to hear how he manages to wangle the figures of Government and endeavours always to put Government on the right side, but I think the inference

can be drawn that the point raised by the hon. member for Georgetown North (Mr. F. J. Seaford) was indefensible. There can be no doubt about it that the accounting methods adopted by this Department in the past and the failure to make provision for replacement were wrong.

I entirely agree with the point made by the Treasurer that the cost of replacing the *Haimara* could not be spread over the life of the steamer, but in the same breath he has not told us why provision has not been made in this year's estimate for replacement of the *Lady Northcote* and the *Pomeroon* 20 years hence when they go out of commission. I think Government should have made provision for the replacement of those steamers in the future. Had that been done 20 years ago the position we are in now with regard to the replacement of those steamers and those to come would not have arisen. The fear has been expressed that perhaps if a reserve fund was created the money might be appropriated at some future time. I am going to plead guilty. We were beggars at that time and could not dictate what should be done. We were in receipt of loans-in-aid and we had no alternative but to accept the suggestion put forward for the appropriation of the replacement fund, but it will be remembered that the measure did not go through the Council very easily. Certain members objected to it, but we had no choice in the matter. I should like to know what steps are going to be taken to replace these steamers 20 years hence, so that we will not be in the position we are in to-day.

Mr. JACOB: I have listened with a great deal of interest to the accounting question raised this morning, but I do not wish to prolong the debate. As a matter of policy I do not wish to disagree with other elected members, but I do think I should say something, because I think I ought to know a thing or two about accounts. I was rather surprised to hear the hon. member for Central Demerara (Mr. De Aguiar) defending the principle enunciated by the hon. member for Georgetown North (Mr. F. J. Seaford), which obviously is not even theoretical. It is wrong fundamentally, and I think the Colonial Treasurer's explanation was extremely sound and to the point. I do not know whether it is

the intention to change the whole method of Government accounting by making reserves and spreading capital expenditure over a period of years. If we are to do what is suggested then the deficit for this year will be a great deal more. The point is that there has been no capital expenditure. We have replaced something that was worn out, and if we want to revise the whole system and have elaborate accounts we will have to make provision now for replacement in the future. I do not think any useful purpose will be served by going into that. Even as regards the Post Office Savings Bank accounts, the method adopted last night was not right in my opinion. Of course it is all a book entry and the position will right itself later on. I do urge that the present system of accounting be continued. It shows clearly what is the position of the Transport Department each year.

The hon. member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar) raised the question of the lot of the employees of the Department. I wish to endorse all that he has said.

There is certain correspondence going on between the Department and myself concerning freight rates, accommodation and one or two other matters. I am not going to say very much about those matters except to make some comparisons. I have made comparisons in the past, and there has always been objection when I compare sugar with rice. As a matter of fact I should not talk about rice at all; I am going to refer to flour this morning. Yesterday we discussed the excellent service we are getting from the Canadian National Steamers. Let us compare that service with the service we run to the North West District. The freight on a bag of flour loaded at Toronto on a luxurious steamer which takes two weeks to reach Georgetown, is 50 cents, but to send the same bag of flour from Georgetown to the North West District by the luxurious *Lady Northcote*, which takes 22 or 24 hours to do the trip, the freight is 60 cents. If this Council agrees that it is equitable and just I can say nothing more. That is only one of several such cases.

What is the accommodation provided on the new steamer? A man in the North West District told me that it is a cattle steamer. The passenger accommodation

is rotten and the fares exorbitant. I leave it to Government either to confirm what the Commissioners have done or to vary it. Statements have been made to me that these rates compare with those of Messrs. Sproston, but I have not been able to confirm that. I have got into the habit of not believing statements like those, because I have verified some of them and found they were not true. I want to see the printed word, not to hear the spoken word.

I wrote the Commissioners informing them that there were over 900 logs awaiting transportation from the North West District, and I suggested that if a steamer was sent weekly there would be sufficient freight to make it pay. I was told that it was not justified. If the Commissioners say there is not sufficient freight there for the steamers it is not true. The people in the North West District are complaining that they cannot get their cargo transported. It may be true that the steamer cannot travel full both ways, but it certainly can come from the North West District full to overflowing. There is some unseen hand behind the policy of not giving the North West District the service it requires, and it is the duty of Government to find out the reason. I am inclined to think the Department is too top-heavy. I cannot be precise about that, but members can look around and see. No doubt on proper investigation it may be found to be not so, but from all that I have heard—and I have had the best information concerning that Department—I know more about it than I think any other hon. member does. Perhaps that is a bit exaggerated in the opinion of some of my hon. friends here. I cannot say that I know of the inner working of the Department, but I know something about the Department and the methods adopted. I know many things which Government would be surprised to know, and I am satisfied that the expenditure should be reduced at the top and increased at the bottom. If that is done, and the services required are given, revenue would increase and there would not be such large annual deficiencies in that Department.

Government will say that it has the best brains on the Board, but I should like to warn Government about that. No business undertaking run by business men

for and on behalf of Government can ever be successful. That is a world-wide opinion. Government should not embark on commercial undertakings. Whenever Government goes into competition with commercial men it must take second place. It will surprise hon. members to know what I know about the commercial transactions of this Department. I am not at all satisfied that the Department is being properly run. I know that several hon. members here will take strong exception to what I am saying. It does not matter to me what hon. members think and say. I am saying what I conscientiously know to be true. Whatever may be their opinions does not matter to me. I say what I believe after careful study, and what I am stating here is true. The Department cannot and never will pay its way under existing conditions. Why? When it becomes necessary Government makes legislation to prohibit competition and to do all kinds of things, yet it cannot make the Department pay. If the Department is properly run and managed like any commercial enterprise it will certainly pay, but no matter how its accounts are juggled with and figures made to show something nice, the plain fact will remain that carried on as it is now there will be annual deficits of more than \$200,000 on the average.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I do not know what the hon. member knows, and I do not claim to know more than anybody else, but there is one thing I know—I told the hon. member yesterday but he does not seem to have taken warning—that a man who knows does not boast about it; it is what he thinks he knows that he boasts about. (laughter), I quite agree with the hon. member that Government can do lots of things. The Department ought to look into the question of fares which are being lost on the Berbice river. The hon. member may not regard my opinions at all. I express them for what they are worth and leave them to Government and other members.

Mr. H. G. SEAFORD: A great deal of criticism has been levelled at the Transport Department, but I think hon. members should take into account that the Department is trying to make a success of a derelict concern which was foisted upon Government by members of the Legisla-

ture before this Colony became a Crown Colony. I am not sure whether the hon. member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar) was a member of the Combined Court at that time, but if he was he must accept some of the responsibility for the working of the Transport Department.

I would like, if I may, to refer to one or two remarks made by hon. members. The hon. member for Georgetown North (Mr. F. J. Seaford) and the hon. member for Central Demerara (Mr. De Aguiar) referred to the question of dividing up the cost of steamers over two years. If a steamer costs \$120,000 it is suggested that \$60,000 should be voted in each of two years. As a matter of fact that point was very fully discussed by the Board because, in the opinion of some of us, it was felt that the cost of these steamers should be spread over 20 years, which was considered the life of a steamer, but as is well known by this Council, Government accounts are not run in the same manner as those of business concerns, and Government therefore could not see its way to spread the cost over 20 years or to allow us to build up a reserve fund. As a matter of fact, to be quite frank, many members of the Board considered that would be a mistake because, as happened before, it might disappear, but it is hardly fair to criticise the Board for not spreading the cost over a period. That is a question of accounting, and in many things the Board has to give way to Government. Although we are told that we must try to run the concern on commercial lines we are still told we are under the Government.

The hon. member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar) said that the stationmasters' quarters were not large enough and should be improved. If he looks at the estimate he will see that a certain sum of money is voted each year for improvement of quarters, and for the improvement of quarters generally for the staff. He also recommended that the railway on the East Coast should be scrapped and a bus service instituted.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I have not come to that yet. I suggested that the Department should look after the Corentyne Coast.

Mr. SEAFORD: I beg the hon. member's pardon; I will not say anything

more on that point. As regards the criticism of Mr. Cooper, that gentleman was sent here as an expert, and what he said was that he had seen pension schemes fail in other places and therefore he could not recommend it, but I expect he had seen them successful in other places. I do feel that his advice should be taken, and that we should not be guided by what we have heard. After all experience counts a lot.

As regards the remarks of the hon. member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob), the question of freight rates is discussed on every occasion. It is quite impossible to make comparisons of freight rates between place and place. I do not understand the hon. member's point that no business run by business men on behalf of Government could be successful, because his criticism has always been that Government was not run by business men. Apparently he is not a business man.

A comparison of freight rates is impossible, because while it is true that the Transport Department is a Government concern and railway and steamer services have to be run to places which do not pay, the Department must try to recoup its expenses to a certain extent. The Transport Department has to meet an annual bill of \$78,000 to pay shareholders of railway stock who received no dividend on that stock until the Transport Department took it over. To pay \$78,000 interest a year before you start to work is a very large item indeed, and if the Transport Department shows a loss of \$70,000 I do not think that can be considered too bad having regard to the fact that services have to be run to places which are distinctly unremunerative.

Mr. WOOLFORD: The Hon. Mr. Dias and myself are the only two people alive who were present at the first, and certainly so far as I am aware, the only conference at which the elected section of what was then the Combined Court was present to discuss the possibilities of the acquisition of the old Demerara Railway, and perhaps I may be allowed to state what occurred, perhaps for the last time, in the hope that no further reference will be made to it. At that conference were the then Governor of the Colony, the late Sir Wilfred Collet, Mr. C. B. Hamilton, late Colonial Treasurer, Mr. Dias and myself,

and there may have been others whose names I cannot recall. Prior to that there was a suggestion that the assets of the old Demerara Railway should be acquired on behalf of the Colony, because it was well known that the Company was going into liquidation. At any rate it was threatened with liquidation. The price at which the assets of the Company could be acquired was certainly disclosed to us, but I can say with truth that the terms under which they were to be acquired were not known to us. I and others who were in that position naturally came to the conclusion when our assent given to the formal agreement, that money would be paid in cash. So months elapsed, and the general consent of the Combined Court was obtained in this room. The Colonial Office, I suppose, or the Crown Agents, or a combination of both are, in my opinion, entirely responsible for the business arrangement that was come to, and which has resulted in what members will see disclosed in Appendix A on page 9 of the Estimates. That is to say that stock in the form of annuities was legalised by Ordinance 23 of 1921, and was the subject of the agreement

Instead of the entire assets being paid for in cash, each shareholder or debenture holder was given stock with a perpetual annual payment of, I think, 6 per cent. or varying interest. I know it is a permanent issue of stock to those people, and at an annual charge to us of \$84,000. It is perfectly clear that unless that incubus can be got rid of it must remain a permanent feature of the estimates of the Transport Department. In my judgment, having regard to a good many things that have happened in commercial life—the manner in which some governments, for instance the Government of Australia, have been allowed to default in the payment of their interest—after a close examination by a chartered accountant in conjunction with some Chancery lawyer, I think there would be some means of our being able to discharge those permanent annuities by some fair arrangement with the holders of the stock. In other words, we can offer them immediate payment of so much, even at a premium perhaps. It would pay this Colony to discharge the liability for these annuities by some bargain approved under the system by which the Crown Agents redeem stock.

I believe that if that agreement were examined—I have never seen it and I do not think anyone in the Colony, except perhaps the Colonial Treasurer, has taken the trouble to examine it, at any rate from a business standpoint, but from a legal standpoint with the advice of the Attorney-General of the Colony, although that promise has been given in this Council over and over again—it might be found possible to come to some arrangement whereby another form of liability can be substituted, instead of waiting for those people either to offer redemption of their stock or surrender it in payment of cash. To my mind there is a vast difference between the obligation to the original holders of the Demerara Railway stock and the transferees, because it is known that some of the original annuitants are not alive, and I have always looked upon that arrangement as being more or less a personal one. The truth about the matter is that those people were only too glad to sell their stock, but the unfortunate bargain that was made was one by which the surrender of their stock in exchange for permanent annuities was done at too great a price. Of course it was the ruling price at that time. Six per cent. was an ordinary dividend payable by several companies, and was looked upon as fair, but the fact remains that the permanent nature of the arrangement, and the fact that it is a perpetual stock has always given rise to a great deal of discontent. I must disclaim responsibility for the inhabitants of this Colony agreeing to such an arrangement; it was agreed to in London without the slightest reference either to the Executive Council or the Legislature of this Colony. For that reason the member who is constantly attacking the success which undoubtedly attends the operations of the Transport service must try to address himself to the peculiar position and the conditions under which the railway was acquired.

It is said that the Transport Board is packed. I invite the hon. member to examine the personnel of that Board and to consider what persuades me, for instance, to continue to be a member of a packed Board when I was a member of that Board at the time when Mr. Cecil Farrar was enjoying, I think £200 a year, and Mr. Alfred Sherlock, as he then was, was being paid £100 a year while I was

being paid nothing. I wonder if he imagines that I viewed that with anything like satisfaction. At any rate I claim to have had some personal interest in the affairs of the Board and still maintain that interest even without remuneration. I am not at all sure that the hon. member would have been so altruistic as to have enjoyed my experience. I doubt very much whether he would have remained a member of a packed Board and witnessed other members being paid while he got nothing. I rather fancy his commercial instinct would have persuaded him to resign his membership. Another member of the Board is Mr. Jones. I wonder if it is suggested that he has some personal interest in being there. I do not know what personal interest the Government nominees have, but I have no doubt that the Comptroller of Customs sits there as a matter of duty, and hardly as a matter of interest. There are several instances of that kind, but the hon. member seems to conceive that the Board is packed with the dominant idea of preventing his constituents, 50 poor souls who are dependent entirely for their adequate representation on the hon. members' efforts, from securing them additional steamer service. He seems to imagine that this packed Board is constituted and will remain constituted as it is in order to prevent his constituents being benefited by constant steamer traffic. Perhaps he would like a steamer twice or three times a week and reduced freight rates.

On every occasion prior to his being elevated to the membership of that constituency, the farmers in that district have themselves on their own initiative petitioned the Board and received consideration. I am not aware that, generally speaking, there is much to complain about the treatment accorded to the farmers in the North West District and the Pomeroun, or that there is any greater hardship or discrimination in the freight charges in respect of the farmers in the North West District and the Pomeroun as compared with those in the Berbice river. I invite him again, if he wishes to enjoy the respect and esteem of the elected section which, after all, should be the ambition of every politician, and without which no success can be measured, to say what would have been the plight of his constituents if Sproston's services had



remained. I think he would find that, generally speaking, the comfort of the steamers, the general conditions, the reduced fares alone, which certainly allow of interchange of visits between the farmer and his consignee in Georgetown, have allowed greater facilities in farmers reaching Georgetown and returning to their homes, than were enjoyed during Messrs. Sproston's regime. In any event, if the hon. member and those who think like him—I am speaking of him, on his own admission, as a practised accountant—compared the subsidy that this Colony gave to Sproston and credited the steamers' accounts with that amount he would find that the Transport and Harbours Department, ill-managed as it is by a packed Board, not only pays its way but pays its way handsomely. In other words, if you eliminate the annual charges—I do not pretend to be an accountant but I know sufficient of the history of the Department and sufficient of figures to know that if you take the trouble to compare the amount of the subsidy paid by this Colony for the general steamer service and what it was asked to pay when Government intervened, and deduct from that the sum that is being paid by permanent annuities and add something for interest you will find that the Department pays and pays very handsomely.

I do not think it is necessary for me to refer to the other criticisms that have been made by hon. members. I gathered that the hon. member for Georgetown North (Mr. F. J. Seaford) did not mean to criticise the Board but rather made a suggestion to Government which I think would support the idea which some of the members of the Board would like to see adopted, as to the manner in which the accounts of the Department are kept. I can say this: that the Colonial Treasurer, when he was Accountant in the Transport Department, had different ideas to those which he now nurtures. I think if it were left to him to manage the Colony's accounts they would be presented in a different form, but he has become an official of the deepest dye since he left the care and custody of the Transport Department. (laughter).

There has been some complaint by the hon. member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar), but I would ask that member to

remember that the service run by the Department on the Berbice river is being improved. Not only have the times of departure from New Amsterdam and Paradise been altered to suit the convenience of the public but there has been a reduction not only on the general freight rates but especially on the freight on cattle. It is possible now to maintain with regularity the arrival of the steamer according to schedule. This is the only place in the world—except Barbados, where the train stops of its own accord—where the train stops on the mere signal of some person's finger. Is that a matter of complaint by hon. members?

I do know, whatever the hon. member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob) may imagine to the contrary, that his letters though not couched in diplomatic language, receive far greater attention than the applications he makes merit. For that he ought to be grateful, and I suggest to him that when the opportunity arises he might disclose to his colleagues in this Council, to whom he is always addressing appeals for co-operation, some of his important secrets. I rather fancy that on close examination it will be found that his fears have neither quality nor logical value.

Mr. DIAS: I am grateful to the hon. member for having explained in brief to this Council the origin of the Transport and Harbours Department which resulted from the acquisition by Government of the assets of the Demerara Railway Company. The Combined Court did agree to the acquisition of the railway, and I think it was a very wise step indeed, taken at a time when the Colony was threatened with the loss of the railway which was becoming derelict. There are many people who believe that the Colony had to find a large capital sum to pay for the railway. I have been told so. The Colony did not pay any money at all, but only assumed certain liabilities which continue to appear on the Estimates. By so doing the Government saved a public utility service which to-day is admitted to be one which reflects credit on the Government.

Hon. members are always looking at the deficit the Colony has to meet, but it must be remembered that it paid to the Demerara Railway Company a subsidy of

\$68,000 to convey mails to the country. Government also had to pay Messrs. Sproston about \$70,000 for the steamer services, and as those two services are combined in the Transport and Harbours Department we must take into account the sum of \$138,000 which this Colony would have had to pay up to this day if it had not this service of its own. If there is a deficit of \$79,000 on the working of the Department that sum must be deducted from the \$138,000 this Colony would have had to pay in subsidies if the railway and steamers belonged to private concerns. In the Appendix members will see that the Department is credited with certain sums received from the Post Office for the conveyance of mails. Those sums amount to \$7,850.

One of the terms of the contract with the Demerara Railway Company was that the Colony had to continue to pay that \$68,000 until the Railway Company paid a dividend to its ordinary shareholders, which it never did during the whole of its existence. When dealing with these figures hon. members were not conversant with those facts, and one has to make allowance for that lack of knowledge.

Mr. JACOB: I would like to reply briefly to one or two points. I think we are grateful in a way to the hon. member for New Amsterdam (Mr. Woolford) for his suggestion that Government should endeavour to re-open the question in order that it may be possible to relieve the Colony of these annual payments. If nothing else, my criticisms have borne fruit in that direction. I have endeavoured to criticise, and to criticise strongly, I hope, but the gravamen of my complaints has not been answered. It is true that certain explanations have been given, and excuses more than explanations. I am not concerned who are the members of the Transport Board. I understand that the Hon. Mr. Jones is a member. I should like to ask that hon. member if he really gives the consideration necessary to the business of the Department when he attends meetings of the Board. It is unfair for Government to expect business men to sit on a Board like that without any remuneration, and to give real service to a commercial concern. I know that directors of companies get fees and give of their best, but I cannot imagine members

of a Board giving of their best with no hope of remuneration. It is the hope of reward that sweetens labour, and it cannot be expected that the Transport Department will be managed so successfully as to compete with commercial concerns with heads who are adequately paid. That is why I say the Board is packed, and there should be frequent changes. I have had experience of some Boards in which the members hardly take any interest. I do not blame them. I wonder how many members of this Council take the real interest they should. While public service is all right in its way, and some of us are prepared to give it, it is unfair to expect commercial men to sit on Boards without remuneration and to give of their best, especially when it is a commercial concern.

Lastly I would like to urge that whatever criticisms I have here made are made with the object of improving conditions, and while my letters may not be couched in the very best language, I invite members of the Board to look at the members' files and see whether their letters are couched in any better language than mine.

Mr. F. J. SEAFORD: It may be difficult to alter the estimate at this stage, but I am asking Government to consider the question of including in supplementary estimate 50 per cent. of the cost of the steamer in 1938 and 1939. It might be possible to get over the difficulty in that way. When I made the suggestion it was not intended as a criticism of the Board, but merely to supplement views which I had expressed from time to time.

I was surprised to hear the views expressed by the hon. member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob) about the members of the Transport Board. I had really thought that the standard of morality of this Colony was very much higher. I would like to know whether Government proposes to pay the members of the Coffee Committee appointed this morning because, from the views expressed by the hon. member, it would seem that it is an absolute waste of time for the Committee to sit at all.

Mr. JONES: I had no intention of taking part in this debate because all the criticisms have been fully answered by the hon. member for New Amsterdam (Mr.

Woolford) and the hon. nominated member, Mr. Seaford, but I would just like to let the hon. member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob) know that everything that comes before the Board is given very careful consideration. There is nothing too small or too great for the Commissioners to go into. We spend hours at the meetings of the Board, and so far as I know no member has ever grumbled about doing so. I personally take the greatest interest in the work of the Board. I never sit on any Board, whether I am paid or not, and take no interest in what is being done.

Mr. GONSALVES: I agree with what has been said by the hon. member for New Amsterdam (Mr. Woolford) and the Hon. Mr. Jones. If there is an impression in the minds of some members of this Council that matters are put before the Board as a matter of form and simply marked "Approved" they are mistaken. I say that for the benefit of those who think that members of the Board do not give the service that is expected of them.

With regard to the observation by the hon. member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob) that it is impossible to expect anyone to take an interest in the work of a Board unless he receives remuneration, I would ask whether it is suggested that members of this Council, including the hon. member, do not give their best possible service because they receive no remuneration at all? The hon. member is here to represent not only his constituency but the Colony as a whole. He gets no remuneration for it. Are we to understand that he does not give of his best?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Major Bain Gray): Most of the criticisms of the working of the Department or the Board have been answered by hon. members already, and it is therefore hardly necessary for me to go over them all. The accounting question in particular has been fully dealt with by the Treasurer. We all know of his financial ability, but in addition to that he has instructions on the subject issued by the Secretary of State on the accounting of Colonial Transport Departments. In any event the main question is whether the Transport Department should have a reserve fund for replacement of steamers we are going to

acquire in the next few years. Agreement on that subject has been reached locally that there should be a fund with regard to the replacement of new steamers, and subject to any observation by the Secretary of State, that policy will probably be given effect to in the estimates for 1939.

The immediate question of spreading over two years the cost of steamers we are on the point of acquiring is a matter which, as has been suggested already, has arisen too late for inclusion in the 1938 Estimates, but if as the result of the labours of this Committee we add a sum of \$50,000 to the estimate there will still be a substantial surplus, so that if it is decided during 1938 to adopt this method of spreading the cost over two years it would be quite possible to do so.

There was only one question about the service raised by the hon. member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob), and as he said, he is in frequent correspondence with the Department. That correspondence is still going on, and I can assure him and his constituency that the matter of the service to that outlying district is the subject of frequent consideration by the Board. It is obviously a difficult matter to regulate a service on which the loss is an appreciable sum, in the neighbourhood of \$5,000 a year. Many people believe that there is an element of development work in connection with services to outlying districts that cannot be disregarded, and should not be, but it quite obviously places a heavy responsibility on the Board to take steps which definitely increase the annual loss on the service such as it is.

The hon. member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar) referred to the living accommodation for the railway staff. He was apparently under the impression that some years ago the Post Office staffs encroached on the living accommodation of the stationmasters. That is not so. I am informed that additions were made to the buildings for the purpose of accommodating the Post Offices. On the main question as regards the future accommodation of the railway staff, as the Hon. Mr. Seaford has already mentioned, it is now the definite and decided policy of the Board to improve the living accommodation of all railway officials, and members

will find an item on this year's Estimate which will appear for a considerable number of years. I can assure hon. members that it is only one aspect of the conditions of service which are receiving the close attention of the Board.

I have been a member of the Board at irregular intervals since 1928, and I am also a member of many other Boards. I really do not think it is necessary for me to assure the Council and the Colony that the Transport Board is one of the best Boards it is possible to get in this Colony, or in any other of similar size. The Board meets frequently, and quite frequently within the last six months I have summoned them at irregular hours, and I have always found the members' interest in the Department beyond criticism and beyond reproach. No body of men in this Colony work harder than they do, and I would be very sorry indeed that any other impression was given.

I think I have dealt with the main points raised, and it only remains for me to remind hon. members that in addition to the price of the new vessel there are items on the estimate for the purpose of improving the conditions of service of the subordinate employees of the Department.

Sub-head 1—Net Deficiency, \$76,898.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move that this item be increased to \$83,813.

Item as amended put, and agreed to.

TREASURY—INCOME TAX OFFICE.

Mr. JACOB: I think a Committee was appointed by the Governor to suggest additional taxation. I would like to be advised of the personnel of the Committee and its terms of reference. I have heard nothing more about it.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member will be informed.

TREASURY—COMMISSIONERS OF CURRENCY.

Item *b*—Probationer, \$432.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move that this item be deleted.

Item deleted.

POST OFFICE—EXTRAORDINARY.

Item 1—New lines, material and labour for extending existing services, \$3,800.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move that this item be increased to \$4,000, to provide for internal telephone extensions at the Mental Hospital.

Item as amended put, and agreed to.

PUBLIC WORKS—EXTRAORDINARY.

Item 1—District Administration—Provision of two quarters for administration officers, Suddie, Essequibo, \$5,500.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move that this item be deleted.

Item deleted.

Item 2—Forestry Department—Construction of new office building in Georgetown, \$5,000.

Mr. F. J. SEAFORD: I conscientiously feel that this money should not be expended; it could be put to much better use. I know that the Forestry Department is now in Georgetown; at least two of its officers are in Georgetown and two in the country. The chief work in Georgetown is in connection with the export of timbers. I know there are going to be experiments in the drying and curing of local woods, but I believe that at the present moment that work is being carried on by the Public Works Department. That can be carried on under the supervision of one of the officers of the Forestry Department, and would not entail the building of a large office. Apart from that there are several offices in Water street that can be rented for the use of the Forestry Department for the time being. I am not an optimist as regards the Forestry Department being retained forever. I have nothing against the Head of the Department, who is an excellent and most efficient man in every way, but I feel that he is too big for the Forestry Department in this Colony. I feel that the time will come when Government will have an officer connected with the Department of Lands and Mines doing the work of marking timber, and another officer of the Public Works Department carrying out the experiments in the curing of timbers. I feel that it is unnecessary to spend this

money at present. If a building is erected in a very short time there will be no one to occupy it, and it will become derelict.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I do not think we ought to do much talking. I am asking Government to delete this item because Government knows our views about this Department, and it is unnecessary expenditure. I do not think the Conservator should remain in Georgetown to see boards sawn. If Government is not inclined to withdraw the item I ask that the motion be put.

Mr. JONES: I am inclined to support the hon. member for Georgetown North (Mr. F. J. Seaford). I cannot see the necessity for this building at all. Quite a number of offices in Water Street can be rented to-day at \$30 or \$40 per month, and one of them should be rented until we see the necessity for a permanent office.

Mr. JACOB: The question of renting a building was discussed in Select Committee, and I think the principle applied to one case should apply to all. The Post Office building is being used at present. If that cannot be continued some other office should be rented.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: This question was raised in Select Committee and I think I did mention towards the end of the meeting that it was proposed to delete item 1 but not item 2. It is quite clearly stated in the report of the Select Committee that item 1 should be deleted. The suggestion that an office should be rented was not made in Select Committee. It is quite an interesting one and will be considered. On the other hand Government must make provision for this office. Every effort has been made to find suitable accommodation within Government buildings, but those are fully taxed. It has been found possible to provide temporary accommodation for the Conservator of Forests on the upper flat of the Post Office, but that arrangement is not convenient as a permanent one. The suggestion of renting an office having been made it will be investigated, and if a suitable office can be rented at a reasonable figure in or near Water Street this expenditure will not be carried out.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: I am sorry. It

seems to me that Government has every intention that the item should proceed. I accept the assurance which has been given but I am inclined to think there is still a determination to erect offices for this Department, and for that reason I am compelled to make a few remarks on the subject. There is no doubt that even the export of timber referred to is only in the nature of an experiment, and those of us who have listened to the debates all these years know that we have been experimenting all the time. The Department once occupied the building now being used by the Teachers' Training Centre in Kingston. Then it was transferred to Mazaroni, and has now been brought back to Georgetown. Government will be well advised to delete this item, and if a stronger case can be made out later on for the erection of an office it might receive support.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I would like to know what is the inconvenience being suffered at the Post Office?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The Forestry Department is now in the top storey of the Post Office. It is a most inconvenient place to get at, and it is not convenient for the work of the Postmaster General who cannot agree to it as a permanent arrangement because it interferes seriously with the usual work of the Post Office.

Mr. ELEAZAR: Because the Postmaster-General wants more room to carry out his bad work this Colony is to be mulct in this expenditure. Why not remove the Forestry Department to the office of the Local Government Board at the Law Courts? There are three persons in that office, and a tremendous amount of room. The reason assigned why the Forestry Department should not remain at the Post Office is preposterous.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: It is not so much the convenience of the Conservator but the people who go there. The hon. member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar) referred to the possibility of utilising the office occupied by the Local Government Board. I can assure members that every possible place within the existing Government accommodation has been gone over, not only on this occasion but on previous occasions. With regard

to that particular office, the Government Medical Officer of Health is waiting daily almost for the Local Government Board staff to provide reasonable amount of room for his staff. Soon after his arrival in the Colony Sir Geoffry Northcote and I went over every office and looked at the accommodation provided, and it was very far from being adequate. I have been advocating for some years the erection of a suitable building on the site across the road which would accommodate the overflow from the Public Buildings and the Law Courts, and would be a pleasing addition to the architecture of the City.

Mr. H. G. SEAFORD: I suggest that Government rent the office over the old Thom & Cameron's. I am sure that Mr. Jones would accept a very reasonable rent. (laughter).

The Committee divided and voted:—

*For*—Dr. Wase-Bailey, Professor Dash, Messrs. Christiani, Crease, Case, Laing, D'Andrade, McDavid, Dias, the Attorney-General and the Colonial Secretary—11.

*Against*—Messrs. Jones, H. G. Seaford, Jackson, Seymour, Jacob, Walcott, Peer Bacchus, Gonsalves, Elcazar, De Aguiar, F. J. Seaford, Woolford and Luckhoo—13.

Item deleted.

Item 1 as renumbered—Magistrates—Erection of building for storage of furniture at Magistrate's Court, Georgetown, \$600.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move that this item be amended to read:—1.—Magistrates—(a) Erection of building for storage of furniture at Magistrate's Court, Georgetown, \$600; (b) New furniture for Magistrate's Courts, \$800.

Item as amended put, and agreed to.

Item 2 as renumbered—Medical Department—Public Hospital, Georgetown—Construction of new maternity wing to accommodate sixty beds, theatre and two delivery rooms, \$20,000.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move that this item be amended to read:—2. Medical Department—Public Hospital, Georgetown—(a) Construction

of new maternity wing to accommodate sixty beds, theatre and two delivery rooms, \$20,000; (b) Sanitary Improvements, \$3,000.

Item as amended put, and agreed to.

Item 4 as renumbered—Public Hospital, Suddie—Provision of shelter for out-patients' department, \$800.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move that this item be amended to read:—4—Public Hospital, Suddie—Provision for out-patients' department, \$2,000. This provision was fully discussed in Select Committee and I think hon. members were agreed as to the need for it.

Item as amended put, and agreed to.

Item 7 as renumbered—Mental Hospital, Berbice—(a) Construction of new dispensary, \$1,000; (b) Construction of criminal annexe for females, \$2,200; (c) Other works, \$1,000.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move that this item be amended to read:—7—Mental Hospital, Berbice—(a) Construction of new dispensary, \$1,000; (b) Installation of modern sanitary accommodation, Victoria, North and F. Blocks, \$3,200.

Item as amended put, and agreed to.

Item 8 as renumbered—Police Department—Police Station, Brickdam—Reconstruction of main barracks, \$20,000.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move that this item be amended to read:—8—Police Department—Police Station, Brickdam—Reconditioning of main barracks, \$20,000.

Mr. JACOB: The Select Committee recommended a little more than that. The Committee thought that \$20,000 was a very exorbitant sum to be spent on the building. I do not know whether the matter has been gone into again and Government has varied the figure in the light of the revised estimate.

Mr. CASE (Director of Public Works and Sea Defences): This is a very old building and it is almost impossible to say what we will have to do until it is opened up. No more will be spent than is necessary.

THE CHAIRMAN: From what I saw the other day when a portion of the building was opened up for my inspection, it seems to me that it will need almost complete reconstruction. It will be a question whether \$20,000 will be enough.

Item as amended put, and agreed to.

Item 10 as renumbered—Police Station, Belfield—(a) Construction of new building to contain barracks, married quarters, guard room, magistrate's court-room and post office, \$11,330; (b) Construction of new quarters for County Inspector, \$6,670.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: I desire to express my thanks to Government for the inclusion of this item, and also for the fulfilment of the promise made by the Colonial Secretary regarding the other proposal put forward in respect of the Post Office. I am going to be bold enough to suggest that the matter might receive early consideration. Now that we have disposed of the office for the Forestry Department perhaps Government might look at it in a different light.

Mr. ELEAZAR: Does Government consider it advisable to construct new quarters for the County Inspector instead of continuing to rent the building now being occupied? The County Inspector did not always live at Belfield, and I do not think Belfield is the best site if a building must be erected. The Inspector's house should be situated where the bulk of the population is, and nearer to the Magistrate's house.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The question of site is being considered and has not been decided upon, but the intention is to erect a house for the County Inspector. The arrangement of renting a house has been very expensive, and not at all an economical or convenient one. The actual site of the police station is not yet decided.

Mr. JACOB: The renting of a house is not an economical arrangement at all. It is better that Government should have its own building.

Item put, and agreed to.

Item 19 as renumbered—Improvements drainage system New Amsterdam, \$30,000.

Mr. SEYMOUR: I appreciate the fact that Government is taking keen interest in the vital problem of drainage, and two days ago I wrote Government making certain suggestions as regards the drainage of Anna Regina. If after the survey in New Amsterdam it has been found necessary that the drainage there should be looked after, it seems to me incredible that nothing has been done at Anna Regina where we have had the drainage problem for many years. It is not a case of making a survey; the levels are there. The Director of Public Works stated in a report that a pump was essential. A pump is necessary as an auxiliary for forcing the channel, but water will not run up a hill. There are pumps in other parts of the Colony which have not been used for years; they should be removed and installed at Anna Regina. For years the Hon. Mr. Brassington has pleaded in this Council for improvement of the drainage in Essequibo. I am asking Government to give the matter early consideration.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I know of one pump that went round once after it had been erected and has never been used since. What is the use of having pumps where they were not wanted? I refer to the pump at Clonbrook? Why not remove it to Anna Regina where it is wanted?

THE CHAIRMAN: As I informed hon. members in my Address, I have received reports from the Director of Public Works in regard to this matter, and he has recommended a survey which will cost about \$4,000. I hope that work will be carried out before very long, after which careful consideration will be given as to what amelioration is possible in the light of the survey report.

Item put, and agreed to.

#### DRAINAGE AND FILLING GOVERNMENT LANDS.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move the insertion of a new item, 20—Improvement of drainage and filling in of low-lying areas of Government lands in Georgetown, \$10,000. The policy has been explained already.

Item put, and agreed to.

Item (1)—Purchase of fire extinguishers, \$250.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move that this item be deleted, having been already provided for under Fire Protection.

Item deleted.

THE CHAIRMAN: I wish to inform the Council that the total expenditure as approved in Committee is now \$5,705,690.

The Council resumed.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move that the original motion on the Estimates be amended by the substitution of the words "as amended in Committee" for the words "which have been laid on the table."

Mr. DIAS seconded.

Motion as amended put, and agreed to.

THE PRESIDENT: Before I adjourn the Council I would like to express my appreciation of the careful attention given by hon. members to the Estimates of the Colony for 1938, and also for the readiness with which all hon. members agreed to sit for longer hours than has been customary in order to deal with the Estimates as expeditiously as possible.

Mr. DIAS: If you will permit me, sir, before you vacate the chair as President I should like on behalf of the unofficial members of the Council to convey to you our gratitude for the very able and dignified manner in which you have conducted the deliberations of the Council during the consideration of the Estimates. We realise, and I believe the community realises, the value of your very able services during the period you have been the Officer Administering the Government, and we only hope that it will stand you in good stead in the future. You have established a record. I have no recollection of this Council having got through the Estimates in nine days, and that achievement is due to your tact and the patience you exercised with some of my hon. friends, and I do not exclude my very respected friend, the hon. member for Berbice River (laughter). I am sure we are all very grateful and wish you every success in life.

Before I take my seat I ask permission, sir, to refer to your co-administrator, the acting Colonial Secretary. Some of the members have expressed among themselves a very high opinion of the service he has rendered, and we hope also that it will stand him in good stead in his future career.

Mr. LUCKHOO: On behalf of the elected members, and speaking for myself, I should like to express my personal thanks to you, sir, for having placed on the Estimates the sum of \$30,000 in order to allow New Amsterdam to improve its drainage system, and I must also express my thanks to the members of the Council for having allowed that item to pass without any criticism.

With respect to your services as the Officer Administering the Government, sir, I should like to say how deeply I appreciate your action in this Council. Your Excellency has exhibited a thorough grasp of local affairs, and by courtesy, tact and goodwill you have earned the love, respect and affection of the members of this Council. You have done your best, and I can assure you of our grateful thanks for the manner in which you have allowed the various items to be discussed. We have had a record session indeed. I never thought for a moment we would have been able to get through in this time. I thank you, sir, for the part you have played, and the sympathetic interest you have displayed.

With regard to the acting Colonial Secretary I should like to add my tribute. Undoubtedly he is a man of great ability and zeal, and I wish to compliment him on the efficient manner in which he has discharged his duties. (Applause).

Mr. ELEAZAR: I would like to associate myself with all that has been said about the success you have achieved during the period you have administered the Government of this Colony, because I perceive you have a quality which is very rare in men. You can take away the sting of a bee without being stung. (laughter). That is why I think in a very short time you will be called to higher service, and we are going to lose you here. I therefore speak with mixed feelings. I express the feelings of other members when I say that you have given us yeoman



service; you have treated us in the way we like to be treated and we have reciprocated. We only reciprocated what you did, and for that I am happy to associate myself with all that has been said about you.

As for my old friend, the acting Colonial Secretary, I know he can deliver the goods (applause). A great financier, he can make a penny do the work of a shilling, and for that we have to thank him. We are very grateful to him for having done all he has done during the period he has filled the place of the Colonial Secretary. He deserves it, and I have no hesitation in according him a

meed of praise for the able manner in which he has filled that office.

THE PRESIDENT: Hon. members, I have been much moved by the very kind remarks you have made, and I wish to thank you very much. I wish to say also that the period of my acting appointment has been made easy by the very great assistance I have received from all sections of the community in British Guiana, and especially by the great help that has been given to me by Major Bain Gray as acting Colonial Secretary. I am very grateful for all the help I have received.

The Council adjourned *sine die*.