

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.*Tuesday, 19th October, 1937.*

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

PRESENT.

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

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

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

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

The Hon. E. A. Luckhoo, O.B.E. (Eastern Berbice).

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

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

The Hon. F. J. Seaford (Georgetown North).

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Hon. J. Eleazar (Berbice River).

The Hon. Jung Bahadur Singh (Demerara Essequibo).

The Hon. Peer Bacchus (Western Berbice).

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

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

The Hon. A. G. King (Demerara River).

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

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

The Hon. T. Lee (Essequibo River).

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

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

MINUTES.

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on the 15th October, as printed and circulated, were confirmed.

GOVERNMENT NOTICE.**MITCHELL TRUST BILL, 1937.**

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr. Nihill) gave notice that at the next meeting of the Council he would move the first reading of the following Bill:—

A Bill intitled an Ordinance to made provision for the future disposition of the charitable bequest contained in the will of Walter Mitchell, deceased, and for the administration of the assets now pertaining thereto.

UNOFFICIAL NOTICE.**£20,000,000 LOAN FOR DEVELOPMENT.**

Mr. ELEAZAR gave notice of the following motion:—

WHEREAS the labour market of the Colony has been for some time in excess of demand; AND WHEREAS the restriction of the area under sugar cane cultivation as a result of the sugar quota allotment will further affect the labour market by increasing the number of unemployed;

AND WHEREAS there is no hope of any expansion of the major industry to wit, cane sugar, for at least 5 years;

AND WHEREAS it is imperative to encourage development of other industries which will absorb the labour element of the Colony;

AND WHEREAS the current revenues of the Colony including the Loan-Grant-in-Aid are inadequate to develop the Colony which is largely undeveloped;

Be it Resolved,—That this Council respectfully request the Government, with the approval of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, to raise a loan of £20,000,000 to be repaid with interest over a period of 50 years for the development of the Colony's resources, coastal and forestal.

And that a copy of this Resolution and the debate thereon be forwarded to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

PLN. TAYMOUTH MANOR.

Mr. SEYMOUR asked the following questions:—

1. What was the total amount of the mortgage held by Government on Plantation Taymouth Manor to the end of 1936?

2. What was the total arrears of irrigation and drainage rates to the end of 1936?

3. What was the total arrears for sea defence rates to the end of 1936?

4. What was the price realised from the public sale of this estate which included all arrears of irrigation, drainage and sea defence rates?

5. How will Government reconcile the arrears of rates due to the Drainage Board also the Sea Defence Board?

6. Are Government aware that prior to this sale all arrears of taxation had to be paid by the new purchaser before a transfer of ownership was permitted?

7. In view of the apparent writing off of such general revenue indebtedness, will Government seriously consider that the present estate proprietors be treated in such a preferential manner by similarly writing off all such arrears?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Major Bain Gray) replied as follows:—

1. \$7,500.
2. \$1,284.63.
3. \$96.25.
4. \$4,500.
5. and 7. The unpaid arrears of rates will be met out of the proceeds realised by the sale, the balance being credited to the mortgage debt.

RADIO LICENCE.

Mr. SEYMOUR asked the following questions:—

1. What is the total amount received for radio licence during the years 1935, 1936 and 1937 (to date) each separately?

2. What are the estimated number of radio sets at present in use in the Colony?

3. If as I have gathered the majority of radio set owners have not paid such licences, what steps are Government taking to collect same?

4. Will Government consider setting aside such revenue for the better control and improvement of broadcasting in the Colony, under one organisation?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY replied as follows:—

1. 1935.	1936.	1937 to date (end of July).
\$329.	\$944.	\$366.

2 & 3. Government has no information as to the number of radio sets in the Colony other than that disclosed by the licence fees. It has been stated that the number is not less than 1,500, but there is no reliable basis on which an estimate can be formed. Regulations are now under consideration which, it is hoped, will provide an improvement in the machinery for collection of licence fees.

4. Government has no present intention of imposing restrictions, other than those embodied in the licence, on the broadcasting companies which have been established in the Colony, but the desirability of assuming some form of control is being considered and any practical suggestions to that end will be welcomed.

EXPIRING LAWS CONTINUANCE BILL.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I beg to move that "A Bill intituled an Ordinance to continue certain expiring laws" be read the first time.

Mr. DIAS seconded.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read the first time.

Notice was given that at the next meeting of the Council it would be moved that the Bill be read the second time. (*The Colonial Secretary*).

SUGAR EXPERIMENT STATIONS BILL, 1937.

Professor DASH (Director of Agriculture): I beg to move that "A Bill intituled an Ordinance to provide for the control of Sugar Experiment Stations for a period of five years from the first day of January, 1938" be read the first time.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL seconded.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read the first time.

Notice was given that at the next meeting of the Council it would be moved that the Bill be read the second time. (*Professor Dash*).

IMPORTATION OF TEXTILES (QUOTAS)
(AMENDMENT) ORDINANCE, 1937.

Mr. D'ANDRADE (Comptroller of Customs): I beg to move that "A Bill intituled an Ordinance to amend the Importation of Textiles (Quotas) Ordinance, 1934" be read the first time.

Mr. LAING (District Commissioner, East Demerara) seconded.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read the first time.

Notice was given that at the next meeting of the Council it would be moved that the Bill be read the second time. (*Mr. D'Andrade*).

SPIRITS (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1937.

Mr. D'ANDRADE: I beg to move that "A Bill intituled an Ordinance to further amend the Spirits Ordinance, Chapter 110, with respect to the allowance to be made on taking stock of spirits in spirit stores" be read the first time.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read the first time.

Notice was given that at the next meeting of the Council it would be moved that the Bill be read the second time.

GRATUITY TO MRS. M. A. FARLEY.

Mr. CREASE (Director of Education): I beg to move:—

THAT, with reference to the Officer Administering the Government's Message No. 1 of the 9th of September, 1937, this Council approves the grant of a compassionate gratuity of \$68 (equivalent of half a month's salary for each completed year of service) to Mrs. M. A. Farley, late uncertificated Assistant Teacher, who retired on 30th September, 1936, on attaining the age of sixty years, after having completed seven years and five months continuous service in primary schools in the Colony.

The facts of the case are clearly set out

in the Message which has been placed before the Council, and I commend the motion to the sympathetic consideration of hon. members.

Mr. CASE (Director of Public Works and Sea Defences) seconded.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I desire to support the motion but I am wondering whether I should not ask Government to accept a slight amendment to make it three-quarters instead of half a month's salary in view of the fact that the amount is very small. Government has to act on certain principles in these matters but when the circumstances warrant it I think each case should stand on its own bottom. In this instance I happen to know the individual who worked where Government could get nobody to work. She happens to be the widowed sister of an unmarried schoolmaster who could not get a female teacher to work in his district under any circumstances. She did good work and when her brother was transferred to the Corentyne river conditions there were very much the same. There was nobody available for the duties of a female teacher in the school, and in those two schools she worked as a teacher for over 17 years. In a special case like this, where the amount involved is not large, I do not think Government would grudge a small increase of the amount to something like \$85. I am strongly tempted to move an amendment of the motion in the hope that Government will accept it.

Mr. JACKSON: There is some merit in the remarks of the hon. member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar), and I am inclined to think that Government might well consider those remarks and increase the amount. When an uncertificated teacher has served the full period of 30 years pension is calculated on the basis of three-fourths of that teacher's salary. In this connection I am quite sure that Government has strained a point to grant anything at all, but perhaps Government might go a little further and meet the request of the hon. member. There is no doubt that in certain remote parts of the Colony it is exceedingly difficult to obtain teachers, and when one practically sacrifices his or her own interests and gives Government support in the matter of the education of the masses some little con-

sideration might be shown. I think in the special circumstances of this case Government might adopt a sympathetic attitude and increase the amount to \$102.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: The circumstances of this case appear to deserve special consideration but I am somewhat in a quandary because I am afraid of the principle that is likely to be involved. I should like first of all to hear what the Director of Education has to say on the matter because Government might be establishing a dangerous precedent. The hon. member might have suggested that the entire situation be reviewed with a view to giving special consideration to special cases. Gratuities to teachers are specially provided for by regulations, and merely to amend the motion would create a very dangerous precedent. I would much prefer to hear some pronouncement from Government whether it is advisable at this stage to review the entire question.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The last hon. member who spoke has expressed a view which is very much the view of Government. This motion has been brought forward in accordance with the recommendations of the Education Committee which has had the subject under discussion for some time. These gratuities are given under circumstances which form the basis of definite recommendations. The desire of Government therefore is that the motion should be passed as it stands, which will enable Government to make this payment, and the matter will be referred back to the Education Committee to see whether they wish to offer any further advice on this matter or, as the last speaker said, on the question generally.

Mr. LUCKHOO: In view of the exceptional circumstances of the case I do not think any good purpose would be served by referring the matter to the Education Committee. As a member of the Education Committee, in view of what has been stated here I should be inclined to agree to the amount being increased by \$17 in order to make it three-fourths of a month's salary. It is true that it might be violating some definitely established principle, but in every case one has to consider the merits of the circumstances advanced. In the special circumstances

of the case I think the Council might at once agree to an increase of the amount without establishing any precedent in the matter. Each case has to be dealt with on its merits. The Education Committee had no definite principle to be guided by and recommended what it considered to be in the best interest of the teacher.

Mr. F. J. SEAFORD: I regret I cannot agree with the hon. member who has just spoken, and I am very much surprised to hear that the Education Committee went into the matter and had nothing to guide them. Surely we who know nothing of the circumstances of the case have to be guided by the Education Committee. I therefore feel that the suggestion of the Colonial Secretary is the best. Government should pay the money and ask the Education Committee to reconsider the matter. I am not prepared to disagree with the Education Committee until I know their views on the matter.

My. JACOB: I have had a little bit of experience of matters being reconsidered, and while I have no reason to doubt that the matter will be expeditiously reconsidered, knowing as I do and representing as I do one of the remote districts of the Colony, I know that teachers labour under very difficult conditions in the outlying districts. The amount involved is only \$17 but it would mean so much to the party concerned and would save the Education Committee and this Council interminable correspondence, probably for a year or two. I do not think it would be creating a dangerous precedent as has been suggested. I think as an act of grace this Council ought to vote the additional \$17 and have the matter settled. According to my calculation an addition of \$34 should be made, making the sum \$102.

THE PRESIDENT: This is an *ex gratia* payment based on a recommendation from the Education Committee. It was sent to the Secretary of State for approval with the recommendation from the Committee attached, and I cannot accept at this time an amendment to increase the amount which has been accepted by Government and the Secretary of State. It is the usual sum in cases of *ex gratia* payments and to accept any alteration might raise questions in other cases. If there is reason for altera-

tion it is for the Education Committee to recommend to Government. I will now put the motion as it stands.

Motion put, and agreed to.

IMPROVING BREED OF CATTLE.

Professor DASH: I beg to move:—

THAT, with reference to the Officer Administering the Government's Message No. 2 of the 10th of September, 1937, this Council approves the acceptance of a free grant of £3,000 (\$14,400) from the Colonial Development Advisory Fund to provide for the improvement of the breed of cattle in the Colony.

I think this matter has been sufficiently ventilated and I do not propose to go over any of the ground already covered. I am sure hon. members are anxious to accept this grant and I commend the motion to their favourable consideration.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL seconded.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I should like to support the motion because we cannot look a gift horse in the mouth; I do not think it would be good policy. I hope this money will not be thrown away at La Belle Alliance. Whether it is the same place or the name has been changed I cannot tell (laughter), but if it is the La Belle Alliance I have known as a boy I think the money will be wasted there. By all means Government should spend the money in Georgetown to improve the breed of cattle. We are thankful even for small mercies.

Mr. WALCOTT: I would like to hear from the Director of Agriculture how he proposes to use the money. I am afraid that a lot of money voted from time to time for the purpose of improving the breed of cattle and horses in this Colony has been wasted. I have frequently suggested that Government might consider going into the matter in a proper way instead of frittering money away, and establish a real Government stock farm. In Trinidad and Jamaica there are Government stock farms which are making money, but here we have half a dozen pigs and chickens and two or three cows, with a man like Major Bone, a very fine Vet, to look after nothing. It must be most dis-

gusting to a man of his disposition to have nothing to do. I would much prefer to see a vote of \$100,000 for the establishment of a proper stock farm instead of spending \$10,000 every year and going nowhere.

Mr. JACOB: When the Estimates for this year were being considered at the last annual session the then President gave the Council the assurance that the matter of the various agricultural and cattle stations would be reconsidered and some definite line of action taken. I am not at all satisfied that those stations in the country districts are of any use to the Colony. We suggested then that probably Georgetown, or a suitable centre near Georgetown, would be the best place for a station where breeders of cattle would be able to go and select what they wanted and see how things were done. To put a station so far away as in Essequibo, where transportation facilities are so difficult that one would have to spend two days, would not be spending the money properly. We think the money should be spent in Georgetown where we would have the services of the Government Veterinary Surgeon. According to the Message and the motion it is proposed to spend some of the money at La Belle Alliance. In view of the assurance given the Council last year I think the whole matter should be reconsidered and a definite line of action taken. My objection is that undertakings have been given in this Council from time to time which have not been honoured. When the new Governor arrives he will have to take some time to study conditions, to go around the country and be advised, so that we have nothing definite, nothing that will bring real prosperity here. I strongly urge that the whole matter be reconsidered.

Mr. SEYMOUR: I think it is advisable that the Director should explain the matter further. I have had a discussion with him on the subject and I think hon. members will recall that I was against the original proposal as I understood it, that all the money should be spent in Essequibo. That is not the object to day; the object is to improve the breed of cattle in Georgetown where the necessary breeding will be done, but in Essequibo it is proposed to establish an agistment area where cattle will be stationed from time to time in

order to help the people in Essequibo who have no lands of their own. The amount of impounding of cattle in Essequibo to-day is a serious crime. This is a very good move, but I hope the agistment area will be larger than what is proposed, so that the people in Essequibo will be able to breed their cattle at low agistment rates. It will be one way of relieving the distress which prevails in Essequibo. I agree with the Hon. Mr. Walcott that if we are to have proper cattle-breeding in this Colony a sum of \$15,000 is a mere bagatelle. These small bites of the cherry cannot produce much. Stock farms require large sums of money which we do not seem to realise.

Professor DASH: These livestock matters have been so frequently referred to in this Council that it is surprising sometimes to find us going over a considerable amount of old ground. In so far as a large stock farm is concerned I think I explained very fully to the Council last year, and I think hon. members are fully aware that a scheme for a large stock farm was put up and referred to the Secretary of State who, for various reasons, found himself unable to approve of the scheme put up. There were a number of difficulties associated with starting a large stock farm here. One of the suggestions put up was that we should go in for the production of milk on a very extensive scale for supplying Government institutions, and I took the opportunity at the time to point out that that would simply mean competing with a large number of producers in this Colony who carried on small dairying business as the only means of earning a livelihood. If we developed a dairying industry on the lines suggested by some hon. members it would simply mean that we would be taking the bread out of the mouths of those people, and Government would have to subsidise them on some unemployment system, or in some other way.

There were other proposals made at the time which were found difficult to accept in connection with the running of a large stock farm. The question of expense was thoroughly gone into. At any rate the Essequibo Commission made certain recommendations in regard to aiding livestock production and development on the Essequibo Coast, and at the same time

there arose a demand from beef producers in the Colony for assistance in the matter of pure bred bulls. That matter has been on the tapis for a very considerable time. Various proposals have been made but the large cattle owners found themselves unable to agree to any of the proposals put forward, on the score of expense. That of course also had repercussions on the small man because he was far less in a position to secure improved animals. Therefore the suggestion was made that as the Department had already given considerable attention to the development of dairying and had provided, with the funds at its disposal, a first-class nucleus of pure bred sires for the dairy end, we should try to concentrate now on the beef end, and that is what we have tried to do—on a modest scale, it is true, but I think with the proposals we have in mind we should be able to make a substantial contribution to the improvement of beef cattle in the Colony. The suggestion that we should help in this matter, coinciding with the findings of the Essequibo Commission, gave rise to a more modest request which was framed along the lines of the Message, and the Secretary of State has approved that this money be given the Colony for the purpose in view. There may be need for some revision in connection with the Essequibo scheme. That is receiving the attention of the Board of Agriculture at the moment and I will have to make some report to Government on the matter. There is no proposal to go back on any assistance which has been decided on with respect to livestock producers in Essequibo.

The hon. member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob) made reference to a promise to remove stations already established, but I have no recollection of any undertaking of that kind. Those matters can always be examined in the light of the requirements of the Colony as far as agriculture and livestock are concerned. We are trying to do our best as the circumstances warrant, and if it is felt sometimes that some of the stations we have should be removed, or that others should be established, we are quite prepared to give anything of that sort our most careful consideration, and the Board of Agriculture, I am sure, is always willing to receive suggestions which would lead to the development of

the stations we have. In this connection the Board of Agriculture and the Livestock Trade Committee appointed by Sir Geoffry Northcote have considered all the aspects of our livestock trade and have strongly supported this recommendation. I think we should be very glad indeed that the Secretary of State has approved of this grant being given from the Colonial Development Fund to assist our livestock industry. About 12 animals have been ordered and we expect them here some time before the end of the year. They will be kept in Georgetown for a time and I hope those hon. members who are interested in livestock will take the opportunity to visit the station and see some of the work being done there. One of the criticisms I have to make about those interested is that we often get a great deal of criticism and a great deal of talk, but we scarcely ever get any visits from persons who claim to be interested, to see the work being done, and I think it is time more frequent visits were paid by members of the public and agriculturists generally who should appreciate and understand much more the conditions under which we are working.

Mr. JACOB: To a point of correction, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: I am afraid I cannot allow the hon. member to speak again.

Mr. JACOB: The Director made a misstatement when he said no assurance was given in this House when the matter was debated last year.

Professor DASH: I said I did not recall any.

Mr. JACOB: Sir Geoffry Northcote told us that the whole question would be gone into when the grant was received, and I thin this motion varies considerably from the previous motion. Therefore I am substantially correct in what I have said. Further criticism was made that money was being wasted and that it would be well to have the stations put together instead of having them in several districts.

Motion put, and agreed to.

SALARY INCREASES TO UNCLASSIFIED OFFICERS.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I beg to withdraw the motion standing in my name on the Order Paper and to give notice of the substitution of another motion. I therefore move that the Standing Rules and Orders be suspended to enable me to move the following motion:—

THAT, with reference to the Officer Administering the Government's Message No. 3 of the 7th of October, 1937, this Council approves of supplementary provision being made under Head XXIII.—Miscellaneous—Sub-head 30 of the 1937 estimates to allow of the payment to unclassified officers and employees of salary increases for the year 1937 on the basis set out in the Message.

Mr. DIAS seconded.

Question put, and agreed to.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: In moving this motion perhaps I should explain first of all the reasons why this amendment has been made.

It is thought that the amendment is desirable in order to remove a difficulty that hon. members might have felt in voting on the motion in its original terms, as they might have thought that acceptance of the motion would have precluded them from subsequent discussion of individual items in this section of the report.

These items will of course all come under review when the estimates are under discussion, and it would in fact have been possible to deal with the matter entirely in committee on estimates (and supplementary estimates) but it was thought that some separate motion on the report was desirable as a promise was given that the report would come before Legislative Council for discussion.

In its amended form the motion enables honourable members to express concurrence in the proposal to pay the amounts recommended in the report, and offers scope for the expression of views generally on the sections of the report dealing with salaries, without entailing a vote on the individual items which can properly be dealt with in connexion with estimates.

It may be necessary also for me to remind members that it is a mere coincidence that I happen to be moving this

motion. Ordinarily, it would have been moved by the permanent holder of the office of Colonial Secretary, and it is therefore on behalf of Government and not as the writer of the report that I am proposing this motion. The recommendations have, in fact, ceased to be my recommendations. After I completed the report it was laid on the table of this Council, and Council, in dealing with the estimates for 1937, approved of a sum of \$4,520 being provided for the payment of increased salaries to reclassified officers on the lines recommended in the report.

Since then the report, by direction of Sir Geoffry Northcote, has been scrutinized by the Colonial Secretary and the Colonial Treasurer on behalf of Government. It has been approved by Executive Council and the Secretary of State. It now comes before Legislative Council in connexion with the need for further expenditure in 1937, thus providing members of the Council with a suitable opportunity to express their views.

I think honourable members will realize that this was not a very easy subject on which to make recommendations. If members will look at Appendix A. of the report they will see the very large variety of appointments and the still larger variety of fixed salaries and scales which were attached to them. I think two committees had previously attempted to deal with the question, but there was no existing material on which to base standard scales.

The main intention therefore, of this section of the report is to establish scales of salary which can be used for the payment of any post of which the salary is under \$1,440 per annum, and which does not belong to the classified service. It will be seen that in the report the emphasis is placed on the maximum figure which the salary will reach. Five different maximum rates \$1,440, \$1,200, \$960, \$720, \$600 and \$480 have been selected, with appropriate starting points and annual increments.

Appendix A of the report shows the application of these scales to the appointments under the different departments. It would obviously have been possible to produce a more expensive scheme, e.g., by placing a larger number of posts on the

higher scales, but it has to be remembered that a scheme of this kind might easily fall to the ground financially on account of its own weight. This scheme contemplates a maximum increase of approximately \$20,000 per annum, as compared with the present cost of these salaries. This figure will almost certainly be exceeded in future as the total number of appointments brought under these scales is increased, or the number of posts in the higher branches is increased to meet the growing needs of the departments.

The present proposals provide a reasonable number of posts on the higher rates in the light of the present needs of the departments. It is always open to the Head of the Department to convince Government that the number of higher posts should be increased.

The individual concerned is naturally inclined to look at the immediate benefit which he will receive, but in dealing with the question as a whole it is necessary to consider the maximum rates of salary, the number of posts in each grade, and the eventual cost.

As it is the general principles of the scheme with which we are concerned at present, I shall not go into any details, but ask the Council to approve the motion as amended.

Mr. DIAS seconded.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I think I can safely say that I am not disposed to oppose this motion. I desire first of all to thank Government because I am of the opinion that it is a sincere attempt on the part of Government to equalise the standing of the people who are engaged in the Government service. I also desire to thank the Director of Education, the acting Colonial Secretary, who is the father of this report, for what I believe is also a sincere attempt on his part to make the best of a very bad case. He needs no compliment from me, I am sure, but I cannot refrain from complimenting him on the outstanding ability displayed in the framing of this report. There is, however, so much in the report that is controversial, so much that one cannot allow to pass with equanimity, that one is bound to wonder how far it differs from attempts made in

the past. What is the achievement in this report? This report has gone the way of many of its predecessors—nothing but a system of “obscurantism.” The whole trend of the report is to make retrenchment at the expense of the lower branches of the Service. There is no question about that at all; it does not require any special reasoning or pruning to observe that. To talk of fixing a maximum for each branch of the Service and then to fix the lowest possible amount as the maximum so as to deprive an officer of pension rights which, without the report, he would have been entitled cannot be anything other than an attempt to lower the standard of living in the Colony. That cannot be good for any country in the world. When you lower the standard of living you demoralise the population.

I will take the case of Postmasters. When they joined the service there were different grades with salaries ranging from \$40 to \$190 per month. Now they have all been reduced to a maximum of \$50 although the maximum salary for pension is \$60. How on earth will such a man be ever able to get on the Fixed Establishment? It is like the old trick of tying a bunch of radish before a donkey's nose. This does not only apply to the Post Office but to other branches of the Service. Throughout the report it will be found that the under-dog is the man who stands to suffer.

The report has been put before the Council, as the mover of the motion has told us, after it had received the consideration of the Governor and the blessing of his star chamber—no, the Executive Council—and after the great magnate of the Colonial Office, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, had pronounced his blessing on it it has been sent to the Legislative Council with its Government majority, to say what? Reports of this nature, I contend, should be laid before the Council after Government and the Executive Council have expressed their views on them, so that if there is another side of the picture it could be seen. The attitude of Government is “Take it or leave it; Government will carry it through.” That is how things are done here.

I observe in the report that attempts have been made to get assistance from

places like Trinidad and Jamaica. The disadvantages are there but the advantages have been left out. In Jamaica men of the several classes who, in this Colony, come under section 17 of the Pensions Ordinance, have to serve for 15 years in order to qualify for a gratuity. In British Guiana it was once 15 years. How it has now become 20 years I do not know, but worse than that, it will only be granted “in special cases.” A man has to work for 20 years, and after that period somebody must say he was a very nice fellow before he can get a gratuity from Government. I find that officers of a certain class are entitled to big pensions and two years' lump sum bonuses, but these unfortunate fellows are kept away from getting up to pensionable positions for fear that they might get lump sum bonuses too. But will the majority of them not spend their lump sums here? When the Financial Commissioners were here I was asked “How did you get these two years' lump sum bonuses?” I think I was told that somewhere in the world officers were given one year's lump sum bonuses. I gave the only answer I had received because I had inquired myself and I was told that Mr. Darnley of the Colonial Office had worked it out. When I received that information I replied that Mr. Darnley must have died with the key to it (laughter).

This report is not wholly bad; it has some very good points here and there, and that is why I am not inclined to oppose it. We must accept the fat with the lean, but we must ask Government to reconsider the matter very soon. I do not know who is to blame for it but in some departments it is going to create hardships. There is an individual who assured me that his salary should have gone to \$48—it is now \$42 or \$44—but he was told that \$40 would be the maximum of his post and that he would be given a special allowance. Surely a man who aspired to a certain maximum has been done an injustice when he is told he cannot get that any more. I observe Your Excellency shaking your head indicating “no,” but I hope I am wrong. The report bristles with problems. On the question of gratuities I cannot understand by what parity of reasoning Government has assumed this position and expect officers to work with any degree of satisfaction. They cannot leave their work, but they

are disaffected all the time. In some cases Government proposes to make two grades, an arbitrary kind of appointment. The efficiency bar system was introduced here by Sir Harry Moorhouse who brought it from West Africa. It means that after an officer has worked for a number of years he has to depend upon the head of his department to say whether he should go over the bar. Government has introduced a sort of high jump. (laughter). I am sure that the incremental system is better than the bar system because if an officer does not do good work he does not get his increment, and if he is inefficient he is dismissed for inefficiency.

Everybody in the Post Office is dissatisfied because the change there is not for the better. It is not altogether for the worse but it is irksome in some respects. The report was given to us a long time ago and now that we have nearly forgotten it Government has brought it forward. I am going to accept it for what is in it, but I am going to ask for more because what is in it is not satisfactory. But even if I do not accept it Government will carry it with its cast-iron majority. It is not because I know I may be beaten that I am not fighting. I wish again to compliment the Director of Education on the ability and patience he must have exercised in this matter. He was given a basket to carry water. It is only an enemy that one gives a basket to carry water. (laughter). I do not know what Government intended by giving him such a task, but he has come out, not with very flying colours but with his colours flying. (laughter).

Mr. LEE: I would like to call Government's attention to the fact that it is not fair to the Elected Members of the Council that any report should be sent to the Secretary of State before it has been discussed in this Council. I strongly protest against it and I desire that Government should accept it as a principle that in future before any reports are sent to the Secretary of State for consideration this Council should have an opportunity of discussing them. Government might be out for economy, but when Elected Members probe into the case of each individual they might be able to bring to Government's notice that hardships would be created in many instances. Criticism of

the report at this stage is useless, but if our criticisms were forwarded to the Secretary of State with the report he would have had the opportunity to see the other side of the picture.

Certain clerks in the Magistrate's Office were appointed in 1932 as assistant clerks. The Civil Service List for 1937 shows that in 1934 other assistant clerks were appointed and that in 1934 certain assistant clerks drew salaries on the Fixed Establishment. In 1934 those assistant clerks were put on the Unfixed Establishment but still received a salary of \$30; they had served from 1934 to 1937 without any increment. It is now proposed that assistant clerks who have been appointed since 1935 should receive the same bonuses as those who have been appointed since 1932 or 1934. Is that fair? There is discontent among the clerks in all the departments and this scheme under which certain officers will receive the same salaries from 1937 will certainly create great dissatisfaction among them. On page 37 of the report it is proposed to appoint 7 assistant clerks at \$360 to \$480. Will that be fair to those assistant clerks who were appointed since 1932? Those clerks cannot be transferred to any other department except there are vacancies. In allocating the extra money to be voted I suggest that Your Excellency take into consideration the services rendered by those assistant clerks since 1932 and remunerate them accordingly. I also suggest that they be promoted to other departments when vacancies arise, provided they have the necessary qualifications.

I cannot see the difference between the rights of senior and junior officers of the Government in respect of leave. I know that certain senior officers do not do their work and that the juniors have to do it. Is it therefore fair that senior officers should have better leave conditions? It is only fair that leave rights of all officers should be put on the same basis.

In considering the case of the Magistrate's clerks I am asking Government that those who were appointed in 1932 should be raised to the \$600 maximum. They are not many and it would be an incentive to the junior clerks.

On the question of the efficiency bar I

do not agree and never will agree that it should be left to the head of a department to say whether an officer should go over the bar.

The Council adjourned at 12.30 p.m. until 2 p.m. for the luncheon recess.

2 p.m.—

Mr. LEE (resuming): At the adjournment I was dealing with the question of the efficiency bar. I desire to add my quota to what the hon. member for Berbice River has said about junior officers being at the whims of heads of departments as regards promotion. In my opinion an examination would be a better method of testing an officer's efficiency for promotion, and I suggest that Government might adopt that method instead of giving the head of a department the last word. I think it is my duty to tell Government that there is a lot of discontent among junior officers in respect of this scheme, and when the Estimates are being considered Government will be asked to make many amendments.

THE PRESIDENT: Before any other member speaks I would like to refer to the fact that there is one point about which there appears to be some misunderstanding, and as other members may refer to it I think it is desirable that I should clear it up. It has been argued that because the report has received the approval of the Secretary of State discussion of it in this Council is useless. Let me state first of all that it is necessary that reports which involve expenditure of public funds should receive the Secretary of State's approval, and that approval of expenditure is given and is expressly stated by the Secretary of State to be subject to the approval of the Legislative Council. That disposes of any fear that this Council is committed to any expenditure of which it does not approve, by the prior approval of the Secretary of State. On the other hand it is felt that the Secretary of State's approval of the report puts a definite limit to expenditure on the matters dealt with in the report, and that no expressions of opinion by members will receive consideration. I wish to state definitely that that is not the case. A report such as this is placed before the Legislative Council for consideration, and the views of

members on points of detail are recorded and will receive the careful consideration of Government.

There is one point of criticism which has been made in this case particularly, that payments have been made already. On that point I accept personal responsibility entirely. I was aware that the Legislative Council approved in principle of the payments and I thought the payments should be made as soon as possible. Such payments in no way diminish the value of the views of members, as I have already stated.

Mr. JACOB: If I understand the hon. members who have spoken on the motion, the principle is not exactly as has been stated by Your Excellency. My point is that when this Government receives the opinion of the Secretary of State Government is certain as to what is to be done, and as the Constitution is at the present time Government can carry through almost anything as long as it has the previous sanction of the Secretary of State. While in principle that may be all right from Government's point of view, it is not quite so from the people's point of view. We claim to have the right to be able to convince Government and its advisers, and let me say at this stage that it seems unfortunate that the present Constitution is working in such a way as to make the people's representatives seem almost tied to Government's policy. The present Constitution is merely on trial, and so far as I am concerned—I have been a member of this Council for only two years but I have taken a keen interest in the political activities of the Colony for over 20 years—I am perfectly satisfied, and I have the opinions of other members of this Council and of previous members, that it is responsible for the present state of the Colony's finances and everything connected with the backward state of the Colony. I am one who will contest the principle that the Secretary of State should give concurrence before matters are put before the Legislative Council. It should be our duty to make representations and to put the people's point of view before Government so that it could be properly represented to the Secretary of State. If that is done I think there will be progress for British Guiana.

I notice that the report is dated 1936,

and that Major Bain Gray was appointed on October 10, 1935. Prior to that Government had numerous requests to do something to put the unclassified officers or certain officers of the Civil Service on a more permanent and satisfactory basis. It took Government a few years to consider that request and to appoint the then Director of Education to frame this report. The report was in the hands of Government last year. I think the Legislative Council voted \$1,000 to be paid to those unfortunate officers who were not getting what they should, and it was conceded that their case was a hard one and that they were deserving of some consideration. It was only as the result of an unfortunate occurrence that Government actually paid the money. I am not at all surprised because I feel very strongly about it. I write a letter to Government and it takes weeks to acknowledge it and months to say "No." I cannot understand how the machinery of Government works. It took Government practically a year to follow the recommendations in the report and to make payments to civil servants who expected this money and should have got it from the beginning of this year. They do not know their actual position up to the present time.

This Council should have some influence in changing certain aspects of this report. The recommendations made may be carried out, but those officers who expect further representations to be made will be in the same position as they were five or six years ago. Those who have been recommended for payments were in a somewhat better position but others have no right to approach Elected Members; that is a principle that is always emphasised by Government. We have to find out as best we can and make representations. Of course Government does not accept the principle that these people have grievances. Government believes that when representations are made to heads of departments and they choose to turn them down the matter is at an end, but it is not at an end as far as the parties are concerned. All these points tend to show that the Council should have the right to express its opinion before any responsible member of the Government and the Secretary of State decide on any matter.

Paragraph 23 of the report states:—

"Wherever practicable, I have discussed the grading with the heads of departments, and they have agreed in principle, although of course in certain instances they would have preferred to see a larger number of posts placed on the higher grades. This is a matter of expenditure, and improvements of this kind can be made whenever the necessary funds can be provided."

Doesn't that paragraph tend to show that we may be able to recommend and devise means whereby those particular officers can be given something more? Most of those people must feel thoroughly sick. I think it is the policy of Government to put off the evil day, or even the proper date from time to time so as to get people disgusted. That is my actual experience of this Government for the last two years, and I think these things ought to be changed.

There are various things in the report that can be criticised but to me it looks like useless criticism. I would like to refer to two classes of civil servants, sicknurses and dispensers and Post Office employees. In the case of sicknurses and dispensers those officers have to undergo special training. They are put in charge of districts outside Georgetown, particularly outlying districts, and have to act as Government medical officers at all times. What are the salaries proposed for those men? At the present time one dispenser can rise to the position of earning \$100 per month, but according to this report that is to be abolished. No dispenser will receive more than \$720 per annum after the present holder of the post goes out. That seems to me to be the position according to the report. Paragraph (iii) on page 39 states:—

"The staff of dispensers has been re-arranged to allow 5 of them to rise to \$960 as compared with the present maximum of \$720 for first class dispensers, and 5 second class dispensers, whose maximum is \$480, to rise to \$600. The increase on the maximum for dispensers is \$1,200."

I am sorry; the maximum is \$960 and not \$720 as I stated (laughter). My substantial point is correct, however, that no dispenser will receive \$1,200.

THE PRESIDENT: If the hon. member looks at page 38 of the report he will see the exact position. There is one dispenser at \$1,200.

Mr. JACOB: If that is so, sir, then it

is all right, (laughter), but my substantial point remains. (laughter). Some consideration has been given to them but the substantial point I wish to emphasise is that even the \$960 per annum is not sufficient for the duties those officers perform. That is my main point. Those dispensers are stationed in the Rupununi, Kamakusa, the North West District, the Demerara and Berbice rivers and various other outlying districts, and surely \$960 per annum is not sufficient for officers of Government who have the lives of people in their hands; who have to render first aid in times of emergency. The lot of those dispensers is not a happy one, and I suggest that the least that should be done is to increase their maximum to \$1,200. The health of the community would be better looked after and the dispensers would be fully satisfied. There should also be more liberal allowances for subsistence. That is one aspect of the matter I urge Government to consider seriously. I would like to get an expression of opinion from Government's medical adviser in the Council as to what he thinks will be the position of those dispensers who are not given really remunerative salaries for the duties they have to perform.

With regard to the Post Office I think the less said the better. (Hear, hear). Government knows the whole case and it is up to Government to make the position of these people better. Government has had examples; it has had representations made very strongly recently, and it is no use trying to emphasise that point any more. I urge upon Government the necessity to appoint a Committee to go into the matter and to pay those employees of the Post Office something more than they are getting. It cannot be expected that a man with a family can live on \$25 per month and perform the duties which these postmen do. As a matter of fact some married men in the Post Office Department get only \$18 per month. The standard of living of the junior officers of Government should be raised. I do not think any hon. member will disagree with that. There may be considerations of increasing expenditure, but once the standard of living is raised to such an extent as to make people feel they can live the increase in expenditure would be compensated for by increased revenue. When residents of this Colony receive money it is not sent

out of the Colony. The hindrance to the progress of British Guiana is the fact that the bulk of its wealth is going out of the Colony in several ways known to Government. No Government should consider that it is doing its duty if it does not pay its officers at least \$30 per month, especially those in the Post Office. It is no wonder that there are all kinds of irregularities there. The employees of the Post Office deserve every consideration.

As regards the teachers, they too deserve some consideration, and what I have said of the Post Office employees applies with almost equal force to the junior teachers who receive salaries from \$8 per month. I do not think it is fair. It is true they are learning all the time, but they are drawn from ranks that are very poor and they should be given something more. The status of teachers should also be raised.

THE PRESIDENT: There was one statement made by the hon. member which is incorrect, and although most hon. members know it is so I think I should deny it. The hon. member stated that the payments would not have been made but for an unfortunate occurrence. I presume he referred to the strike among the Post Office employees. I wish to deny that that was the cause. The payments were held up until approval was received from the Secretary of State, and as the employees themselves knew, that approval of the Secretary of State was received two days before the strike, and the pay sheets had already been made out. I know that most hon. members know that it was not the occurrence that caused the payments, but I wish to deny the statement made by the hon. member.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: In moving the motion this morning the Colonial Secretary was at pains to point out that the object was first of all to obtain the sanction of this Council of the payment of the amount mentioned in the motion, which was in excess of the original vote passed last year, and secondly, to afford hon. members of this Council an opportunity to add their contribution, if they so desire, to the report which is before the Council to-day. I had hoped that hon. members would have confined their remarks to those two points. I think the hon. member for

Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar) started off by saying that he heartily approved of the motion because he desired to see the money paid to those unfortunate people. With that view I entirely agree. It is desired that approval should be given in order that payment should be made as soon as possible, although some payments have already been made.

So far as the report itself is concerned I look upon it as forming the basis for discussion and I am very happy in the thought that it is not the desire of Government that discussion of the report should be confined to this motion to-day. The matter will be brought up again when the Estimates for 1938 are under consideration, and hon. members will be afforded every opportunity to deal with any particular cases they wish to. I propose, therefore, to leave out of my remarks to-day reference to any particular cases I may have in mind to which I think Government ought to give some consideration. I would like first of all to congratulate the writer of the report on the excellent piece of work that has been produced. (Hear, hear). Those of us who are—and I submit that I am one—right-thinking members of the community can appreciate very well the amount of work involved in its preparation. It must be remembered that it was an attempt to put the unclassified officers of the Civil Service of the Colony on a more equitable basis, and I do not think any hon. member of this Council or any individual in this Colony will gainsay the fact that it was a very arduous task and one which, in my opinion, was very difficult for one man to accomplish without omitting any item of detail. I think Major Bain Gray ought to be complimented on the valuable report he has presented to Government, and any criticism I might level at the report itself will be confined to the principle and not details, because it would be manifestly unfair to criticise the work done, having regard to its volume and the time and devotion given to that work.

I have in mind that this report is the outcome of several petitions presented to Government from time to time regarding unclassified officers of the Service. It may be true that in the past immediate action was not taken on the representa-

tions made, nevertheless I think it is too late now to make reference to that. We are here merely to try to do the best we can in order to put those unclassified officers on a more equitable basis, and I am prepared to lend every possible assistance towards that end. Although I happen to be a member of the Executive Council I consider I am one of the people's representatives as much as any other member, and I am not tied to any Government policy. I consider I am free to express an opinion on this question as on any other question, and I must again repeat for the benefit of the hon. member who made that representation, that I am as determined as he is to make representations on behalf of the people whom I have the honour to represent.

So far as the report is concerned my chief complaint is that I consider the method employed in going about it is one that might have been improved upon. I make that remark although I must frankly admit at the outset that I have not been able to follow Major Bain Gray throughout his various activities and inquiries, but so far as I have been able to ascertain it seems to me that perhaps a wider view ought to have been taken, as in that way information of greater value might have reached the writer of the report, and perhaps some of the hardships that will be pointed out later on by me would not have resulted. It will be seen later on that some of the salaries proposed in this report are not based on the importance of the work that is being carried out by some of those unclassified officers. There are several instances which come to my mind to which I might make reference, but I wish to confine myself to what I said at the beginning and not give illustrations. It is my opinion that some of the increases recommended in this report are not altogether adequate, and perhaps when the time comes I may be able, as I hope, to convince Government on that phase of the matter.

I do not propose to make any reference to the question of pensions and gratuities because I know that the motion before the Council has nothing whatever to do with that phase of the report, but when the time comes to discuss that phase of it I hope to be able to offer a very fair and reasonable contribution to Government.

There was one criticism levelled at Government to-day at which I was rather surprised, coming as it did from the member who made it. It was that this report should not have been considered in its present form. I think the hon. member has forgotten that if Government was in sympathy with the recommendations made by the writer of the report that certain increases were necessary Government had to give effect to those proposals in order to afford this Council an opportunity to discuss it and to make any further representations it desired to make, for the simple reason that no member of the Council could have endeavoured to initiate the expenditure of public funds because it would be outside the scope of any member. I welcome this opportunity of supporting this motion because I feel sure it is a genuine desire on the part of Government to do what is right and just to the unclassified officers of the Service.

Mr. SEYMOUR: I do not intend to occupy the time of the Council very long; I shall have an opportunity of discussing the details when the Estimates are being considered. There will be the fullest scope then. Possibly the acting Colonial Secretary when he drafted this report forgot to put in another appendix—E. & O.E. (laughter). Had he done that I think the Council would have been quite satisfied (laughter). I must tell the Colonial Secretary that he cannot please everybody; none of us can. These people are deserving of consideration, and in drafting this report he has started a foundation which did not hitherto exist, and upon which we can build. I have read the report not too carefully; I have not had the time.

There are cases in the Post Office of officers who have been many years in the Service and whose chances of promotion were hampered by the closing of several district post offices some years ago. I hope we shall be able to do our best for these under-dogs, as we call them. I hope Government will be sympathetic in the matter.

There is one point I would like to emphasise. Would it not have been possible to avoid this debate if Government had called us together and discussed the report

before it was sent to the Secretary of State? To put the cart before the horse and ask us to discuss it after it has been considered by the Secretary of State is all wrong. If the course I suggest had been adopted I feel sure that a good deal of the time of the Council would have been saved.

Mr. WOOLFORD: I believe the author of this report and myself, of all the members present in this chamber, have been continuously associated in public life. I think we are the only two members who enjoy that happy privilege, and I should like to tender not merely my personal congratulations to him, but also those of that part of the Civil Service resident in my constituency, which is affected by these recommendations. I seem to think that it is because of that long experience in this Legislature that he is about the only officer that I know of, apart from one other perhaps, who would have had the necessary experience to have produced this report, and the fact that he has done so practically unaided and has produced what is really a useful and practical document makes me regret that no formal motion recording the acceptance by the Council of a report of this valuable nature has been submitted for our consideration. That is perhaps due to the fact that he is acting Colonial Secretary, and I should like to believe that in a practical way his services and those of the Secretary and others who have assisted in the preparation of this report and in compiling the data will receive suitable recognition. It is usual in my experience to vote a sum of money to secretaries of committees, and I cannot understand why that has not been done on this occasion.

I have risen principally to correct one or two errors that seem to have a sort of resting place in the minds of certain elected members. I believe they fought for many years for the representation on the Executive Council of members in the position of elected members, and it seems to me to be thought by some of the elected members that it is a position where, when one reaches it, there is such a dominant control exercised by Government over the faculties of members of that body as to render them absolutely impotent of thought or action. (laughter). I wish to say, speaking for myself, I have never asked any Government favour, per-

sonal or otherwise, and I feel myself perfectly free and competent to differ from Government on any occasion that I feel I should give expression to views in opposition, and I am not aware that that is not the position, not merely of the present representation by Electives on the Executive Council, but has always been the position of other elected members. I think it should be known—I do not think I am breaking confidence in disclosing it that the decisions of the Executive Council are in very many cases majority decisions, and it is not because it has been stated here that this report has been approved by the Secretary of State and considered by the Executive Council that thereby it follows that every elected member on the Council agrees with any or all of its recommendations. I deplore myself, sir, the tendency on the part of elected members to deprecate the value of the nexus between elected members of the Council and the Government in their joint communion on matters of public policy on the Executive Council. It would be a sorry day if the public came to the conclusion that when an elected member becomes a member of the Executive Council he is necessarily a member of the Government. Those are expressions of views given effect to by the member for Essequibo River (Mr. Lee) and in a much larger measure by the member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob). It is discouraging to me and to my colleagues to hear it constantly suggested in this Council that we are in any way under an obligation to Government. As a matter of fact I think I may be permitted to say that the motion in its altered state was due to the initiative of the elected members of the Council. As has already been explained we all desire when the time arrives, and when several items come under discussion, to secure not only for ourselves but for other hon. members of the Council the fullest freedom of discussion.

From my point of view, sir, I have never understood the conditions governing the entrance of persons into the Civil Service. I know there is such a thing as an Appointments and Promotions Board, and I know there are certain educational qualifications required for entrance into the Civil Service, but I think I am correct in stating that notwithstanding that check, if I may

say so, there does exist among the members of the Civil Service a large measure of dissatisfaction in regard to the system under which, notwithstanding the general classification, A. is appointed to a position that B. previously held. There does exist that dissatisfaction in the Service. It is apparent to some of us that some appointments should never have been made, and I wish to say again that in matters of that kind members like myself and the member sitting on my left (Mr. F. J. Seaford) are not allowed any greater opportunity of criticism than any other member of this Council. Those are matters of administration. I personally would like to see some better system employed. I would like to see a greater amount of discretion given to heads of departments. I know it is not always possible, but I doubt whether there would not be improvement in the Civil Service if even some heads of departments were allowed this privilege. I am not going into details but I see on the Estimates, for instance, positions held by persons not on the Fixed Establishment who enjoy emoluments greater than those who are on the Fixed Establishment, and whose pay and emoluments together are not one-half of those who are on the Unfixed Establishment.

The Commissioner has made certain recommendations, but there is this about the report and about the procedure which governs it: I have had the experience of discussing three different reports on the Civil Service of the Colony. Sir Harry Moorhouse came to this Colony and examined the position of members of the Civil Service, and I am not aware that the subject matter of his report or his recommendations were ever made the subject of a motion in this House. There was no formal motion as in this case, and he was the Commissioner sent out at the instance of the Secretary of State. A Commission of a similar kind was that of the Financial Commissioners, and there again so far as my recollection goes no formal motion was tabled for discussion in this Legislature. Therefore when members complain that this report should have been considered—I suppose in draft—by them before submission to the Secretary of State I do not quite understand the nature of the criticism. My answer to that is that in the case of two previous reports on the Civil Service this Council

never had an opportunity of expressing its opinion on any portion of those reports which were simply laid on the table, and there they remained without an opportunity of some formal action by elected members. Therefore there has been no departure from previous practice, but there has been, if I may say so, an improvement in the general attitude of Government towards the Legislature in submitting this report in its present form.

The main idea is to gain approval and legislative approval for certain public expenditure, and to that extent I have no doubt, sir, that you were justified—although I personally do not think so—in issuing your special warrant. I have never approved of the system whereby expenditure from public funds has been made without approval of the Legislature, and I cannot conceive that there was any greater urgency on this occasion than on any other, in making those payments at the time you did. I say so for this reason: I think there was opportunity for summoning a meeting of the Legislature, if only for that purpose. I am very jealous of the system whereby, although this Council has not control of votes, Government or no Government body can expend public funds without authority and then come to the Legislature for its formal approval. To some extent, of course, you were justified because you had the formal approval for say nine-tenths of the amount, and you had the right to anticipate that formal approval would be given, but I think myself that there was opportunity of saying to those affected “We have received the approval of the Secretary of State and we propose to go to the Legislative Council by whom it should be authorised,” and it was the duty of the members of the Service, however disaffected, to have remained quiescent. If the impression has gone abroad that it was the result of pressure of the strike that this payment was made in that way I think myself there was some little justification for it. Still, in the exercise of your authority you have explained, and I think one of the features that disarm criticism is the fact that you have stated so in your Message.

I hope that in the consideration of the Estimates item by item you will allow a general freedom of discussion along the

lines indicated by certain members, because I happen to know that there exists a considerable amount of dissatisfaction among the lower grades of the Service in regard to pay. It is not dissatisfaction so much in relation to the nature of their employment; it is not that their work is necessarily so arduous that they feel the strain of it, but they are feeling the pinch of living. It is a fact that you cannot pay a man \$25 per month and compel him to live in the country. How can you expect him to exist on \$25 per month, holding a responsible position even in Georgetown? But when you remove him to the country and his emoluments remain the same, and the duty allowance given him is not sufficient to compensate for the increased cost of living, you must have dissatisfaction. I do not think this community would grumble at an increase of the Estimates to restore, not prosperity but ordinary comfort to some of those men who are living in penury. I am not going to refer to any particular officers. We all know that defalcations occur in some departments more than in others, and they are due to temptations. They are tempted to borrow in the hope of replacing, only to find that the auditor comes along, an examination is made and it is discovered. From what I know of you, sir, you will as President allow some consideration and freedom of discussion as Sir Geoffrey Northcote gave when you were Colonial Secretary.

Motion put, and agreed to.

BUDGET STATEMENT.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: In pursuance of notice I beg to move:—

That this Council approves the estimates of expenditure to be defrayed from Revenue during the year ending 31st December, 1938, which have been laid on the table.

In accordance with custom, Honourable Members have already been supplied with the estimates and with a memorandum explaining in detail the changes under both revenue and expenditure heads. In Your Excellency's speech on Friday you placed before members a clear statement of the estimated position at the end of 1937 and the financial effect of the adoption of the estimates presented to Council. Having regard to the information already

supplied to Members there is really not much which I can add at this stage.

Before dealing with any of the heads of revenue and expenditure it will be convenient if I refer to the general financial position and indicate what balances are expected. A balance was brought forward from 1936 of \$556,506, and the estimated deficit for 1937, based on the revised estimate of revenue and expenditure, is \$59,391, so that, apart from loans-in-aid received during the year, the surplus balance at the end of 1937 would be \$497,115. Actually an amount of \$170,400, being the balance of a loan-grant-in-aid for 1936/37, was received during the year. It is estimated, therefore, that there will be a surplus balance at the end of 1937 of \$667,515.

Turning now to 1938, we find an anticipated deficit on the year's working of \$108,732, as compared with \$400,445 in the 1937 budget. It should be noted that the 1937 figures include an item of Extraordinary Expenditure of \$135,000 on a new ship.

Having regard to the estimated surplus balance of \$667,515 at the end of 1937, it will be seen that on the basis of estimates as now presented to Council there will be an estimated surplus balance of \$558,783, at the end of 1938, without the promised loan grant-in-aid of \$48,000.

On the revenue side, the general features of the budget remain unchanged. The anticipated Customs revenue is \$3,031,000 out of a total estimated revenue of \$5,549,905, followed by Excise and Licences amounting to \$1,091,252 and Internal Revenue of \$467,360, of which Income Tax alone produces \$350,000. Income Tax is now the fourth largest item in the revenue—those which exceed it being—Specific duties (excluding Wines, Spirits, etc.) \$1,648,000; Ad Valorem duties \$744,000; and Rum duty \$516,000.

The estimate of total ordinary revenue for 1938 is \$5,549,905, being an increase of \$399,087 over the original 1937 figures, the increases being made up approximately of Customs \$271,000; Excise and Licences \$82,202, due almost entirely to rum duties and sugar duties; Internal Revenue—mainly income tax \$51,830;

Fees of Court or Office, etc., \$33,232, due to reimbursements to be made by the Post Office Savings Bank under the new accounting arrangements; Post Office—\$22,300 owing to the anticipated sale of the new issue of stamps; and Forests—Lands and Mines, \$32,120 due to the increased activities in the mining industry.

The revenue abstract table shows that the figures for 1938 follow closely the revised figures for the current year, the only differences of importance being under the heads Customs, where the increased figure in the current year is due to the importation of coronation goods during the early part of the year; Internal Revenue, the receipts from which were abnormally increased in 1937 on account of payments of estate duty; and Interest under which, consequent on the Post Office Savings Bank becoming an independent financial organisation as from 1st January, 1938, the appropriate item is no longer included.

I hope that Honourable Members will agree that the revenue estimate has been framed along the line of reasoned optimism. The Income Tax is estimated at \$50,000 more than the original estimate for 1937. \$50,000 was the figure by which the original estimate for 1937 was increased in the revised estimate, but since this was done, it has become clear that a further \$20,000 may be expected before the end of this year. Almost the whole increase from payments is by companies, not individuals. The receipts from Estate duties have been abnormal in both 1936 and 1937, and as this is a branch of revenue where the results cannot be foretold, the figure has been left at the previous low level of \$25,000. The importance of the stamp collector is reflected in the Post Office revenue to the extent of over \$22,000, but even this is only approximately 50 per cent. of the amount derived from the sale of Coronation stamps in London this year. Beside this our modest profit of \$1,150 on the seignorage of our only local coin—"the bitt"—is a mere drop in the bucket. I think that on the whole, the Council will be satisfied that the taxpayer is paying his legal dues, with the exception of the owners of wireless sets. New Regulations on this subject are now in draft.

The revenue side of the Colony's budget

is affected by the question of the liabilities of Drainage Areas under the Drainage and Irrigation Ordinance, Chapter 165, which has been a matter of serious concern to Government for some time. Various proposals have been put forward for 'funding' arrears of drainage rates outstanding in accordance with the provisions of the Drainage and Irrigation (Payment of Arrears) Ordinance (No. 8 of 1936), passed in June, 1936. But it has become apparent that these proposals will not provide a solution of the difficulty.

In a number of cases, owing to the unsatisfactory financial position of the Village Authorities concerned, Government has had to agree, on the advice of the Local Government Board, to the adoption by the Authorities of budgets which do not provide for the proper assessments for payment to Government of annual loan charges on the capital cost of drainage works. The Director of Public Works has also brought to the notice of Government that in very many Drainage Areas the works have been inadequately maintained and that comparatively large sums will now have to be expended on arrears of maintenance. The whole question is now being studied, but it is evident that some special arrangements in regard to the debts due by the Authorities to Government will have to be made if the drainage works are not to be allowed to deteriorate still further, and the value of the capital sums expended upon them to be wasted.

On the expenditure side, the estimate for 1938 is \$5,658,637, being \$107,374 in excess of the original estimate, and \$161,715 less than the revised figures for 1937.

The main items of expenditure in which there is an increase have already been mentioned by Your Excellency—Medical, Education, Police, and Public Works Extraordinary. Out of a total recurrent expenditure of \$5,401,487, one Head, Public Debt, absorbs \$1,140,595. Of other Heads the Medical Services are still the largest with \$616,513 under various branches. Next, but a long way behind, comes Education—all branches—\$494,303, followed by Pensions and Gratuities—\$438,168, Police \$425,510; Public Works \$461,445, without Extraordinary Works.

If this be added the total for Public Works is \$713,795. I refrain from adding Sea Defences to this total.

As mentioned by Your Excellency the estimates include a number of items which are under individual consideration by the Secretary of State, and have been included in the estimates as presented to the Council on the understanding that they are subject to such consideration.

These items are as follows :—

Education.—Grants to Primary Schools and Carnegie Trade Centre.

Forest Department.—Forest Improvement Operations.

Law Officers.—Reorganisation of Staff.

Medical.—Tuberculosis Hospital—Increases of staff in Hospitals, etc.

Militia and Police.—Increases of personnel.

Supreme Court.—Increase of staff at New Amsterdam—Deeds Registry, Printing of Law Reports.

Public Works Extraordinary.—All items.

There are also minor increases of staff under other heads which have not yet been considered by the Secretary of State.

I shall now deal briefly with some of the more important new or altered items of expenditure that are inserted in the estimates for consideration, especially those where some question of principle is involved, or a change in the establishment is contemplated. In the majority of cases these have been included in the printed memorandum which accompanied the estimates.

Head II.—Legislature—

Sub-head 1a.—On the retirement of the Official Reporter it was decided that it would be better if there were two reporters instead of one, in order that the reports of proceedings in Legislative Council and of deliberations of committees and commissions may be prepared more expeditiously than at present and the need for employing temporary assistance obviated. Provision is therefore made for the extra post.

Head III.—Agriculture—

Sub-head 1 (7).—It is proposed to combine the post of cane agronomist and plant

breeder; the post to be placed on the pensionable establishment with salary on the scale now being paid the cane agronomist. The Sugar Producers' Association will continue to contribute to the salary of this post on the existing basis.

As a result of this amalgamation it is proposed to create the post of assistant plant breeder on contract for three years.

Head VI.—Colonial Secretary's Office—

Sub-head 10.—Provision is made for the payment of a duty allowance of \$240 per annum to the officer performing the duties of Clerk to the Legislative Council.

Head VI. (A)—Colonial Secretary's Office, Labour, Local Government and Immigration—

It is proposed to form a branch of the Colonial Secretary's Office under an officer to be styled "Commissioner of Labour and Assistant Colonial Secretary for Local Affairs."

This officer will organise and supervise a labour inspectorate and take over such functions of the existing Immigration Department as are still statutorily necessary under the Immigration Ordinance, and at the same time, will assist the Colonial Secretary in his capacity as Chairman of the Local Government Board.

Head VII.—Customs—

Sub-head 10.—This item was previously shown under Head XXIII.—Miscellaneous, sub-head 17. Refunds of Revenue.—The amounts provided under (a) Oils Drawback Regulations and (b) Exports Drawback have hitherto been debited to revenue in cases where the refunds were made during the year of collection, but from 1st January, 1938, such refunds will be charged against the expenditure votes.

Head IX.—Education—

The principal increases under this head are due to—

(a) Grants to Primary Schools—an increase in the vote of \$11,450. The estimate under this sub-head is largely based on the average attendance in the fully-aided schools of the Colony. The provision for the current year was calculated on an average attendance of 35,239 pupils.

A return of these attendances, compiled at the end of April, 1937, shows an average attendance of 36,536, an increase of 1,297 pupils. It is anticipated that by the end of the current year these figures will show a further increase. The increase over the 1937 estimate is detailed in the Explanatory Memorandum which is before members.

(b) Carnegie Trade Centre—an increase of \$5,507. The provision in 1937 was \$6,263 in respect of the period July to December, and the amount required for the whole year 1938 will be approximately double that amount. Some alteration may be desirable in the light of the report of the Committee which is now sitting.

Head XI.—Forest Department—

The new items under this head are necessary in consequence of (a) the decision to remove the headquarters of the department to Georgetown and (b) the recommendations made by Major Oliphant, as regards to the necessity for completing the valuation surveys on the Demerara and Berbice rivers, and for commencing work in connection with the improvement and restoration of worked out greenheart areas. The experimental work which has been carried on in the Mazaruni over the last five years has established a routine by which this can be done.

Head XIV.—Law Officers—

Sub-head 1b.—It is proposed to place the post of Assistant Attorney-General on a full time basis. The present arrangement is that the holder should receive a salary of \$2,400—\$3,120 with the right of private practice. It is proposed that the salary of the post should now be fixed at \$4,080 per annum, and that the holder should be a full time Government Officer without right of private practice.

Head XV.—Magistrates—

Sub-head 2.—The increase under this item is necessary on account of the number of sittings of the Providence Court having been doubled since April, 1937, and the need to provide travelling expenses consequent upon the opening of the Court at 11½ Miles Potaro.

Head XVI.—Medical—

Sub-head 1d.—The new post of Assistant Physician is created in accordance

with the recommendations of the Medical Re-Organisation Committee's report—paragraph 21—23.

Sub-head 1x.—In accordance with the recommendations of the Medical Re-Organisation Committee—paragraph 104—provision is made for the payment of an honorarium to the private medical practitioner assisting in the Venereal Diseases Department of the Public Hospital, Georgetown, and also for an increase of the duty allowance to the Venereal Diseases Officer.

Head XIX.—Medical—Hospitals and Dispensaries—

It is expected that the new Tuberculosis Hospital, Best, West Coast, Demerara, to be built from funds provided by the Colonial Development Fund, will be ready for occupation next year. It is estimated that a sum of \$21,448 will be required for the maintenance and running expenses of this hospital. The present cost of maintenance and running expenses is \$5,856, so that the net increase in 1938 on this account will be \$15,592.

Provision is made for the appointment of 2 additional Second Class Dispensers. The present staff allows no relief for officers on vacation or sick leave, and it is considered this proposal is the minimum requirement for relief purposes.

A total increase of \$14,675 under the item Nurses and Servants, is proposed. \$7,308 of this amount is on account of staff for the Tuberculosis Hospital and \$1,146 is for staff at the Lady Denham Home which in 1937 was paid from a one-line vote. The remainder of the increase, amounting to \$6,221, is in respect of annual increments and also to provide much needed reliefs in the various hospitals throughout the Colony, as recommended by the Medical Re-Organisation Committee in paragraph 61 of their report.

Head XX.—Medical—Government Health Department—

Though not included in the estimates before members, the Secretary of State's approval is being sought to provide for an additional post of Assistant Government Medical Officer of Health with salary on the scale £650—£800. It is proposed

that this officer should be in charge of the new Tuberculosis Hospital and should also carry out the duties of an Assistant Medical Officer of Health. This is in accordance with the recommendation of the Medical Re-Organisation Committee's Report, paragraph 93.

Sub-head 1j.—In accordance with the Committee's Report provision has been made for the appointment of two additional Sanitary Inspectors.

Sub-head 10.—The Nutrition Committee recommended that certain preliminary investigations and experimentation required to determine along scientific lines the nutritional state of the people of this Colony, should be spread over a period of three years.

The first year would largely be devoted to the undertaking of a series of surveys carried out amongst selected groups of persons resident in Georgetown and New Amsterdam, in village and rural areas, on sugar and other estates and in mining areas.

Such surveys will be carried out under the direct supervision of the Nutrition Committee. Details are given on page 23 *et seq.* of the Report of the Nutrition Committee, the estimated expenditure for the year 1938 being \$4,200.

Head XXI.—Militia—

Provision is made for an additional platoon (30 men) of militia in New Amsterdam.

Head XXVII.—Police—

It is proposed that the establishment of the Police should be increased as follows:—

- 1 Warrant Officer Mounted Police.
- 1 County Sergeant-Major.
- 1 Sergeant.
- 1 Corporal.
- 12 Constables.

The additional expenditure which will result from the above increase in the Police establishment is as follows:—

Personal emoluments	\$ 8,220
Other charges	2,220
	\$ 10,440

Head XXXII.—Post Office Savings Bank—

From 1st January, 1938, the Savings Bank is to be established as an independent financial organisation with accounts separate from those of the Colony. The offices are included in the estimates in order to preserve the status of the holders thereof as public officers and employees of the Government.

Head XLVI.—Public Works Extraordinary—

Of the building items, the most important are the provision of a new Maternity Ward at the Public Hospital, Georgetown, a new Police Station at Belfield, and the continuation of the rebuilding programme at Brickdam. Considerable improvements in other Medical, Police, and Post Office buildings are also contemplated, and provision is also made under Minor Works to improve living conditions at certain Post Offices and Police Stations. Item of improvements from the health point of view is the supply of artesian well water to all primary schools where such a course is practicable, and the improvement of the surface drainage, New Amsterdam.

Under Roads and Bridges it is proposed to continue the reconstruction of the Georgetown-Buxton Road with concrete strips and to improve the trail from Tukeit to Kaieteur.

In addition to the items included in the printed estimates the Secretary of State has been asked to approve of provision being made for the following services which are considered to be important from the point of view of public health:—

- (1) Georgetown—
 - (a) the drainage of Government lands, and
 - (b) filling of low lying areas which constitute swamps on Government lands.

It is intended that the cost of the work amounting to \$82,516 should be met from revenue spread over a period of years. The Secretary of State's approval of the scheme generally and of a sum of \$10,000 being included in the 1938 estimates is being sought.

(2) Country Districts —

In order that surveys may be carried out in certain areas of land in country

and rural districts on which local sanitary authority and private owners seek to erect buildings, or to lay out for building purposes, the Secretary of State's approval has been asked for the employment by Government of a Land Surveyor during 1938. It is estimated that the cost of this scheme will amount to \$1,760 for each year a surveyor is employed.

It is also proposed to establish one scholarship per annum for pupils of the Berbice High School for Boys who obtain the Cambridge School Certificate with credits in five or more subjects, for the purpose of enabling the winner to proceed to Queen's College to continue his studies for the British Guiana Scholarship Examination. The scholarship would be awarded under conditions similar to those governing the award of the Queen's College Scholarships. The estimated annual cost is \$260.

The question of this Colony taking part in the Empire Exhibition to be held in Scotland during 1938 is under consideration at present. If it is finally decided that the Colony should participate the Council will be asked to provide the necessary funds estimated at \$3,960.

The Secretary of State has also been asked to approve of provision being made which will enable the services of the Curator of the Museum being retained till the end of April, 1938, when the re-organisation of the Museum will have been completed.

I beg to move the motion standing in my name. I propose, after Honourable Members have spoken, if they so wish, to move for the appointment of a Select Committee on the same lines as last year.

Mr. ELEAZAR: There is nothing to add to the very lucid explanation given by the Colonial Secretary in this matter. Government has tried its best and I like to give it credit for trying its best, but I am wondering whether the whole of the explanation given by him is not contained in the explanatory memorandum supplied for use when considering the Estimates. I wonder who informed Government that this explanatory memorandum is a useful innovation. I have tried to read the Estimate and I had to turn off to look at the explanatory memorandum to see what a certain letter indicated. (laughter). It

takes too much time. Hitherto the Estimates were interleaved and it was easy to refer to the explanatory notes. Perhaps Government thought it was doing something for the best, but from my point of view it is not the best.

Mr. JACOB: Sir, I should like to take this opportunity to refer to the speech delivered by you to the Council on Friday last and to the budget speech just delivered by the Colonial Secretary. I must compliment you, sir, to some extent (laughter) for giving us such a concise review of the trade and revenue and expenditure of this Colony in your address last Friday, but I think it was a little bit too short. When I refer to one or two omissions which I think are very vital, and one or two statements which might have been made so as to make the public rest at ease that something would be done to improve conditions in the Colony, I think you will agree with me that your speech was a little bit on the short side. However, I think, acting as you are just for a short time before the arrival of the new Governor, there is no question about your grasp of the affairs of the Colony.

I think it would be the best thing for the Colony if the Estimates for 1938 were not discussed until Sir Wilfrid Jackson arrives. The Select Committee could be appointed and other matters could be dealt with by the Council in connection with this year's work, but the Estimates should be left over until the new Governor arrives so that he might be conversant with the affairs of the Colony and be able to hear the views of elected members as well as those of Government's advisers. I do not know whether it would embarrass you, sir, to adjourn the Council until the new Governor arrives for the consideration of the Estimates. I think it is the view of many of us that that should be done. When it was suggested to you a few days ago I do not think it found favour with you, but I do urge consideration of it, and I trust my brother Electives will support me. (Mr. Eleazar: No). The hon. member for Berbice River says "No." I think I heard him correctly. (laughter). He gave notice of a motion this morning complaining about unemployment and various things. I remember during the last session Government agreed, and all the members of the Council agreed

that something ought to be done to improve labour conditions here. With the curtailment of the production of sugar I at least hoped to hear some pronouncement in your address, sir, as to the future agricultural policy of Government. There can be no doubt that unemployment is increasing very rapidly. The population of the country is increasing; health statistics are fairly good but there is no work. Avenues are not being opened up for further employment so as to absorb all the population.

I am greatly concerned not only about the unemployed but the young people who are coming up. I see no hope for them to make themselves independent on the soil. I think it is known to the Government that a large number of young people are about to go out of the country in search of employment. I think it is undesirable that they should go. I think the crying need of the country is population, and everything ought to be done to keep the people here. Ever since I was a child I have heard that something must be done about drainage and irrigation and I have started to say the same thing, but nothing has been done. Nothing is being done and I urge that something ought to be done. That is one of the reasons why I suggest that when the new Governor comes he will listen to what we have to say and be able to formulate some scheme. He will have first-hand information on the various heads of the Estimate. He will not have to go around the country seeking advice, which takes time. He would not have to travel from place to place to learn conditions and then make up his mind. I think it would be best for him to listen to some of us at least. (laughter). Some of us have other avenues of approaching Government. Some of us tell Government one thing to-day and quite the contrary to-morrow. Some of us make speeches here and when they are reminded of them they say "I did not mean it; I am a politician and I have to make certain statements." We want members to get up here and say what they think is right and stand by it. It is unfair to the people of the Colony that all sides should not be put forward to the new Governor and as quickly as possible.

It is my duty to refer to my constituency first, and when I say I was dis-

appointed in seeing or hearing nothing of hope in your address as regards the North West District I think you will agree with me that I am entitled to feel disappointed. The entire County of Essequibo is being depopulated. Communication with the North West District is extremely difficult. In fact it is my considered opinion that communication with that district is being deliberately hampered for certain obvious reasons which are known to the advisers of this Government. It appears to me that it is the intention of this Government to completely abandon the County of Essequibo, and while certain sections of the Press have suggested various things, a newspaper with the largest guaranteed circulation suggested that the North West District should be sold. (laughter). I am wondering what the Imperial Government would think of a suggestion like that. One section of the Press suggested that the County of Essequibo should be partitioned. I think I am inclined to agree with that because it is being depopulated, and it is unfair to expect the people in Essequibo to contribute to the expenditure of the whole Colony. It is grossly unfair to expect the residents of Essequibo to contribute to the taxation levied for the whole Colony.

I would like to refer to coffee particularly. It is the staple industry of the North West District. In your address to the Council, sir, you stated:—

"Among other products which showed an improvement it is interesting to note that the value of coffee exports rose from \$9,243 in 1936 to \$19,055 in 1937."

I must confess that I cannot understand how you arrived at the figure of \$9,243 in 1936. I have in my hand the report of the Director of Agriculture for 1936 which gives the exports of coffee for 1936 as valued at \$15,626. Even if \$9,243 was the value of exports up to a certain period I think you created a wrong impression by suggesting that it had increased from \$9,243 to \$19,055.

THE PRESIDENT: I made a comparison of the exports from the 1st January to the 31st August and stated that the value of the coffee exports rose from \$9,000 in 1936 to \$19,000 during the corresponding period this year.

Mr. JACOB: The figures given in your address create a wrong impression. They

show that the position of the coffee industry has improved tremendously from last year to this year, and that is not the position. The figures for the last five years are:—1932, \$69,436; 1933, \$79,594; 1934, \$47,238; 1935, \$23,849; 1936, \$15,626. The fact is that the exports have declined from \$69,000 or roughly \$70,000. This year I do not think the exports will be valued more than \$25,000 but I think it would be fair to take the average figures for five years because it must be borne in mind that the coffee market slumped. It is hoped, however, that world conditions will so improve that the industry will be able to find a footing later on. I am satisfied that I have the assurance of Government that everything will be done to aid existing agricultural industries and to create new industries. Here is an industry that has been established and maintained; exports went up to \$100,000 but have now declined to \$25,000.

I suggested various means of aiding this industry to a very small extent. I have had promises for over two years and yet this year there is not a ray of hope in your address, sir. It may be that you have not been favoured with the report you are expecting from a certain organisation. There again there is something wrong somewhere. That organisation appointed a committee over a year ago to report to Government. It is rather strange that to consider a scheme to aid the coffee industry would take a year, and even when suggestions are made they are not included in the Address presented to this Council. What must the people who are interested think about the matter? I made certain recommendations and it is well that I should read them to the Council. I am charged with the representation of that district and it is my duty to urge on every occasion and as strongly as I can that something be done to assist the coffee industry. I made the following recommendations for the aid of the industry:—

(1) A grant on an acreage basis of not less than \$3 per acre per annum and not more than \$5 for a period of not less than 3 years, this grant to be given to *bona fide* cultivators on the certificate of the District Agricultural Inspector, to be paid in January, 1938, 1939 and 1940. If cultivation is not maintained the cultivator to receive no further grant.

(2) That representations be made through Government for a reduction of the freight rates of the steamship lines.

(1) That the Local Authorities encourage the consumption of coffee especially in the institu-

tions where it could be done without interfering with the health of the people, and that there be extensive advertising propaganda for increasing the consumption of coffee.

I made those recommendations because I felt they would help the industry. An expenditure of \$20,000 or \$25,000 to tide the industry over present world difficulties would be money very well spent indeed, but I do not know whether Government has received those recommendations yet. They were adopted almost unanimously by the organisation. I do not know why they have not reached Government up to the present time but I am inclined to think they are being delayed for very many reasons. I will give one of the reasons. When the matter was being discussed a certain member suggested that the coffee industry should not be helped at all because coffee was unsaleable and that the varieties should be replaced by better ones. I suggested that the Department of Agriculture should be asked whether the varieties were good or should be replaced by other varieties. I have been selling coffee for some time and can give this Council the assurance that Liberian coffee produced in this Colony is saleable at competitive prices, and with skilful selling it can secure a better price than several other varieties. As a matter of fact our Liberian coffee is used for blending purposes and is bought for that purpose by other countries. It is time that this matter is exposed and that Government take notice of it. Not even £5,000 has been given to help the coffee industry, but when the sugar industry was in a bad way it was given help. I think it is within the knowledge of Government that one of the largest firms interested in coffee in the North West District has practically given it up.

With regard to freight rates this Colony pays a subsidy to the Canadian National Steamships. If I travel deck or 1st class I pay a standard rate, but if I ship rice I have to pay 30 cents per 100 lbs. to Canada, 60 cents per 100 lbs. for coffee and 17 cents per 100 lbs. for sugar. There may be reasons why there should be a difference in the freight rates for different commodities, but there can be no earthly reason why those rates should differ so greatly. If representations were made I feel sure that something would be done to remedy this state of affairs. In the case of local freight rates the position is just

as bad for the people in the North West District who contribute to the revenues of the Colony in the same way as residents in other parts of the Colony. If I ship a bag of rice to the Windward Islands by one of the ocean liners I pay \$1.50 per ton or a little less than 37 cents per bag, but to ship a bag of rice from the Georgetown ferry stelling to Morawhanna I have to pay 40 cents. I can ship a bag of rice to Barbados by a sailing vessel for 20 cents. I cannot conceive that it is not possible to reduce freight rates from Georgetown to Morawhanna. I refer to these details in Council as a last resort; it is no joy to me to do so. The freight rate on a bag of flour from Georgetown to Morawhanna is 60 cents; from Canada to Georgetown it is 50 cents per bag. The freight rate on sugar from Georgetown to Canada is 42 cents per bag; from Georgetown to the North West District it is 48 cents per bag. If these are not exorbitant charges to make the lot of the poor man harder I do not know what are. Representations have been made over and over again but we are told that the rates are very low. I shall never be satisfied to give up any representations I make. The freight rate on rice from New Amsterdam to Georgetown by steamer and rail is 10 cents per bag. The charge is the same by Messrs. Sproston's barge, but it costs 40 cents per bag to ship rice from Georgetown to Morawhanna. I think I have made out a case that something ought to be done to aid industry in the North West District and to bring freight rates to that district in line with those to other parts of the Colony. It is in the North West District that the wealth of the country lies.

With regard to passenger traffic I made representations to the Transport Board, on which there are elected members, that in order to encourage travelling there should be better accommodation on vessels plying to the North West District. I was assured that something would be done; new ships would be built and the accommodation would be better. Those new ships have come. The "Tarpon," was to have been improved upon, but the "Pomeroon" came out worse than the "Tarpon," and the "Lady Northcote" recently came out worse than the "Pomeroon." For a fare of \$7.50 you are provided with nothing more than a bunk, and there is no privacy for third-class

passengers. We were told that there was no freight at Morawhanna. On probing the matter I found that freight was there but the Transport Department could not remove it. I wrote the Department on September 21, and was told that the matter was being considered. Every effort is being made to drive the people out of the district. That is the conclusion I have come to, which is supported by 99 per cent. of the people there. I have come to that conclusion because I have visited the district six times during the last two years; I have lived there for a month and taken the keenest interest in discussing the matter with everybody who is somebody, and that is the concensus of opinion. I think Government would do well to verify that.

When Western Essequibo is coupled with the North West District let us examine the position. The people in the County of Essequibo are living under such awful conditions that I think it would be well to find out what is the death-rate there. Most of their foodstuffs are obtained by importation and the tariff rates are high. In return for the preferential treatment given to the sugar industry we have to admit British goods under the preferential tariff. The people in that district have to pay for that, but what return do they get by aiding the sugar industry? If the sugar industry was established in Essequibo the burden would not be so great because money would be in circulation there from that industry, but the industry is completely disorganised,

although my friend on my left (Mr. Seymour) thinks it will be re-established there again. The burden of taxation on the people in Essequibo is not fair. Why should the inhabitants on the Essequibo Coast who receive no benefit whatever from the sugar industry contribute towards the general taxation of this Colony?

THE PRESIDENT: I do not wish to interrupt the hon. member, but I would like to know whether he proposes to continue for some time, in which case I shall adjourn the Council at this stage.

Mr. JACOB: I should like to continue for some time, sir. The people in Essequibo have to pay 3½ cents per lb. for sugar when the export price is 2 cents per lb. They get absolutely nothing from that industry, but they have to pay very high freight rates on rice as compared with sugar.

Mr. F. J. SEAFORD: Is the hon. member referring to freight rates in the Colony? If he is I would like to compare freight rates on rice and sugar on the East Coast.

Mr. JACOB: I have not gone into the figures with regard to the sugar industry. Perhaps the hon. member will supply those figures. I have supplied the freight rates on rice transported from one part of the Colony as compared with another part of the Colony.

THE PRESIDENT: The Council will adjourn until 10.30 to-morrow.