

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Tuesday, 11th December, 1934.

The Council met pursuant to adjournment, His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government, SIR CRAWFORD DOUGLAS-JONES, Kt., C.M.G., President, in the Chair.

PRESENT.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Mr. P. W. King, (Acting).

The Hon. the Attorney General, Mr. Hector Josephs, K.C., B.A., L.L.M. (Cantab.), L.L.B. (Lond.).

The Hon. T. T. Smellie, O.B.E. (Nominated Unofficial Member).

Major the Hon. W. Bain Gray, M.A., Ph.D. (Edin.), B. Litt. (Oxon), Director of Education.

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

The Hon. R. E. Brassington (Western Essequibo).

The Hon. E. A. Luckhoo (Eastern Berbice).

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

The Hon. J. C. Craig, D.S.O., M.E.I.C., Director of Public Works.

The Hon. E. F. McDavid, M.B.E., Colonial Treasurer (Acting).

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

The Hon. J. Mullin, M.I.M.M., F.S.I., Commissioner of Lands and Mines.

The Hon. B. R. Wood, M.A., Dip. For. (Cantab.), Conservator of Forests.

The Hon. J. A. Henderson, M.B., Ch.B. B.Sc. (P.H.), (Edin.), D.T.M. & H. (Edin.) Surgeon-General.

The Hon. N. Cannon (Georgetown North).

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

The Hon. J. Eleazar (Berbice River).

The Hon. J. Gonsalves (Georgetown South).

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

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

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

The Hon. F. J. Seaford (Nominated Unofficial Member).

The Hon. Peer Bacchus (Western Berbice).

The Hon. J. L. Wills (Demerara River).

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

MINUTES.

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Friday, 7th December, 1934, as printed and circulated, were confirmed.

ANNOUNCEMENT.

LOAN FOR BARTICA-POTARO ROAD WORKS.

Major CRAIG (Director of Public Works): I am the bearer of the following Message from His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government to the Council:—

MESSAGE No. 7.

Honourable Members of the Legislative Council,

I have the honour to inform you that certain further works are considered necessary to the section of the Bartica-Potaro Road between 91½ miles from Bartica and the present traffic terminus at 12¾ miles on the old Potaro Road.

2. It is proposed to macadamize the existing wooden corduroy surface of the sandy clay stretches of the road between 91½ miles and the Potaro River; and to strengthen some of the wooden bridges on the old Potaro Road between Garraway Stream and 12¾ miles. These bridges were designed for relatively light traffic and are unsuitable for the vehicles and loads of the present day.

3. Members who have travelled on the Bartica-Potaro Road will be aware of the unsatisfactory state of the surface between 91½ miles and Garraway Stream.

4. It was hoped to replace this corduroy gradually by stone macadam from maintenance

funds, but its life under the heavy traffic now passing over it has been very short, and its replacement by some enduring surfacing medium is now imperative.

5. It is estimated that a total length of 9,000 lineal yards of corduroyed surface has to be replaced, while further treatment is required to 1,300 lineal yards of roadway which have been laid with coarse metal only.

6. An application to the Colonial Development Advisory Committee for a loan of £8,500 from the Colonial Development Fund has been approved, subject to payment of interest at the rate of 3½ per cent. per annum thereon and the capital sum being repaid by equated annuities within 20 years from the date of each advance.

7. I invite this Council to approve of the acceptance of the loan for these necessary works on the terms mentioned above.

C. DOUGLAS-JONES,

Officer Administering the Government,

5th December, 1934.

PAPER LAID.

Mr. McDAVID (Colonial Treasurer) laid on the table—

Comparative Statement of Expenditure under the Separate Heads of the Colonial Estimates for the ten years 1924 to 1933.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL gave notice that at the next meeting of the Council he would ask leave to introduce and have read the first time the following Bills :—

A Bill to amend the Georgetown Town Council Ordinance, Chapter 86, with respect to the disqualifications of councillors and with respect to the payment and recovery of taxes.

A Bill to amend the Georgetown Sewerage and Water Ordinance, Chapter 96, with respect to the payment and recovery of the rate under section twenty-two.

LOAN FOR BARTICA-POTARO ROAD WORKS.

Major CRAIG (Director of Public Works) gave notice that at the next meeting of the Council he would move the following motion :—

THAT, with reference to the Officer Administering the Government's Message No. 7 of the 5th of December, 1934, this Council approves of the acceptance of a further loan of £8,500 from the Colonial Development Fund for the purpose of effecting improvements to the surfacing and bridges of the Bartica-Potaro Road between 9½ miles and 12¾ miles on the old Potaro Road, subject to interest at the rate of 3½ per cent. per annum being paid thereon and the capital sum being repaid by equated annuities within 20 years from the date of each advance.

UNOFFICIAL NOTICES.

DRAINAGE AND IRRIGATION.

Mr. ELEAZAR gave notice of the following motions :—

THAT a comprehensive scheme of Drainage and Irrigation for the entire coast lands of the Colony in sections commencing from the County of Berbice is essentially necessary for the economic development and the relief of unemployment, and also to ensure the prosperity of the Country; and this Council respectfully requests Government to obtain the approval of the Secretary of State for the Colonies to raise the necessary funds for the immediate embarkation upon such a scheme.

MEDICAL INQUIRY COMMITTEE.

THAT in the opinion of this Council the appointment of the Committee to enquire into the administration of the Medical Department is a violation of the privileges of the Unofficial Members of the Council and a dangerous precedent to future administration.

EXCLUSIVE PERMISSIONS IN MINING DISTRICTS.

Mr. ELEAZAR gave notice of the following questions :—

How many Exclusive Permissions have been granted in the Mining Districts of the Colony? How long has each subsisted? What is the area covered by each?

GOVERNMENT PRIMARY SCHOOLS.

How many Government Schools are there in the Colony, where are they situate and the number of children enrolled in each?

What is the cost of maintenance of the Government Primary School in Georgetown under the following heads :—

- (a) Staff:
- (b) Equipment.

Mr. GONSALVES laid on the table the following petitions :—

(a) From Ada Worrell praying for a pension in respect of her services at the Public Hospital, Georgetown.

(b) From Caroline Augusta Mitchell, praying for the payment to her of any sum to which she may be entitled in respect of her late husband's contributions to the Widows and Orphans' Pension Fund.

FLOODING OF PLN. LIMA.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: Before the Council proceeds with the Order of the Day I would like to ask whether Government has received any communication with regard to the inundation of Pln. Lima on the Essequibo Coast. I have received a telegram, which appears in the Press, from the residents of Lima. I do not know whether Your Excellency has seen it. On the receipt of that telegram I communi-

cated with the Director of Public Works and asked that immediate steps be taken to ameliorate the conditions there. I do not know whether Your Excellency wishes me to read the telegram.

THE PRESIDENT: Government will look into the matter. I have no doubt Government will receive a communication. The hon. Member might let the Clerk of the Council have a copy of the telegram.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: I wish Your Excellency will allow me to say this: that on previous occasions I have been permitted by you to read something that concerned my constituency. I do not know if I am in order. I am not going to make a speech, but it is a very important matter.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Perhaps the hon. Member will move an adjournment of the House in order to put himself in order, otherwise there is nothing before the House.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: I do not wish to do that Your Excellency if you would assure me that the matter is receiving the attention of the Government. It is truly a serious position in Essequebo.

THE PRESIDENT: I give the hon. Member the assurance that the matter will receive attention. If he hands a copy of the telegram to the Clerk of the Council copies will be sent to the Press.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: That has been done already. I sent a copy to the Director of Public Works yesterday.

ORDER OF THE DAY,

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY.

The Council resumed the debate on the following motion:—

That the Council do resolve itself into Committee to consider the Estimates of Expenditure to be defrayed from Revenue during the year ending 3rd December, 1935.

Mr. ELEAZAR: It is usual on this occasion to thank Government for the Speech which has been delivered, and which will form the subject of this debate. I have always prefaced my remarks by congratulating Government on the effort,

but on this occasion I regret to say that while I have to thank Government—I believe in thanking everyone for mercies received, no matter how small, and often for what I do not receive—I cannot congratulate them to-day. The Speech which has been delivered by you, sir, on this occasion has no doubt created a feeling in this community that our position is absolutely hopeless, and that while we are in this parlous state we are called upon to distribute *largesse*—to put it mildly—in certain directions. These donations which are indicated in your Speech leave some of us in a state of wonderment bordering on exasperation, as to how it became possible for such propositions to come from Government to the Unofficial Section in these times. Government has informed this Council that certain circumstances unforeseen have arisen during the year which have had disastrous effects on Government revenue, the flood and the breach of the sea defences at Nog Eens. Government might well have added the drought which succeeded the flood. One naturally would have expected Government to indicate some direction in which it is hoped that the economic equilibrium of the country would be resuscitated. The flood was unprecedented. During the century of British occupation of this country we have been accustomed to having floods every year and sometimes two floods in a year. I note that we are in for a rainy season in December and another in June every year, and that we expect our usual drought once in seven years. The drought in 1926 was unprecedented, the worst ever experienced in this country, and the flood in the early part of this year was the worst this country has experienced. The oldest man living in this country has never seen the like of it, and we hope that the like of it will never return. Surely one would have expected Government to indicate that measures would be taken to prevent a recurrence of such a calamity, and not merely to gloss it over and leave it at that. I say the country is disappointed, the Unofficial Members are disappointed that Government has not indicated anything which would lead them to think that Government has addressed its mind to any preventive measure. From time immemorial the complaint has been that a drainage and irrigation scheme for the coastlands is an absolute necessity, and now that conditions have reached an

unprecedented state we find Government passing it over without even an indication as to what the future policy is to be. We know that owing to these calamities and the general world depression we have with us what we have never had before, or at least what we have never taken cognizance of before, that is unemployment. There are always unemployables in every part of the world, but we have men willing, anxious and able to work, for whom no work can be found. Government has simply contented itself with saying that there is an amount of money to be spent on relief works, but of what nature we are not told. That is another source of disappointment in these Estimates.

Worst of all, Government, in your Excellency's Speech, has indicated that the District Administration Scheme, which was forced upon the community in much the same way as the present Constitution, against the protests of all who had the power to protest, has been a failure, but notwithstanding the failure of the scheme Government has indicated its determination to increase the personnel and to add to the remuneration of those officers who have failed. I cannot conceive of any person who has given thought to this subject, leaving out the Government, taking up such an attitude. The scheme has been pronounced a failure, but in spite of that Government is asking the community to increase the salaries of the District Commissioners above those of their seniors in the Service. I notice that the proposed increase is \$60 per month in some cases and increased personnel. The new officers will be appointed as Assistants, to learn what? What are the qualifications of a District Commissioner, and what is his successor to learn? If I were asked—and surely those who are paid for that business ought to be more alert than I am—I would go into the country and without looking around, hand to Government gentlemen who will do the job at the present salaries. Yet Government wants to have men to train as District Commissioners and to pay them \$200 a month. To ask Elected Members to support such a proposition is an insult to their intelligence. I protest strongly against it. If the Commissioners have failed I do not know how they are going to teach other officers. I understand that the reason for this movement on the part

of Government is because Government has been losing revenue. No wonder. Those who had experience of the country knew very well that would be the result. Before the Constitution was changed and the District Administration Scheme adumbrated there was a Treasury in Essequibo, a sub-Treasury at Fellowship on the West Coast, at Belfield on the East Coast, and one in New Amsterdam. The Government of that day saw the wisdom of concentrating Government finances in Georgetown, and those sub-Treasuries were abolished. This Government in the plenitude of its wisdom has again resuscitated those sub-Treasuries under another name, and now tells us that it has lost revenue. For that reason these Commissioners are to be paid more money, and young men who are to be taught District Administration work are to be paid \$200 per month when a doctor is paid \$100 per month, a professional man! A Magistrate gets a smaller salary than a District Commissioner who has no qualifications at all. The thing is scandalous. I cannot find any other description for it. It is a colossal scandal. If it is the opinion of Government that these two Commissioners are deserving of higher pay, come straight and tell us so. Government has indicated its determination to retain part of the salaries it took away from these officers for the sake of retrenchment, yet in the same breath Government is going to select a certain few for donations, because they are the pets of Government.

I see nothing in the Speech to indicate that Government is going to redeem its promise to this Council some time ago when it was stated that Government intended to put certain officers in a different class, and that they were no longer to be considered to be in the clerical branch of the Service. What is to become of the dispensers, postmasters and officers of that standing who are not on the Fixed Establishment? Government promised to make another class and put them in, but they have been waiting for two years and do not know where they are. Is Government going to redeem its pledge to these men and place them in a position to have something to look forward to? With one stroke of the pen Government has deprived them of the privilege they hoped to enjoy when they joined the service. These are some of the

things we expected to hear from Government but there was nothing about them in the Speech.

I expected to see in the Speech something about the activities of the Transport and Harbours Department with respect to its officers. Government still persists in what it alone believes, while nobody else does, that they are not Government servants. Whose servants are they? They have to remain there at the mercy of the Directors, and when a man retires or dies he or his widow is given an *ex gratia* sum. These are things we expected to find in the Speech, but what do we find? We find that the Postmaster General whose salary before the War—and the salaries of greater men than he—was £700 per annum—now it is £825—is to get a personal allowance. In the meantime he is actually depriving the postmasters of quarters. The Postmaster of New Amsterdam is to-day without quarters, and though his predecessors got a house allowance he gets none. The Postmaster General has taken away the telephones from Government officers. He is saving on the telephones, he says, and for that he is to get an additional allowance of £50. Telegraph messengers were made to use their own bicycles and were given an allowance of \$2 per month. To-day they get \$1 per month for using their own bicycles. The thing is absurd to the last degree. In 1885, as soon as an officer got \$144 a year he was put on the Fixed Establishment. To-day telegraph operators are told they have to work for 20 years before they are put on the Fixed Establishment. Many of them have gone over the 20-year period and are still not on the Fixed Establishment. Isn't that a breach of faith? Still we are asked to favour the highly paid officials.

The only redeeming feature, the only ray of hope in Your Excellency's Speech, is the reference made to the achievements at Queen's College, thanks to the Elected Section of this House and those who protested against what was being carried on. But what are we to do for that? We are to thank a person who had nothing to do with that, we are to give the highly paid Director of Education another \$20 per month on his salary. If that is not a ramp nothing is a ramp. Where is the Education Code that has taken eight years in the making? It cannot see the light of

day until now. Government accepted my motion for the appointment of a Committee to enquire into the system of education, but that Committee is yet to be appointed. It was said that the Committee should wait until the new Code was framed to discuss it. The Code is never to be framed, and therefore the Committee is never to be appointed. These things cannot last forever. Nature has a way of recouping herself, and in this instance—I do not wish it, but I cannot prevent it—it seems to me that is what we are waiting for—for Nature to say "That is the end of it."

Education is in a chaotic state in this country. The Department is being run against every person who thinks anything about it at all. There is not a single clergyman in this country who is in sympathy with what is going on now. Everyone is out of sympathy, and if any man dares reply I will be able to give him the lie. Still we are asked to pay another \$20 per month to an already highly paid if not overpaid Director.

Apart from that, if I remember rightly, the very first occasion on which the Director of Education sat in this Council he advocated the appointment of a female Inspector of Schools, but this Council and the old Combined Court have persistently refused to allow the experiment. We do not want experimenting on such a subject; it is absolutely useless. Have they a female Inspector of Schools in Barbados? We are told that we want one to assist in the training of female teachers. That is only the fad of a theorist. In Barbados, where some of our best female teachers were trained, there was no female Inspector. What has become of the infants of this country all these years? What do Inspectors do here? It is said that a female Inspector is necessary because we have a large number of small boys and girls going to school. That is a manifest absurdity. A Committee is to be appointed to enquire into the education of the country and Government is asking for something that might never be wanted.

That brings me to the Medical Department. We have a Committee actually enquiring into the administration of this Department and Government is appointing two Supernumerary Medical Officers to the Hospital. It has also been suddenly

discovered that the nursing is not adequate. What does that mean? Supposing the Committee finds that we do not want young doctors but specialists in certain branches, what then? Government's action is intended either to hoodwink the Committee or frustrate its endeavours, and deceive the community. That is the view of the general public and the ordinary business man. Government should wait until it gets the report of the Committee and see what we want. The new doctors are to be placed on a higher basis and get higher salaries than some of the men who are actually in the employment of Government now. My vote cannot prevent it, but it certainly will not help it. I hope that no Unofficial Member will assist Government in these ramps.

On page 12 of your Speech we find Your Excellency states:—

“It has, however, become increasingly evident that, in order to enable the growers of rice to obtain a better price for their produce, it is essential to establish an organization charged with the duty of marketing all the rice for export.”

I have always known that the saying is “Get your hare and then cook it.” Government will not help the people to get rice by giving them drainage and irrigation, but is getting an organisation to teach them what to do with their padi. These things are irritating to the ordinary individual. Take the train to Mahaicony and you will see the large expanse of blasted rice. These things do not help to inspire confidence in Government at all. Your Excellency also says in your Speech:—

“It is with great pleasure that I am able to record the appreciation expressed by the Secretary of State of the valuable work done by the Agricultural Department for the benefit of this industry.”

I suppose the Secretary of State has great pleasure in expressing his appreciation because he is so far away. If he had been here and had gone on the East Coast and seen what was there he would have wanted to know why the Director cannot tell us how to ensure the people's crops, and why is it that he has only now discovered that dwarf bananas can grow in the country because they cannot get Panama disease. Nobody is pleased on this side

because we know that all is not well. We have any amount of talk and additional expenditure, but nothing to show for it.

When we come to deal with the Estimates under each head I will make remarks with respect to some of them. I therefore do not wish to take up any more of the time of the Council in further discussing Your Excellency's Speech. There is quite a lot more that can be said on it. While I think you have put these things in a nutshell I cannot congratulate Government except on the achievements at Queen's College, which are entirely due to the Principal of that institution.

Mr. DEAGUIAR: I desire to join my friend in his thanks to Your Excellency for the able manner in which the affairs of Government in respect of 1934 have been reviewed, and also for the forecast in respect of 1935. But, like him, I feel that the Budget for 1935 is one that has absolutely no ray of hope for the people of the country, because I have examined the Estimates very carefully and I can see nothing whereby the position of the people will be improved during the year. To begin with, no relief from taxation is proposed. To my mind, if it were at all possible—and I hope to be able to show later on that it might have been possible to afford some relief—there can be no doubt that whatever relief from taxation is afforded it would be reflected in the spending power of the people.

Let us examine for a moment the expenditure for 1934 and make an analysis with the draft Estimates for 1935. The figures for 1934, as far as I have been able to find out, show that the revised estimate of revenue was \$5,476,552. That revised estimate of revenue is based on ordinary receipts of \$4,792,181, and extraordinary receipts of \$406,288. Receipts from Colony Reserve Fund, etc. total \$278,084. Against that there is an estimated expenditure of \$5,260,061. The position in respect of 1935 shows that the revenue from ordinary receipts is estimated to produce \$4,810,329, or a figure slightly above the estimated ordinary revenue in respect of 1934. The extraordinary receipts are estimated at \$200,000, regarding which I shall make some remarks later, and Loans-in-aid account for the balance, making a total of

\$5,675,205. The total estimated expenditure for the same period is \$5,514,474. It is obvious that the draft Estimates are prepared on the basis of what this Colony is expected to earn in revenue, either ordinary or extraordinary. There can be no doubt about it that Government in framing its Estimates expected that there would probably be receipts from ordinary and extraordinary sources of an amount exceeding five million dollars, and the estimate of expenditure was based accordingly. I make that statement without any fear of contradiction, having regard to the fact that certain new items have been introduced into the estimates of expenditure for the coming year, and it must necessarily follow, as night follows day, that if we have so much money to spend we must find avenues to spend that money. In the same breath Government made reference to the floods and the sea defence difficulties, and framed its estimates of ordinary revenue at a figure higher than in 1934, before we knew anything about the floods, because the figures were originally drafted at the end of 1933.

The sea defence problem will not create an additional charge on the revenue of the Colony. But be that as it may, in my humble opinion I do not think that the burden this Government will be called upon to bear in respect of works which are now being carried on will be such a figure as to prevent this Government from embarking upon any development schemes for the future prosperity of this country. But the question of Government expectation from ordinary revenue is one which cannot be easily overlooked. There can be no doubt that as the result of the floods the revenue for the coming year will be affected, to what extent it is difficult to say at this stage, but one can readily forecast that Government's hopes in respect of receipts of ordinary revenue might not be realised. I would have preferred to see relief from taxation in various forms. The Export Tax seems to be something that will be always with us. There can be no doubt that the continuation of the Export Tax will interfere with the industries of this Colony.

One other point I would like to mention is that I observe that it is expected to receive a sum of \$20,000 in Excise Duty on edible oil. Government is fully aware

of what is going on at the present time. Whether that figure will be realised in 1935 there must be grave doubt. As a matter of fact I am beginning to wonder at the justification of penalising one particular branch of that industry in the collection of revenue. It is known that that tax is only being paid by the Demerara Oil Mills, and would they not be right if during 1935 they asked Government to relieve them of that duty in view of the fact that Government finds it impossible to collect the same rate of duty from other sources, and also in view of the 25-year guarantee that Government gave the proprietors of that factory before it was installed? I make reference to that because I have grave fears that the sum of \$20,000 will be realised from that source, and if things of this kind are still in the air it seems to me that instead of Government first of all finding out how much revenue it is going to collect before drafting its estimates of expenditure, the position ought to have been the other way about.

I made reference to sea defences. I would remind hon. Members that so far as the immediate commitments of this Government are concerned the sea defences of this Colony are controlled by a Board, and there is an annual vote by this Council of \$50,000. That amount cannot be increased without the approval of the Council. I would like to remind hon. Members that not many days ago the Council was approached, and I believe the contribution in respect of 1935 was increased to \$56,000. The point I wish to make is this: that as far as it is known, the works that are going on at the present moment will probably require a loan in the vicinity of \$800,000. I will calculate the loan on the basis of \$800,000 in order to make the point clear that the commitments of this Government will not be as great, and therefore should not act as a bar against any schemes that might be put forward for the development of any part of the country. An \$800,000 loan, if we accept that figure, would probably be raised at the rate of 3 per cent. interest which would require an annual commitment of approximately \$24,000. As far as I can calculate, this Government will only be committed to the extent of \$12,000 per annum. After all that is not an amount sufficiently alarming to prevent any further schemes.

So far as the Estimates are concerned I should like to say that Members of this Council should be given a little more time in order to consider them carefully. After all the preparation of these Estimates must undoubtedly take up a lot of the time of the respective Government officers. The Colonial Secretary in making his Budget speech frankly admitted that the framing of it "has been a task of some difficulty having regard to the revenue position and the many important outstanding matters involving expenditure which have had to be temporarily held over." I suppose the expenditure referred to is whether we should increase the emoluments of certain officers or give them additional allowances, but that is a matter which might well be left over at this stage. I have been able to make small investigation into the Estimates. There are a few items I would like to make reference to.

It will be remembered that some time ago when a proposal was put forward by Government to establish a Central Stationery Store a new head was introduced in the Estimates and referred to as Archives and Stationery. I think that was done in 1932. At that time \$601 was the amount voted on the Fixed Establishment, with "Other Charges" \$5,257. In 1933 no amount was voted on the Fixed Establishment, but on the Unfixed Establishment a sum of \$584 was voted, with "Other Charges" amounting to \$5,182. In 1934 the figures were \$960, Unfixed Establishment, "Other Charges" \$5,400. The proposal for 1935 is Unfixed Establishment \$1,560, "Other Charges" \$5,400. I take "Other Charges" to mean the value of the stationery to be imported. Whereas in 1932 it cost \$600 to look after \$5,257 worth of stationery, in 1935 it is going to cost Government \$1,560 to look after \$5,400 worth. At that time I sounded a note of warning that in introducing this proposal Government would never be able to effect a saving on its stationery bill. To-day I am in a position to draw Government's attention to what I told them in 1932. It is going to cost Government over 25 per cent. of the total value of the stationery to look after it. I know Government's answer will be that the scheme is now being developed. We will soon be wanting an Assistant Superintendent, and a little later on a museum

collector to look after the old files. If that is the answer of Government the obvious question will be what has become of the old records of Government? Who has been looking after them? Where are those officers now? What are they doing at present? We have to provide additional funds so as to continue the development of the scheme. It will be very difficult now to remove the item from the Estimates, so all we need do now is to prevent this Department increasing from its present figure to that of the Department of Agriculture.

Elected Members of this Council, and I believe the Nominated Members too, will voice their disapproval of the increases under the head District Administration. It is well known that the scheme is far from nearing completion. We were told that the introduction of this scheme would not mean at any time increased expenditure, yet from the time of its inauguration we have been called upon to increase the annual estimate. The estimate for 1935 has taken a new turn. We have now two of the "big Governors" and three or four of the lesser fry. They are being divided into two classes. In one case we find that it is intended that one of these officers should participate in the new scale of salaries. In 1934 his salary was voted at \$3,120, but for 1935 it is fixed at \$3,600. I would like to draw the attention of Government to the fact that the new scale provides for these two high-class Commissioners a salary of \$3,120 rising by \$120 to \$3,840, but the scale is only now being introduced. I can only conclude that there must be some reason, and I would like Government to give the reason why this officer will receive four annual increments in one, because after all that is what it amounts to. Does Government intend to give this officer the maximum under the old scale because he has consented to accept the new scale of this office? I have looked through the Estimate but I have not been able to find the other "second-class Governor." I think that officer is intended for the Berbice district. I am not sure about it and I reserve my remarks. I have not been able to find the officer who is to participate in this new scheme of first-grade Commissioner. In respect of the Berbice district the emoluments of the Commissioner last year were \$2,420,

for 1935 his salary is put down at \$2,520. I suppose in time this Council will be informed of the district to which this officer will be allotted, and it will not be surprising if we receive, either in the form of a supplementary estimate or a Governor's Message, a request to meet the salary of the officer whenever he is appointed, on the same scale as the officers I have just referred to. An examination of the expenditure of this Department for a period of three years shows a very interesting state of affairs. In 1933 the amount voted was \$91,181, in 1934 it was \$95,598, and the estimate for 1935 is \$101,103, a 10 per cent. increase in the short period of two years. How is it made up? It should be of interest to Members of the Council to know that a substantial proportion of the increase is going to the officers above the line, a fair proportion of the increase will go towards pensionable emoluments. Therefore our troubles will not even end by passing the vote, but will go on and later on we will have to bear an additional burden in the form of increased pensions to these officers. My own view of the new proposal to divide these Commissioners into two classes is that it should be deferred, having regard to the present state of things in the Colony, and I sincerely hope Government will accept that view and defer it.

The scheme is not yet nearing completion. Why do we want at this stage to appoint Assistant Commissioners, when the crying need of Government is the appointment of Excise officers, men who are experienced in distillery work? We are to have two Assistant Commissioners now, and a little later we will have Assistant Commissioners in each district under the scheme. If Government's idea is to give this District Commissioner an assistant in order to free him to attend Committee meetings—because I notice he is being appointed to nearly every one of them—or it is because Government hopes that this Commissioner will be able to do work that will result in some benefit, either in the way of collecting revenue which we all know is being lost to Government, or whether it is to give advice to the people in the villages in order to improve their position, then it would be something that any Member of the Council would agree with. After all certain duties are assigned to the Commissioner, and if

he is merely given an assistant to free him of those duties in order to attend the various Committee meetings, then one can only characterise such expenditure as too costly and, as my friend said, absolutely useless. I made reference to the appointment of an Excise officer because in the old days distillery work was done by the Commissaries. All of that work is now supposed to be done under the District Administration Scheme, and experience has taught us that Government is suffering from the want of a type of officer who has special knowledge of that particular branch of work. Whilst I am advocating it I am not at all suggesting that the officer should be put under the District Administration Scheme. I would like to make that perfectly clear. My own view of the matter is that Excise work should fall on the shoulders of the Customs Department. Members of the Council in going around take keen interest in matters pertaining to Government, and when things of this kind are brought to their notice they must make representations. It is the only way one can hope to obtain any improvement.

As regards the Forest Department I should like to say at the outset that as a member of the Forest Trust I desire to protest very strongly that the estimates of that Department have not been submitted to me. I know I will be told that members of the Trust are in an advisory capacity and not administrative. That may be so, but I also know that all matters affecting this Department in respect of its revenue have been submitted to members of the Trust for their approval or otherwise, yet the estimates for the working of the Department for 1935 have never been submitted, certainly not since I have been a member of the Trust. But it is very interesting to see how the estimates have been framed. I do not know what my worthy friend the Director of Public Works will say about it, but I see under the head Public Works Extraordinary a sum of \$4,500 for the re-conditioning of the Chaplain's quarters at the Mazaruni Station as a residence for the Assistant Conservator of Forests. I will use Government's phraseology and say that in the estimates for that Department there are no savings to provide for this work, and I do not know what the Director of Public Works will have to say on the subject. There has been no saving in

the Forest Department which, until quite recently, was voted an annual sum of \$50,000. The expenditure of the Department over a period of ten years should be of interest. In 1925 the total expenditure was \$20,896, in 1926 it was \$45,366, in 1927 \$43,963, in 1928 \$51,488, 1929 and 1930 \$50,000, in 1931 \$57,337, in 1932 \$33,069, and in 1933 \$31,719. But the figures above the line interest me most of all, and I believe there is sufficient reason to refer to those figures in respect of the same period. In 1926, with a total expenditure of \$45,366 the figures above the line were \$21,538, in 1927 with a total expenditure of \$43,963 the total expenditure above the line was \$23,383. In 1933 the total personal emoluments were \$17,492, and the total expenditure \$31,719. In 1935 the total personal emoluments are fixed at \$18,365 and the total expenditure \$30,657. It is costing Government on the Fixed Establishment as much to spend \$30,000 as it did in 1927 and other years to spend \$43,000.

The same point was raised two years ago. At that time when some justification was being looked for for the continuation of this Department we were told that Government proposed to embark on a saw-mill business in order to justify the amount that was being spent on the upkeep of the Department. It would be interesting to know what has been the experience of Government since it decided to enter the saw-mill business. I would like very much to get an answer from Government on that score. Has Government found the cutting of timber into boards and the curing of timber generally a paying proposition? Has Government found it a sufficient reason to continue the amount that is being spent annually on the upkeep of this Department? If we have to conserve our forests by all means let us do so, but at the same time let us do so with the means at our disposal. Do not let us have hare-brained schemes that will mature in 5, 10 or 15 years, during which time we continue to carry on this heavy expenditure. If this Department is to be of service to this country let it be run on an economic basis. Let us assume for argument sake that we will obtain some return from the operations of the Department in say 20 years. By that time it will have cost Government one million dollars. No business man would look at a proposition

of that kind. If there is any justification at all for the continuation of this Department the estimates of the Department must be pruned down to a figure within the means of the taxpayers of this Colony. I feel sure that no Member of this Council will give his vote for such an enormous expenditure on the running of this Department. A little later on when the estimates are being considered in detail it will perhaps be necessary for me to speak on the items as they come up, and I hope when that time arrives Government will give these words some heed in order to reduce the running expenses of this Department.

Before I deal with other Departments I should like at this stage to make casual reference to my esteemed friends the Crown Agents. The Estimates show that it is proposed to spend with them \$5,000 in 1935 as compared with \$2,400 in 1934. What is this money for? Item 25 under the head Miscellaneous says:—"Crown Agents charges on store purchases (including commission, inspection and marine insurance), \$5,000," while item 19 says:—"Remittances --Commission on, \$6,000." Would I be right in assuming that the commission on remittances amounting to \$6,000 is due to the Crown Agents for supplies shipped to this country on the order of the Government? Would I also be right in assuming that the \$5,000 it is proposed to pay the Crown Agents in 1935 is all they are expecting to receive for commission, inspection and marine insurance? \$5,000 looks small to me for such charges. Would I be right in assuming that in calculation of the cost of goods imported by Government these charges are overlooked when comparisons are being made whether or not a similar class of goods can be obtained through the regular channels in this country? I may mention that on casual inquiry I have been told—I do not make the statement on authority but I would like Government to give an answer to it—that commission to the Crown Agents, freight and insurance charges are never at any time included in the cost of the goods. If they are included in some instances they are not in others. I merely make reference to that item to-day. I propose to deal with it at greater length on another occasion when the motion which I have before the House comes up for discussion.

I would be wanting in my duty if, like my hon. friend on my right (Mr. Eleazar), I did not enter a protest against the special personal allowances proposed to be given to a certain lot of officers. I think they are six in number. Is that another way of getting behind the non-approval of the Secretary of State of the withdrawal of the Civil Service salary abatements? We were told in this House that the Secretary of State does not approve of the withdrawal of the abatements, and in the same breath Government proposes to give a certain number of officers personal allowances. I have no desire to attack officers of Government. As a matter of fact I think I can name two of them out of the six who are very deserving of some allowance. Perhaps their case might have been met if the abatement was withdrawn in their case, but I do not like these allowances going above the line. They appear at one time as non-pensionable, and another time we find the same item pushed above the line. An officer is given a special allowance, or a bonus as it is known in Water Street, for some valuable service rendered, but it is never intended to be added to his pensionable emoluments. Obviously it means an increased burden on the taxpayers. Are we going to be faced with supplementary estimates in respect of other officers for similar allowances? It seems to me that in adopting this course Government has opened the door for similar representations to be made by other officers in the Service for personal allowances, and there are a good number of them who, if ever they make such representations, would receive the support of this Council. A good number of them are entitled to these allowances, but they are not on the list. They are not among the favoured few; they will never get there. Some of them are far more important in their Departments than the few officers for whom we will be called upon to vote personal allowances. They are far more important to the Government and the people of this country in every sense of the word, because a number of them are responsible for the revenue collection of this country. After all if these officers are not to be encouraged it seems to me to be unreasonable to expect this Council to support the present proposals. We are told continuously that Government is unable to accept this or that proposal for the reason that the

country is in a bad condition and we have no money, but Government can always find money to do things of this kind.

A little later on I would like to know how the total expenditure for 1935 is going to be the figure which has been stated. I would also like to know when we have no more estimated surplus on the Redemption of Stock, which under the 1935 Budget is estimated to produce \$200,000, how we are going to be able to balance our budget in future years. Of course, so long as we can go on obtaining loans-in-aid and other money from the Colonial Development Fund we can always frame our estimate of expenditure to meet that. In Your Excellency's Speech I think you said that the amount in respect of 1935 loans-in-aid from the Imperial Exchequer will provide the balance between the amount of revenue and expenditure. That might well be, but so long as that state of affairs is allowed to continue we shall never be able to advance any claims, as is the ambition of every self-respecting citizen of this country, for a change of the Constitution. Is it the intention of Government to allow us to perpetuate this state of affairs? The answer must be "Yes," for the simple reason that we find in this Council year after year items appearing on the Annual Estimates that could very well be postponed, while items that are deserving of attention are merely brushed aside.

I made reference to the top-heavy expenditure under the head District Administration. There can be no doubt that the expenditure on that Department is going to continue to grow, and when the scheme is finally adopted, if it is adopted at all, Government will find itself with a burden which it will probably be unable to carry.

In my criticisms of the various heads of the draft Estimates I have purposely left the Department of my hon. friend until now. I refer to the Department of Agriculture. The figures of that Department are so interesting that if I were a very good hand at framing pictures I would proceed to frame the figures which show the expenditure of the Department for the last 10 years. I am mindful of the fact that in 1927 the present Director was called upon to re-organise the Department. I am also mindful of the fact that

he did re-organise it. He introduced into his Department officers who will not be required for the next 10 years, if at all, as one hon. Member suggests. In his re-organisation of the Department he introduced officers who will not be required for another 10 years. In the 1935 Estimates we have another officer thrown at us. I think he is referred to as a Plant Breeder. I have a distinct recollection that when it was mooted that this officer should come to the Colony we were told that this Colony would not contribute one penny to his emoluments. That officer came out under contract for three years. His term of appointment will expire at the end of 1934, I believe. We are asked to retain his services which have been very valuable because he has been able to mix the male with the female rice to improve the cultivation, and we are to put him on the Fixed Establishment. A post has been created for him and his salary for 1935 will be \$2,760. It seems to me that he is going to be always with us because a place has now been found for him on the Fixed Establishment, and if he ever gets there we will never get rid of him. The only way we can get rid of him is if by some miracle he is transferred to another country. Is there any justification for his salary being fixed at a figure near the maximum scale, having regard to the fact that this Government has never been responsible for him? I would like to know how many officers are in the service of the Colony under those conditions. I think at this table there is an officer whose contract with Government has been renewed for the third time, but this Plant Breeder has only been here three years and his services have been so valuable that we must welcome him with open arms and put him on the Fixed Establishment. One cannot help feeling that the Head of this Department is able to get all that he wants from the Government or from the Secretary of State. It seems to me that the estimates of this Department can keep going up and nobody is in a position to check them. On further examination of the estimates of this Department I hope to be able to bring to the notice of the Council further additions. Of course I know the obvious answer will be that there are savings in other directions, but be that as it may, I shall never be convinced of the necessity for the spending of such a large sum of money under this head. I made

reference to the fact that in 1927 the Head of the Department was called upon to re-organise the Department, and I also made reference to the fact that a certain type of officers were introduced who will not be required possibly for another 10 years. I shall deal with those officers a little later on.

The Council adjourned for the luncheon recess.

Mr. DE AGUIAR (resuming): When the Council adjourned I was about to make reference to the gradual increase in the expenditure of the Department of Agriculture since 1927. The increase in the expenditure of that Department is all the more disheartening to Members of this Council when it is observed that it is entirely confined to personal emoluments to the officers of the Department. In 1928 the amount voted for personal emoluments was \$38,638, in 1929, \$43,162, 1930, \$59,323, 1931, \$64,611, 1932, \$65,482, 1933, \$66,684, 1934, \$63,253, and the amount to be voted for 1935 is \$66,633. It will be found that whereas the expenditure on personal emoluments has risen considerably "Other Charges" remain more or less stationary. In 1928 the figures were \$17,667, 1929, \$50,815, 1930, \$57,228, 1931, \$47,735, 1932, \$43,423, 1933, \$45,800, 1934, \$46,479, and for 1935, \$46,194. These figures to my mind go to prove conclusively that the Department is top-heavy in so far as its technical staff is concerned, and as I said this morning, officers have been appointed when their services will not be required possibly for another 5 or 10 years. That is one of the main reasons for the criticisms that have been levelled against this Department within recent years. But it seems to me that so far as the criticisms of Members of the Council are concerned they are like a voice in the wilderness. Before long it will be observed that these officers are not pulling their weight. In fact there is no weight for them to carry. There is nothing for them to do, and for that reason the expenditure in that direction is unjustifiable. It cannot always be said that because this country is an agricultural country the estimates of the Department of Agriculture must keep on soaring. After all saturation point must be reached at some time or another. My own view is that saturation point was reached since

1928. In spite of that we find that the Department is being strengthened, and in 1935 another addition will be made to the staff, for which this Colony will have to pay, in the form of a Plant Breeder. Can this Colony afford to bear this additional expense? We were told that his salary would be paid out of the Colonial Development Fund, and now that his contract is about to expire he should go. I appeal to Government not to saddle this Colony with any additional expense in this direction.

As regards the activities of the Department it might be said that there have been improvements so far as the rice industry of the Colony is concerned as the result of certain efforts that are being made by the Department, but it cannot be truthfully said that the position which the rice industry holds to-day is to be placed entirely to the credit of the Department. If it is going to be argued that the increase in the production of rice is something with which the Department has had to do, then the answer must be "No," for the simple reason that unless the land is prepared by the people of the Colony for the cultivation of rice it matters not whether there has been any improvement in the distribution of padi or in the grading of rice. It cannot be truthfully said that the financing of the rice industry can be placed to the credit of the Department of Agriculture alone. A good deal depends on the minds of the people. They have been faced with various difficulties from time to time. Early in the year we know that the rice industry suffered considerably as the result of the flood. We know that since then there has been suffering in certain quarters on account of the lack of irrigation and drainage, and the semi drought experienced in the middle of the year. From the Mahaica creek to the Abary district we know there has been tremendous loss of crops. We also know that in Berbice, between Bloomfield and Hogstye, there has been further loss of crops for the same reason. One expected that in the Estimates for 1935 some provision would have been made to improve the lot of the people living in those districts and afford them some measure of relief so that when they plant their rice they would be assured of some prospect of getting some return on their money. Because there happens to be improvement in one or two

districts it is folly for the Department to remain idle and feel satisfied that there is improvement in the rice industry. I should like very much to see some effort made to improve the lot of the people in the areas I have just mentioned. I have been told—not by experts but by people in the Colony—that the districts I have named can be irrigated and drained for a sum of money that is within the reach of the current expenditure of the Colony. If that is so it seems to me that Government has a duty to perform because it must be heart-rending to the people that either as the result of flood or drought they are unable to reap the reward of their labours. I have every reason to believe that representations have been made to Government regarding the districts I have named, and I appeal to Government that the matter should have its careful consideration, and if it is found to be within the means of Government, some scheme should be embarked upon in order to avoid the recurrence of the loss of crops that occurred early this year.

As regards the sugar industry I as usual prefer to leave matters concerning that industry to those particularly engaged in it, but like you, sir, I would like very much indeed to add my quota of praise to the wonderful organisation by which that industry is being controlled. They are able to make representations, and I do hope that if they are unable to obtain any further assistance, at least they will be able to retain that assistance which they are enjoying at the present moment.

Those are my criticisms of the Estimates that have been put before the House. I have not been able to examine them as closely as I would like, and it should not be surprising if at a later stage of the proceedings I attempt to add to what I have just said for the reason that I feel that Estimates for 1935 have been drafted in such a manner as to equalise expenditure with expected revenue. We have no more surplus funds to draw upon, and when the time comes, if it does come—some Members are of the opinion that it will never come, and if it never comes we will not have to worry—for us to repay these loans-in-aid, some with interest and others without interest, it seems to me that we shall never be able to maintain the services of Government at a position sufficiently

strong to meet the requirements of the country. If that is going to be the position 5 or 10 years hence it seems to me that it is just as well that we begin at once, instead of which we are endeavouring to swell the expenditure of the Colony so far as personal emoluments are concerned. I would be the last person to raise any objection to expenditure that would be of some value to the community. Your Excellency will observe that I have purposely refrained from making any reference to the increase in the estimates of the Customs Department. I think it has been well known for years that the clerical staff of the Customs Department has not been what it should be. I am very glad to see that Government has awakened to that fact because, after all, the Customs Department is an important branch of the revenue collection of the Colony. That being so it should never be understaffed at any time in the way it has been in the past. Those who complained of the shortage of staff had every right to do so. The position was nothing short of being disgraceful. Here is a Colony dependent on the Customs for the major portion of its revenue, and yet when people go there to pay that revenue there are not sufficient officers to look after the passing of entries. I refrain from making any reference whatever to the increases proposed in respect to the staff of the Customs Department. My silence in that respect should not be taken to mean that I approve of the increases suggested in other quarters. I have perhaps taken up a much longer time than I had intended, and I therefore will conclude my remarks by appealing to Government to pay some heed to the remarks which have been and are going to be made by certain Members of the Council regarding the proposed expenditure in 1935. The position is becoming rather serious indeed. If we have to frame our Estimates on the basis of revenue collections we are going to go wrong all the time. If because we expect to receive five million dollars of revenue we are going to look to spend five million dollars we are not going to get anywhere. Until we are able to carry forward from year to year a surplus on our annual working it seems to me that we shall continue to travel in the same rut, we shall continue to mark time and never be able to make any step forward. I trust that the remarks I have made have not fallen on

deaf ears. I regret that Your Excellency will not be with us very long, therefore I appeal to you to see that when you leave the Colony it will at least be said of you that representations made by Members of the Council during this annual session have received careful consideration, and that you will give effect to them.

Mr. SEAFORD: I must admit that after having heard the speech of the Colonial Secretary on the finances of the Colony I was overcome with a fit of depression. I heard so much about balancing of budgets, turning the corner and a silver lining to the dark cloud from those I thought were in a position to know, that I really looked for a ray of sunshine. Instead of that we find that in order to balance the budget or make revenue meet expenditure we have to borrow a sum of \$384,000 and that after getting a windfall of \$200,000. Is it surprising that one becomes depressed? The estimated expenditure for 1935 is a little over 5½ million dollars, a quarter of a million dollars more than that of last year. What does Government propose to do to meet the situation? It is proposed to borrow the money. For the past few years we have got grants, we have borrowed and we have used our Reserve Fund, but for the life of me I cannot see how that can be called balancing the budget. Could any company be run on such lines? It would either end up in the Bankruptcy Court or in some other court. When a company finds itself in a position of that kind what does it do? It first of all looks around to see how it can cut down expenditure. Having done that it looks to see how it can increase revenue. How has Government acted in this case? Has Government endeavoured to cut down expenditure? From the Estimates which have been put before us it does not seem as if Government has done so. Instead of that we see increases of staff, personal allowances that have never existed before, in fact increases in practically every Department although we were told by the Secretary of State that the Colony cannot afford to discontinue the abatement of the salaries of the Civil Service. It seems to me that certain gentlemen have been picked out for increases of salaries, because after all a personal allowance is an increase of salary. I would like to see everyone get an increase of salary but under present conditions I do not see how

it can be done. Borrowing will not meet the position. I claim that this is not the time to give increases; the Colony cannot afford it. The affairs of the Colony must be run on business lines.

The hon. Member for Central Demerara said we are marking time but we are going steadily backwards. Are there any other means by which Government might save money? Let us take, for instance, the Forest Department. I read a short time ago a most illuminating report by an officer of that Department on the marketing of local woods in Great Britain and Europe. A more pessimistic and depressing report I have never read. He practically said there is no market. When is it proposed that we get some return from the money being spent on that Department? I understand that they are planting trees at the present time which may come to maturity somewhere between 80 and 100 years, but when they do we are not sure they will be what they ought to be. I have nothing against the Department—I believe they do excellent work—and still less against the Head of it. I consider him one of the most able officers in the Government service, but I consider the Forest Department to-day a luxury which the Colony cannot afford. I would like to put this question to the Head of the Department: Does he think the Colony can afford it now? I would like his honest opinion, not Government's opinion, on that question. (Laughter).

Mr. WOOD (Conservator of Forest): My opinions are always honest, even when they coincide with Government's. (Laughter).

Mr. SEAFORD: Another Department on which Government can save money is the Public Health Department. We have three Medical Officers of Health, one for Demerara, one for Berbice and one for Essequibo. Demerara has had service from one, Essequibo, I believe, has never seen its Medical Officer of Health, while Berbice has had its officer for a very short time. At a certain time this year there was no Public Health Officer in the Colony. One was on leave, another was doing bacteriological work, and the third was sent into the interior. I admit that the time was not long, but for the major portion of the year there has been only one Medical Officer of Health

doing Public Health work. Is it therefore necessary for us to have three officers at the same time?

I consider that there might be a much better working arrangement between the various Departments of Government. I feel that the Departments do not pull together and help one another as they should. My one reason for saying that is because I have seen any amount of material going up the East Coast for sea defence work, and it strikes one rather forcibly that the Public Works Department and the Transport and Harbours Department might come together and see if Government cannot make a little bit out of it. The amount of money being spent on the sea defence works there is very large, and surely the Transport Department could have handled that material and so help to reduce overhead expenses. Further, in considering the matter one must bear in mind the amount of damage the lorries do to the roads. It seems wrong that they should compete with the Transport and Harbours in both goods and passenger traffic.

A business firm would consider the other side of the picture, the revenue side. What is Government doing to increase revenue? Is Government prepared to go on year after year borrowing money to balance the budget, as it is called? There is a day of reckoning coming, and that day of reckoning cannot be very far off. The Colony's borrowings are increasing and we are getting no nearer balancing our budget. It looks as if Government is sitting and waiting for something to turn up, but nothing will turn up unless one tries to help oneself. It is rumoured, and I think the hon. Member for Central Demerara suggested also that he had heard it, that Government does not wish to balance the budget. I do not think that statement is correct, yet it is a rumour that is going around, and Government should do its best to contradict it. The surest way to do so is to do what it can to bring in more revenue. Government might argue that it is not its province to put up schemes which are schemes of development, and that it is up to private individuals to do so. I cannot agree with that view. All over the world to-day Governments are putting up development schemes, helping to increase employment

and revenue, especially in countries where there is a dictatorship. In a country where there is Crown Colony Government that is very nearly dictatorship. We have been told that Governors have come here with proved constructive ability. What does that mean? It means that they have come here to carry out development or constructive work. It means that Government proposes to take steps along that line, and I think the people of the Colony are entitled to expect that of Government. The people here continue to expect it. Is Government considering schemes of development and the ways and means of bringing money into the Colony and increasing production? If Government feels that it has done all it can and that it can do no more in the matter I would suggest that a Committee be appointed to advise on these points.

There are lots of things that can be done but they have not been attempted yet. It is no good trying to increase revenue in this Colony unless you are going to increase production. You are not going to get one farthing more out of taxation. The industries of the Colony are overtaxed already. To get anything more you have to increase production. What is Government doing to increase production? What has it done? I do not know what Government has done to try to increase sugar production or to help in that line. In fact I feel it is rather the other way around. I feel that the taxation of sugar is being increased, the latest being the sea defence tax, but in that respect all industries were taxed. Unfortunately sugar had to pay double the tax on any other industry, but in the case of sugar the help it wants is rather negative help. Sugar producers want to know that they will not be subject to progressive taxation. They are afraid to develop because Government will come in and tax them.

As regards the rice industry I do not know how much of the development is claimed by Government and how much by the people engaged in it. I will say that it has developed, but I am not sure that it is altogether on very sound lines, and the position to-day is that the production of rice is very much greater than the demands of the Colony. What is going to happen to that rice? There is the difficulty of

market. I claim that Government should step in at once. I consider it is Government's duty to find markets for that rice. All over the world Governments are making agreements so as to find markets for the produce of the country and to maintain them. I think I suggested here some time ago that this Government might do the same with regard to our rice. We were told that owing to the Ottawa Agreement it could not be done. I notice that Great Britain, in spite of the Ottawa Treaty, allowed the Argentine to send in cattle, wool, etc. to the detriment of Australia. I feel that this Government should take steps immediately to get those markets. Further I note that in Your Excellency's Speech at the opening of the Council you stated that steps were being taken to find a market for rice. I take it that those steps were as regards the quality of the rice, but that does not go far enough. That only helps to maintain our markets to a certain extent. Government will have to legislate along other lines. I understand that at the present time there are rumours of war between the Rice Association and the Rice Marketing Board. That must stop otherwise the rice industry, which is the second best in the Colony, will be defunct in a very short time.

Government may claim, and possibly perfectly rightly, that the opening of the Bartica-Potaro road is development, and that it will lead to a bright future. I sincerely hope Government's optimism is correct. I have been informed by some that it is going to lead to very little if anything. I hope that opinion is not correct, but at the same time there are numbers of agriculturists in the Colony. As I read in a leading article some time ago, the agriculturists in the coastlands are infinitely better off than those who are persuaded to go into the interior. I do not desire to be altogether destructive in my criticism and I have tried to put up suggestions. In view of that I feel Government does not go far enough. Government ought to go very much further than it does in trying to attract money to the Colony and also to make the local people with money invest it in the Colony. It is a very difficult thing at the present time. While I was away I tried to interest people in the various industries of the Colony, old and new, but I have always

met with the same remark "We have no faith in your Government. If we come in and do well we never know whether we will not be taxed out of existence. Government seizes everything it possibly can. There is no guarantee for the future, therefore there is nothing doing." As the result of that feeling we will never attract money into the Colony, and we will never get those people here with money to invest it. They must have a feeling of security that their money will be safe. If Government wishes to increase production Government must let the Secretary of State know that it does not propose to add any further taxation or increase existing taxation. Let everyone in the Colony and outside know that they will not be taxed to any greater extent. To do that Government will have to get a guarantee from the Secretary of State or the Colonial Office. We have been told here more than once that one Administration cannot bind its successor. There is no continuity of policy. We will have to get that from someone higher up, and it will have to be guaranteed, otherwise I am afraid we will be crying in the wilderness for a long time.

Another thing that is doing a great deal of harm in this Colony and prevents development is the very high rate of income tax. In an undeveloped country like this people are asked to invest money in the Colony. It is a speculation. If they make money Government takes one-eighth of it. If they do not make money they lose it all. I think there are gentlemen with money in this Colony to-day who prefer to allow it to remain in the Bank at 2 per cent. interest rather than take the chance of speculation. They claim that the dice are heavily loaded against them. They rather play for safety. In an undeveloped country like this an income tax does an infinite amount of harm. Not only does it do harm in preventing money coming in but it affects revenue by taking money away from people that would otherwise be spent. If Government takes less income tax it gets more Customs duty. I appeal to Government, if it cannot find a means of dealing with the position, to appoint a Committee to go into the whole question. To my mind the whole incidence of taxation ought to be changed. The position Government is in to-day is just drift, and

where does it lead us to? It leads us to bankruptcy and ruin. The loans we borrow may be called development loans but they are leading us nowhere. I would ask Government to give this question its utmost attention. Do not borrow money to make revenue meet expenditure. Cut expenditure wherever you can. I would ask Government to consider the suggestions made during the consideration of the Estimates in a most generous spirit, and at the same time to consider any means they can to attract money into the Colony and add to the development of the Colony.

Mr. PEER BACCHUS: Criticism has been levelled at Government and I do not wish to say anything on points already made, but I would be wanting in my duty if I did not state in this Council how disappointed I felt, and I think the whole community felt, that although Your Excellency prefaced your Speech by reference to the disastrous flood early in the year, and the effect it had upon the revenue of the Colony, no mention has been made of what will be done to safeguard the revenue and safeguard the farmers. The farmers are continually gambling. I would not say that Government has not seen the wisdom of a scheme of drainage and irrigation throughout the coastlands, yet the cost of the flood and the drought that followed in the same year would more than pay for any scheme to assist the farmers. Instead of that we see it is proposed to increase the staff of the Department of Agriculture. I think it was hinted by the hon. Member for Central Demerara that a scheme of drainage and irrigation could be met out of the current expenditure of the Colony. I doubt whether the revenue in any one year would be able to meet such a large scheme, yet I think it is in the interest of the Colony and for the protection of colonial revenue that such a scheme should be embarked upon. If no protection is given to the rice industry I predict nothing but failure, and I do not see the use of increasing the staff of the Department of Agriculture.

With regard to the estimates under the head District Administration, when the scheme was inaugurated it was given out that it would effect economy, and three Departments were merged into the scheme for economy, the Commissaries Department, the Local Government Board and the Immigration Department. In

1931 the vote for the three Departments totalled \$64,584. The present vote for the District Administration Scheme is \$95,698, an increase of \$31,114 which with an addition to the present estimate of \$5,404 will make a total increase on the District Administration of \$36,518. Should it go on like this, in the next three or four years the District Administration Scheme would cost more than double what the three Departments cost the Government in 1931. The hon. Member for Berbice River said that the scheme has absolutely failed. I would not go to that extent, but the point I wish to make is that instead of a saving by merging the three Departments we find that the vote for District Administration is increasing year after year, and has reached the handsome figure of over \$36,000. Government should hesitate and consider whether it is in the best interest of the Colony that the Department should continue on those lines.

I must protest against the singling out of some officers for personal allowances. I think very great care has been taken in singling them out because under the head Transport and Harbours Department I notice that three junior officers have been singled out for a reduction of their salaries by \$25 a year. Isn't that going carefully through the Estimates and singling out some officers for increases and others for decreases? I will deal with the various heads as they come up.

Mr. CANNON: My only grouse with Your Excellency's Speech is that it was a little on the long side, hence the lengthy debate we have had. The Colonial Secretary's Budget speech was equally as long and might have been cut in half. I merely throw that out for future guidance. I wish to say also that I feel Your Excellency has been well advised not to attempt to throw at this unfortunate Council the silly idea that we have turned the corner. I think it originated with your predecessor and I sincerely hope that he will take the trouble to read our newspapers and to satisfy himself that he attempted to mislead us when he made that statement.

I am in absolute agreement with what has been said by the Hon. Mr. Seaford about the lack of co-operation between the

Transport and Harbours Department and the Public Works Department in connection with the sea defence works. I thought, however, that being an engineer he would have thrown out the suggestion that the Transport Department might have utilised some old rails in running a sideline from the railway line for the purpose of delivering materials on the site of the sea defence works at very nominal cost. Be that as it may, perhaps it is for our good because it provides a little work for the people who own lorries, but I do not think we should consider that at this stage. Government ought to be in a position to put the material on the spot at the cheapest possible rate. My friend, the Director of Public Works, may say that if that were done it would have cost more.

Major CRAIG (Director of Public Works): It would involve too much handling.

Mr. CANNON: I do not agree. I wish to say very briefly that the whole of our revenue troubles are due to what I said a few years ago, and I still maintain it, that our preferential tariff is the root of all our troubles, and until Government realises what it is doing and put that right we are going to go from bad to worse. It is all well to say that we have a preferential tariff with Canada, but Canada does not care a snap of the finger about us. We are living on doles because it is nonsense to say we are borrowing money. How are we going to pay it back? Any form of loan is a millstone around our necks. We shall be borrowing money to such an extent that the day of reckoning is bound to come. I think it has come already. I think we realise that we are giving away our just rates of duty on every pound of stuff that comes into the Colony. I am satisfied that is the crux of the whole trouble.

The hon. Nominated Member also referred to the question of income tax. I have also pointed out that the first question which was asked me when I was negotiating for a railway into the diamond fields was "Have you got income tax in your country?" I said "No, thank God, we have not got it, but we might have it in a short time." Although we did not have it at the time, the people I was

interested in were quite satisfied that it was bound to come, and it has come with a vengeance. Those who have the money to pay know exactly what it means. There is no chance of getting people to come here to invest money so long as Government is going to drain their pockets before they start to do any work. I am in sympathy with what the hon. Nominated Member said, that there are people in the Colony who have money to invest, but rather than invest it in property, owing to the terrible sewerage disaster they prefer to allow it to remain on the Bank at 2 per cent. interest. Until the sewerage question is settled you are not going to get anybody to invest money. Those who have money will sit on it like a hen with her chickens. It has been suggested that a Committee should be appointed to advise Government. If everybody felt as I feel about Committees they would not make such a suggestion because it is a waste of time. Whatever Committee is appointed it all ends in smoke. It is all a farce, therefore I would not suggest a Committee. I do not propose to repeat what my colleagues have said regarding Your Excellency's Speech. There may be one or two items on which I may offer a suggestion or two.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: Most of the previous speakers have expressed disappointment and surprise with regard to the budget. I neither feel surprised nor disappointed, because my experience here has been that every year, in spite of the efforts of Government and the Electives, the expenditure of the Colony goes up. I do not think there is a single year in which the Government could congratulate itself by showing that there has been a substantial reduction in expenditure. To my mind the fault does not lie with the Government. We have to go much further afield to locate that fault. The fault lies across the water at Downing Street. As long as we have the present system of Government the same disappointment, the same disastrous results will be felt. What is the remedy? The remedy I see is self-government. In this Colony we have men capable in every walk of life and in every direction, of taking up the posts held by the present officers of the Government. That is no criticism of the abilities of those who come from the other side, but the fault lies with Downing Street. I

hope the new Governor will be a good man. I rather angered a prominent official when I expressed such a view. I told him it did not matter what Governors we got, they could do nothing because they have to do what their masters in Downing Street tell them. Until we get representative Government here the same state of affairs will continue.

The Estimates show that of the 56 heads there are only eight instances in which there has been a reduction. There has been an increase in expenditure in the last two years of nearly \$400,000. Where is it going to stop? We hear Government say that great economies have been effected here and there, but what is the sum total of those economies? We are going deeper into the mire every year. Government when making its budget statement should lay stress on the excesses, but they are always left on one side. To my mind the position of the Colony is a hopeless one. We are not advancing. Our industries, in spite of all the ability and brains, are being strangled by excessive taxation. The moment any concern in this Colony is started and shows a slight profit Government says "Here is a chance to tax them." With the proceeds of that tax Government will inaugurate a new Department or indulge in some pet fad of one of the Heads of Department, or of the Governor himself. The matter is a serious one. The position we are in to-day cannot go on. The climax will be reached. This Colony is either going to become a third or fourth-rate one or it must go forward. The government of the Colony from Downing Street might not be so bad if it were not for the vicious system that planks on us here officials that we do not want, officers who are retrenched from some other Colony, the younger sons of some peer or some of his friends or connections. I am not disloyal in saying that the use Great Britain finds for the Colonies is a dumping ground for her sons, uncles, brothers or friends. There is a saying that the fool of a family is put in the Church. I think in many instances what happens is that the fool of the family is sent out to one of the Colonies. I do not wish to imply that that is the general rule. We get good officials here and a good many mediocre ones. What we object to is that we have to pay the ineffi-

cients the full salary and double what they are worth.

It may be said that my criticisms are very harsh and unfair, but I have been put here to represent the views of my constituents and to help them with any knowledge or experience that I may have. I am not indicting the high officials of the Colony. I say that if nearly every one, if not every one of the officials who sit in this Council were allowed to do what they know or consider is right for the benefit of the Colony there would be a very different state of affairs. They have to do what they are told. In nine cases out of ten it is in the opposite direction to what they know is right. The whole system of Government in this Colony is wrong. That is where we have to look to change our Constitution. When the Constitution was being changed the hon. Member for New Amsterdam and I sat on the Commission, and rather severe criticism was levelled at us because we signed the report of that Commission. I said in justification of my signature on that document, that prior to the change of the Constitution we had neither Crown Colony government nor representative government. The Electives had no say in financial measures. I also pointed out that the change of the Constitution was probably the very best thing that could happen because it would cast the onus on the Government to prove that it could govern, and that if it made a success of its tenure of power it was entitled to remain in the saddle. I see that my prophecy then was right. I contend, with due respect to the Government, that its seat in the saddle has been a very poor one. The Colony is in a very much worse position to-day than before the Constitution was changed seven years ago, and it is due to the fact that we sit around this table to legislate and plan for the benefit of the people of the Colony without power. It is an empty honour to be an Elected Member of this Council. We have very little say. It is not due to the Governor who is appointed. I feel very sorry for him because it is a galling thing for a man to have to carry out directions and measures which he knows are totally wrong and not in the best interest of the Colony.

As regards the balancing of the budget I am sorry that Sir Edward Denham is

not here. I say with respect that some men are very lucky. He was promoted to Jamaica just when the storm was going to break on his head, because if he was presiding here to-day, he would have been asked "What about the balancing of the budget?" It is a budget balanced on paper. I view the position very seriously although I am not a pessimist. I am very optimistic but I do not see any silver lining to the cloud in regard to next year or the next couple of years, unless a total change of policy is undertaken by the next Administration. I hope, sir, that you will not take my remarks amiss. They are the honest and sincere opinions I have formed as the result of a long experience of the people of the Colony and of the Council. I say that criticisms such as I have made cannot be rightly considered disloyal. There is nobody more loyal than I am. There is nobody who admires more than I do the system by which the British people are governed, but while it might be thrown at me that I am a politician, I say it is the politicians plus Downing Street who are keeping back this Colony, and the sooner we let them know that we are a British people the sooner will we reach the goal of prosperity and contentment.

Dr. SINGH: Much has been said on the general aspects of the Estimates under the various heads. My own observations are that some of the Departments have kept their expenditure within reasonable limits. Others have been regardless of expenditure, and I do hope that this year is the climax. I have observed that provision has been made in the Estimates for personal allowances to certain officers in the Service. While this Council appreciates the usefulness and efficiency of officers in the Service and will do any thing to reward efficient and long service, we cannot see our way to give allowances at this session in view of the financial position of the Colony. It is the duty of every Member of the Council to see that the expenditure is kept down to as low a level as possible. It is our duty to lower taxation. We know that there are many inhabitants of the country going with one meal a day and not a proper meal. I hope Members of the Council will endeavour to keep down expenditure. This is not the time to incur extra expense or give personal allowances.

to officers. When the finances of the Colony improve it will be ample time to give extra emoluments to officers who have given efficient service.

Mr. WILLS: In adding my quota to this debate I may say that we are deeply indebted to you, sir, for the comprehensive manner in which you dealt with the Colony's finances in your Speech. Much criticism has been levelled at Government and I do not propose to go over the ground covered by my colleagues. But as I listened to your Speech and subsequently read and digested it it struck me that the Colony is being run on loans, and surely everyone will agree that that state of affairs cannot continue for long. The day of reckoning is at hand, and it behoves Government to put its house in order and consider and devise means to meet expenditure instead of borrowing money. I do not know whether the suggestion to appoint a Committee will find favour with Government but some other means might be found, and Government is capable of finding means. As a matter of fact, as far as I could see, Your Excellency's Speech was barren of any policy on the part of Government. Government might well devote its energies to devising schemes and ways and means of raising revenue instead of dissipating its energies in drafting Bills for the purpose of expediting the collection of rates in the City.

Along the lines of development I had expected from the Department of Agriculture some suggestion for the establishment of demonstration fields in areas accessible to the farmers, but instead of that there is a proposal for the appointment of a Plant Breeder for whose services we were told we would not have to pay when he came to the Colony. But we find the thin edge of the wedge is being inserted for the purpose of making him a pensionable officer. I may be told that there are experimental fields, but where are they? They are at the Botanic Gardens, but which farmer is going to leave his farm up-river, or in some other part of the country, to journey to the Botanic Gardens to look at the experimental fields? I expected that the Head of the Department would have brought forward a proposal to set up experimental fields in the heart of the farms where the farmers would be able to see the experiments.

As regards the District Administration Scheme I do not think the proposal to appoint two Assistant Commissioners will find favour with any Elected Member or even Nominated Member of the Council. That the District Commissioners have failed to carry out the real object for which they were appointed there can be no doubt. If it is going to be said that these District Commissioners are highly efficient rate collectors, very well. If their sole duty is to urge village councils to see that their rates are collected then Government should appoint rate collectors. Do not let us have these high-sounding titles of District Commissioners, pay them large salaries and ask the Council to increase those salaries. As a matter of fact Government has said that much revenue has been lost, and it has thought fit to increase that revenue by increasing the salaries of the District Commissioners and appointing Assistant Commissioners. I do not follow that reasoning. If the Commissioners themselves, or the present system of appointing District Commissioners has proved a failure, or has not met with the support of the people among whom the Commissioners move, I say there is something wrong with the system, and it would be ill advised for Government to incur additional expenditure in appointing assistants to those Commissioners who have proved failures themselves.

There are other remarks which I intend to reserve until we are discussing the Estimates. The Secretary of State has said that he cannot approve of the discontinuance of the Civil Service salary abatements, yet we find about six officers asking for personal allowances. Isn't that an indirect way of getting around the ruling of the Secretary of State? Will that promote harmony in the Service? If this Council should vote for these allowances it would be negating the ruling of the Secretary of State.

Mr. WALCOTT: I am not going to say much, but I am rather surprised that the Government has had the temerity to come to this Council with a budget like this. Honestly I cannot imagine how Government could think it could go through. Just a glance will show that the estimated expenditure next year is \$5,514,474 while the total exports of the Colony last year only amounted to \$7,281,000. In other

words the cost of running the Colony is 75 per cent. of the total value of the exports for last year. What is left for the producers? If the cost of administration takes up so much what is left for the people who actually do the work of producing? I am afraid Your Excellency is going to have a very troublesome time at this session. To bring forward an increased expenditure budget at a time like this seems most unreasonable. I had hoped, having heard the remarks of our late Governor, that we could look forward in 1935 to some reduction in taxation, instead of which we find that the expenditure not only equals our revenue but exceeds it, and we are going to borrow another \$380,000. What would be the position of a man in business if he had a revenue of five million dollars? He would have to spend within five million dollars. It is time Government realised the position of the people and the absolute necessity of financing the Colony in an economic manner.

If we did not have the Imperial Government to go to we would have to make two ends meet. In the old Combined Court we had to balance the budget, but within the last two or three years Government has entirely ignored the fact that it is an ordinary commonsense principle that we must live within our means. Government has been living beyond its means consistently during the last three years. It is all right to borrow money to do some work where one can see some prospect of getting return or increasing your assets, but this is a case of borrowing money to meet current needs, and I say without fear of contradiction that if this Council goes into the Estimates properly we can cut them down sufficiently to bring our expenditure within the estimated revenue (Hear, hear) and not have to borrow \$380,000 from the Imperial Government. I sincerely hope that Members of the Council will, in co-operation with Government, endeavour to achieve that aim. As a Nominated Member I feel very strongly on this matter. I cannot help feeling that the Government are not taking into consideration sufficiently the burdens of the taxpayers. Up to the present time the people of this Colony have borne the extra cost very well indeed. (Hear, hear). We cannot expect them to go on doing it. They have certainly reached the extent to which they can be

taxed. In fact I consider that they are very much overtaxed to-day. It is costing us over \$16 per head to govern this Colony. That is much too high. If you compare that with other Colonies you will find that our cost is altogether out of proportion. Undoubtedly the expenditure of Government is altogether out of proportion to the exports from the Colony which represent the total revenue coming into the Colony from stuff produced here. Our internal trade is a question of taking in one another's washing. The financial officers of the Government should seriously reconsider these Estimates. I strongly urge for Government's consideration an effort to bring our expenditure within our revenue.

Mr. WIGHT: I did not want to take part in this debate. I was waiting until the Estimates were being considered to take exception to certain things. I felt no disappointment on hearing the Speech because I expected nothing. It was only a glorified document of details which was lacking in essentials. The only disappointment I felt was that I listened in vain to hear something about the new dredge which is being imported into the Colony at a cost of \$153,000, to do what I do not know. I expected Government to outline a proposal to build a wall at the northern end of the riverside where steamers could go alongside, thereby saving a tremendous amount of smuggling. I think a good deal of revenue is lost by Government on the various wharves. I need not tread on certain people's toes, but if we had one Customs receiving wharf for everything I think we would materially increase our Customs revenue.

The Hon. Mr. Walcott said it cost over \$16 per head to administer the affairs of this Colony. It is \$18 per head to be accurate. Pensions and Gratuities is a head in the Estimates that has always worried me from the time I entered this Council, and it is on the upward grade each time we meet. It amounts to 10 per cent. of our expenditure while we only spend 8 per cent. on Education. It would pay us handsomely if instead of tinkering with all this money we are supposed to have got for nothing or at cheap interest we expended it more usefully. As the result of my connection with this Council

during the past few years I feel that there is a lack—I do not wish to use strong language—of confidence in its Members. We hear nothing about the money expended on wild-cat schemes. Even in the Speech nothing is told us. I would like particularly to hear something about the Kilmarnock expenditure. Of all the things I have heard that takes the cake. I warned those who spoke to me about it. I gather from an authentic source that the result of the expenditure of that large sum is that six or eight persons are residing on the land. There must be lots of other things hidden from us.

I feel that instead of the Government putting forward a proposal for personal allowances for a selected few officers, the entire salary abatements should be discontinued because the money would be expended and it would come back in the shape of revenue. These officers have been educated to live up to a certain standard, and cutting off a few dollars here and there does not help in any way to balance our budget. When the Income Tax Committee reported to this House it was distinctly understood that the recommendation was made in view of the promise that Government would reduce the Customs duties. Nothing of that kind has occurred. The Customs Department is undoubtedly well manned, but I know that a good deal of leakage goes on. With a half-mile of river frontage it is impossible to keep track of all the steamers and schooners that go alongside the various wharves. If Government had used some of that money from the Imperial Government and built a river wall it would have served a very useful purpose. The Customs revenue would have increased considerably. That is my view.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: (Mr. P. W. King): As we have been informed that many of the hon. Members who have spoken propose to reserve further comments until each item of the Estimates is being considered I do not propose to reply at any great length to the remarks which have been made, except to say that while Government does not expect congratulations on anything it may do it expects that criticisms would be well thought out and would not only be destructive but constructive. I think I can do no better than use the expression used by

the hon. Member for Berbice River when he said there was no end of talk but nothing to it. There has been a great amount of talk to-day but so far as I can see there has been very little to it. There have been criticisms of small increases in expenditure, criticisms of small increases in the salaries of certain officers of Government, but apart from that we have heard very little that will help Government to consider the items on the Estimates carefully. I can only hope that those Members who said they were reserving their remarks will, on a later occasion, be far more helpful to Government than they have been in their remarks so far. I have not forgotten that they are approaching the end of their period of service, and that next year there will be a General Election. I hope that will spur them on and that when we next meet to consider the Estimates item by item they will come forward with really good suggestions which will help Government to increase revenue as they have said, and also to decrease expenditure. I am really waiting to hear those suggestions.

I would like to deal briefly with the suggestion that Government has put up no scheme of development. Government has given consideration to every scheme of development it could think of, and what schemes Government can put up at this stage of the Colony's history I cannot say. It is obvious that the Elected Members of the Council have no schemes in view either, because not a single one of them has been able to suggest any scheme worth while considering. It is true we are going through a state of depression and therefore it behoves us to walk warily. We cannot put forward schemes unless we are satisfied that something will result from them. Schemes have been put up and have been tried and failed. Therefore any schemes in future that Government will consider will have to be very carefully gone into because it is obvious that we cannot afford to go in for schemes that will not produce something.

Another matter that has brought forth very severe criticism is the District Administration Scheme which was inaugurated some years ago. Government does not accept for one moment the statement made by two Members of the Council that the Scheme has proved an utter failure.

That statement is absolutely untrue. Those two Members obviously did not know what they were talking about when they made that statement. The Scheme came into force some years ago, and on that occasion Sir Edward Denham, in his Minute No. 2 on Local Government and Administration said :—

“The statements which are tabled show the financial effects of this scheme. The present cost of work which it is proposed should be done by the District Administration is \$113,632 (approximately) and the District Administration Scheme is estimated to cost \$79,705, and Immigration and Repatriation under Registration of Births and Deaths, \$5,908—a total of \$85,613, so that the savings by the absorption and retrenchment of Officers should produce savings of \$28,019. These increases allow for economies in regard to the District Engineer, Essequebo, and the Superintendent of the Onderneeming Industrial School.”

Those figures were accepted at the time and I presume they were correct. If that is so it is incomprehensible to me how the statement could be made that the District Administration Scheme shows an increase of \$31,000 because the total cost of the Departments absorbed was \$113,632, a net saving of \$28,019. The total cost of the scheme in 1935 will be \$101,103, and if you add the figures for Births and Deaths, \$6,228, it will give a total of \$107,331, which still shows a saving of over \$6,000 on the cost of the various Departments which were absorbed in 1931. In addition to that it must not be forgotten that owing to the drastic reductions which Government was bound to make in the Staffs of all Departments, Sir Edward Denham pointed out at the time that it would be necessary as the Scheme went on to increase the personnel. Since the scheme was inaugurated there have been various activities undertaken by Government. Various Ordinances have been introduced, and it must be quite apparent to all Members of the Council that it is impossible for Government to carry on any longer without additional staff. It is very easy to say that Government should run its business like a company. It is a most futile expression. Government cannot fail. A company closes down the part of its business that does not pay. How can we close down the Government? Can

we close down the Hospital, the Medical Service or the Legal Service? We are bound to carry them on. It is absolutely futile to say that Government must realise that it should run its business in the same way as a company does. I could never follow such argument and nothing has been said to convince me that there is anything in it. What would happen to the country if that were done?

Mr. ELEAZAR: It would close down itself. (Laughter).

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I do not agree; I do not think this country will ever close down. Although we are passing through bad times, good times are bound to come. Reverting to the District Administration Scheme, allegations have been made that it has proved a hopeless failure. Government does not agree with that at all, nor do the people of the districts agree with the statement made by those two hon. Members. If anything was wanted to prove the value of the District Commissioners it was during the course of the recent flood when, if we had not the scheme working, the people would have suffered far more than they did. These District Commissioners did their work thoroughly and proved that they were capable officers, and that the scheme was a good one. It must not be overlooked that various Ordinances have come into operation which have throw more work on them, for instance the Copra Ordinance and the Rice Ordinances. These Commissioners have proved their worth. I am quite sure that the Village Councils and the village people welcome these District Commissioners in their midst. (Laughter). The hon. Member for Berbice River may laugh, but since I have been acting as Colonial Secretary I am amazed at the number of loans granted to these villages through the persuasion of the Commissioners. I am sure they would not have got them otherwise. How is the Colony to develop if the villages are not helped and given small drainage schemes and other things they require? It is exactly what we on the Government side complain about. The moment we do anything to help we are told we are wasting money. It is no use coming here and telling Government that it has put up no schemes. If they put up schemes Government would be only too willing to assist.

That is the duty of Government. If people, instead of putting their money on the Bank, would get busy and prepare schemes of their own assistance would be given by Government.

I do not agree with the suggestion that Government strangles at birth every industry that is started. It is easy to make such statements but it is very difficult to prove them. There has been no increase in taxation within the last five years. The sea defence rates cannot be regarded as taxation any more than the sewerage rates, because the people concerned are only paying for their own protection. You can just as well say that a scheme of irrigation is a scheme of taxation. I do not agree with the hon. Member. That is my view and I think it is a sound view. You are paying for what you are getting.

Remarks have been made about these small increases in the Estimates. Hon. Members say that the Estimates are continually increasing. Estimates for staff must necessarily increase from year to year because a certain number of officers are on the incremental basis and the Estimates must show those increments year by year. We are asking the Council to approve of certain increases of staff which we maintain are absolutely necessary. The District Administration has to be strengthened. We fully recognise that Government is losing revenue owing to the lack of staff to collect it. One hon.

Member said we do not want Assistant District Commissioners. Whether we call them Assistant District Commissioners or first class clerks it does not matter. Nobody is more aware than Government that we have not at present a full strength of Excise officers, trained Commissaries. The older men are dying out or going away, and unfortunately there have been no young men trained. Government proposes to rectify that by getting young men and putting them through a proper course of training. They will be attached to the District Commissioners, and with their help and an increased staff Government feels sure that licences which are not paid to-day will be collected. Unless we have an increased staff that will be impossible. We feel sure that if the staff is increased the revenue collected will more than offset the increases asked for.

The hon. Member for Central Demerara, commenting on his friends, the Crown Agents,—I do not think he holds them in very high esteem—said that the item Stores Clerk has been coming up year by year. Under that heading is provision for the gentleman who is going to take charge of the archives of Government. That is a new post which was established some years ago. Before this a lot of valuable papers in Government's archives were put in the dome and absolutely neglected.

The Council adjourned at this stage until the following day at 11 o'clock.