

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Tuesday, 21st November, 1939.

The Council met at 11 a.m., pursuant to adjournment, His Excellency the Acting Governor, SIR JOHN WADDINGTON, K.C.M.G., O.B.E., President, in the Chair.

PRESENT.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Mr. G. D. Owen, C.M.G.

The Hon. the Attorney-General Mr. E. O. Pretheroe, M.C.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Hon. N. M. MacLennan, Director of Medical Services.

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

The Hon. L. G. Crease, Director of Education.

The Hon. B. R. Wood, Conservator of Forests.

The Hon. W. A. Macnie, Commissioner of Labour and Local Government, (Acting).

The Hon. J. Eleazar (Berbice River).

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

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

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

The Hon. F. A. Mackey (Nominated Unofficial Member).

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

MINUTES.

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Wednesday, the 15th November, 1939, as printed and circulated, were confirmed.

PAPERS LAID.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Mr. G. D. Owen) laid on the table the following documents :—

Annual Report of the Auditor to the Director of Colonial Audit and to the Government of the Colony of British Guiana for the year 1938.

Comparative Statement of expenditure under the separate heads of the Colonial Estimates for the years 1929 to 1938.

The Defence (Finance) (Amendment) Regulations 1939, published in the *Official Gazette* of 18th November, 1939.

The Post Office Telegraph Regulations, 1939, made by the Postmaster-General under section 94 of the Post and Telegraph Ordinance, chapter 185, as amended by section 4 of the Post and Telegraph Ordinance, 1935, (No. 6) and approved by the Governor in Council on the 10th of November, 1939.

UNOFFICIAL NOTICES.

LOCAL APPLICANTS FOR CIVIL SERVICE APPOINTMENTS.

Dr. SINGH gave notice of the following motion :—

That, whereas, local men and women of British Guiana have been gaining diplomas from recognised institutions of the British Empire in steadily increasing numbers;

And, whereas, it is the desire of these men and women to make a livelihood in this colony by virtue of their qualifications:

Be it Resolved,—That in all cases in which appointments in the Government Civil Service are being considered, the applications of local men and women who hold qualifications of recognised institutions of the British Empire, and who are fully qualified to hold such posts be at all times given priority over all others.

POTARO COURT.

Mr. GONSALVES gave notice of the following questions :—

1. (a) How many days has the Magistrate of the Essequibo Judicial District to be away from his headquarters at Suddie when he has to take Court at Potaro?

(b) How many cases—civil and criminal—engaged the attention of the said Magistrate at Potaro Court for the period January, 1939 to October, 1939? Give the number for each month and the nature of cases.

(c) Does Government consider the present arrangement for the holding of Court at Potaro satisfactory? If not, what is proposed to be done in the matter?

(d) Is the Warden of the Potaro Mining District not sufficiently capable to take such Court at Potaro?

TRAVELLING MAGISTRATES FOR MINING DISTRICTS.

2. Is it Government's opinion that a legally qualified person is necessary to take Court

(a) at Potaro

(b) in the Mining Districts of the Colony?

If it is Government's opinion that qualified persons are necessary as Magistrates in Mining Districts of the Colony will Government consider the early appointment of such qualified persons as Travelling Magistrates for the said Mining Districts of the Colony including Potaro?

3 (a) Have representations been made to Government with regard to the shortage of Magistrates for the work required to be done in the various districts of the Colony?

(b) Is Government satisfied that there are sufficient Magistrates for the several districts of the Colony? If not, how soon does Government propose to increase the number?

ACTING MAGISTRATES.

4 (a) How many persons are at present filling acting appointments as Magistrates?

If there is more than one acting appointment, for how long will each such acting appointment continue?

(b) Is it Government's intention to appoint, or to recommend the appointment of the persons at present acting as Magistrates?

TELEGRAPHIC COMMUNICATION WITH THE POTARO.

5 (a) Is Government aware of the great inconvenience caused by the absence of telegraphic or telephonic communication between Garraway Stream and Potaro—a distance of about 20 miles?

(b) Has Government ever considered the necessity of providing such form of communication in the said area and, if so, what would be the cost?

(c) How soon will this unsatisfactory condition be remedied?

(d) What are the views of the Commissioner of Police and Commissioner of Lands and Mines on the matter?

INCREASED PAY FOR GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES.

Dr. SINGH gave notice of the following question :—

In view of the increased and still increasing cost of living, will Government consider a raise of pay for employees in all Government Departments including the Hospital, Post Office, Police, Prisons, Transport and Harbours Department, Public Works Department, etc., who are in receipt of not more than one hundred and fifty pounds (£150) per annum?

ORDER OF THE DAY.

ABORIGINAL INDIAN PROTECTION (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1939.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move that "A Bill intituled an Ordinance to amend the Aboriginal Indian Protection Ordinance, Chapter 262, by abolishing the minimum penalty for harbouring Aboriginal Indians and female half-castes" 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 or subsequent meeting of the Council it would be moved that the Bill be read the second time. (*The Colonial Secretary*).

CUSTOMS DUTIES (AMENDMENT No. 7) BILL, 1939.

Mr. D'ANDRADE (Comptroller of Customs): I beg to move that "A Bill intituled an Ordinance further to amend the Customs Duties Ordinance, 1935, with respect to the export duties on gold and bauxite and the import duties on petroleum spirit" be read a second time. The object of this Bill is to provide in part the additional revenue that will be required to quadruple revenue receipts with expenditure in the forthcoming year. This will be

done by means of increasing the export duties on bauxite and gold and the import duties on petroleum spirit. Gold is subject to a $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. *ad valorem* export duty based on the f.o.b. value, and by sub-clause (1) (f) of clause 2 of this Bill there is substituted therefor:—

a duty equivalent to one and one-half per centum of the value of each ounce of pure gold or, where the value exceeds thirty-five dollars per ounce, a duty equivalent to twenty-five per centum of such excess, whichever duty shall be the greater: Provided that for the purpose of assessing duty all raw or smelted gold, concentrates, samples and substances containing gold shall be deemed to contain eighty per centum pure gold or such lesser quantity as may be allowed in writing by the Commissioner of Lands and Mines;

The definition of "value" in subsection (5) of section 19 of the Principal Ordinance, 1935, is also amended by providing that in the case of pure gold "the value shall be deemed to be the average of the daily market prices in London during the period of three months immediately prior to the first day of January, the first day of April, the first day of July or the first day of October, as the case may be, next preceding the date of exportation."

The export duty on bauxite is the same as that at present payable on gold, namely $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. *ad valorem*, calculated on the f.o.b. value. In 1938 the revenue from this source averaged about 8 cents per ton. The new rate provided in the Bill is 20 cents per ton.

Clause 3 substitutes new rates of import duty for those now payable on petroleum spirit. The rates now payable are 20 per cent. British preferential, and 24 cents general tariff, with a 30 cents surtax in each case, or a total of 26 cents under the British preferential tariff, and 31.2 cents under the general tariff. The proposed new rates are 31 cents British preferential, and 36 cents general tariff, with no surtax. Clause 4 provides that the surtax payable on imports shall not apply to petroleum spirit.

The revenue which is expected to be received from these amendments of the tariff will amount, it is estimated, in a full year to \$101,000. The export duty on gold is expected to yield \$17,000, the export duty on bauxite \$44,000, and the import duty on petroleum \$40,000. I move that the Bill be read a second time.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: I have no desire to enter any opposition to this Bill but I was hoping to hear from the mover that this is only a temporary measure, and that it is proposed to review the position at the end of next year. As a result of his silence on that point I am drawing the attention of Government to that phase of the matter: that by this Bill it is proposed to impose an export duty on two products exported from the Colony.

Mr. D'ANDRADE: It is only in respect of the commodities I have mentioned. Agricultural and forest products are still exempted from export tax.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: Be that as it may, my point is that we are all very alarmed when export duty is imposed on any item whatever. I have no desire to oppose it, although there are many points I would like to mention at this stage. It is an emergency measure and I would like to see a clause inserted in the Bill providing that the matter would be reviewed at the end of next year, because I fear that this tax will become one of our permanent taxes. We have had two or three temporary measures put before the Council during the last two or three years and they are still with us, and if this is introduced now as a temporary measure I think it should be so stated in the Bill, so that members will have an opportunity of reviewing it again from year to year.

Mr. ELEAZAR: What surprises me is Government's anxiety to raise money at the expense of the very people in the community who get no assistance from Government to enable them to earn something more. Instead they are being taxed more and more all the time. Gold is to pay a higher duty. The gold-digger has to pay more for everything, and when he gets his gold he has to pay higher royalty. What is that but enslaving him? I see Government making no effort at all to relieve the ordinary taxpayer, but every move is to increase the burden on him. I do not know whether the Bauxite Co. are going to give increased wages to their labourers. If people are to pay more for every single item and their wages remain the same their position will be very serious. What Government is doing is what any old woman in the street can do. That is not statesmanship.

Whenever there is any proposal for an increase in taxation I am dead against it, because I see many things that can be taxed, but it seems to me that Government's advisers are the persons who would pay those taxes, and could well pay them, therefore they are always left out.

Government has seized the war as an excuse for levying these additional taxes, and is doing nothing to improve production. Where is Government's assistance to the gold-digger to produce more gold? If he produced more gold Government need not increase the duty, because the additional production would compensate for the low rate of royalty he is now paying. Government has withdrawn the petty amounts which were given those men some time ago. Even that was not sufficient. Before this session is concluded I expect to hear Government make some proposal to place the burden on the shoulders that can bear it. There are some strong shoulders which are escaping their fair share while the weaker ones are being burdened more and more. Trinidad has given a million dollars to the Imperial Government in these times of stress, but we cannot give a penny, and even in support of the poor Red Cross we have to desecrate the Sabbath by playing Sunday football and cricket in order to give the Red Cross a few shillings. It is simply a case of making the rich richer and the poor poorer.

Mr. LUCKHOO: I think the Bill should be carried through as it stands; I cannot see any reasonable objection to it. Your Excellency pointed out in your Speech at the opening of the session that there will be a large deficit, and that we must not rely on any financial assistance from the Imperial Government. We have to face our burden now, and the only way we can do that is by increasing taxation in some directions. This is one of the directions, and I do not think it is unreasonable.

Mr. JACOB: I am in sympathy with this Bill because I realize that we have to raise additional revenue to meet necessary expenditure. I was taken a bit by surprise, but I am not going to speak on all the items in this Bill. I wish, however, to say something about bauxite. I feel that while that industry has done quite a lot for the people of this Colony it is not

bearing its fair share of taxation. I had occasion to ask certain questions about it in this Council but I am sorry to say that the replies were far from being satisfactory. I am in no better position now than when I asked those questions, and if that is the attitude Government intends to adopt in matters of this kind Government may expect serious and caustic criticism. That is a matter entirely for Government. I understand that the quantities of bauxite exported are never checked by a competent officer of Government. I cannot imagine exports going out of the Colony not being checked. If there are no means of checking the amounts—and I do admit that there are difficulties in checking bauxite exports—I think further steps ought to be taken by Government to get the correct figures. That is not beyond the ability of Government, but it appears to me that certain things are not looked into. I think if the bauxite industry was properly looked after by Government the Colony would benefit a great deal more. I do not want it to be understood that I think the industry should not make legitimate profit, but I think Government does not take the necessary steps to get adequate revenue from that industry. I hope I shall have another opportunity to refer to this matter again. I do not think this taxation can be considered burdensome. On the other hand I think it is taxation people should not grumble to pay.

Mr. D'ANDRADE: There is not much I can say because the hon. member for Central Demerara (Mr. De Aguiar), I take it, is in favour of the increased duties. He has only asked for an undertaking that the matter will be reviewed at a later date. I take it that when the financial position of the Colony has improved it will certainly be brought up for re-consideration. The hon. member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar) says he knows several other sources from which Government can obtain additional revenue, but he has not suggested any. He laid very great stress on the increased export duty on gold, but I think if he referred to the Bill he would find that that increased duty only takes effect when the value of gold exceeds \$25 an oz. Therefore, when the price of gold goes down below that figure the duty reverts to the old rate of 1½ per cent.

With regard to the remarks about

bauxite, if the hon. member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob) is not satisfied with all the details supplied by Government as to the method of collection of the export duty I am afraid I cannot add anything more.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

The Council resolved itself into Committee to consider the Bill clause by clause.

Clause 1—Short title.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: I do not know whether I understood the Comptroller of Customs to say that the suggestion I put forward is accepted. I am reluctant to move the insertion of a clause to provide that the Bill shall remain in operation until the 31st of December, 1940. I think it would be difficult to put a clause of that kind in a Customs Bill; I realize the difficulty although this is only an amending Bill. I should be satisfied if the position was reviewed again next year. I am not satisfied with the statement that the matter will be reviewed when the financial position of the Colony is improved. That statement is a bit too general. I do not propose to make any further remarks on that aspect of the matter because I have to speak again on the general question, and I shall reserve what I have to say on the financial situation until then.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I think this Colony would be extremely fortunate if in 12 months' time it was in a position to repeal this law. I do not think there is any likelihood of Government being allowed to forget its existence if things so improve that we are able to repeal it. There are many ways in which the hon. member may remind Government of what he has said to-day, and I am sure Government would consider the matter. I do not think there is any good in inserting the clause the hon. member suggests.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: Nothing that I said was meant to convey that this tax should be repealed in 1940. I am only asking that the matter should come up again for review. I am not a prophet. I am not in a position to say what is going to

happen in 12 months' time, but I do want an opportunity to review the position at the end of 12 months. I know that several opportunities will be afforded me to speak on the financial situation generally, but I am speaking with regard to this particular form of taxation which is introduced as a sort of emergency measure. The only way I will have an opportunity of reviewing this Ordinance is if there was a clause in it providing that the matter shall be reviewed.

Mr. JACOB: I am wondering whether that is going to be the procedure in the future. I am not in favour of that system. As a matter of fact I should like to see revenue increased so that we can really do something on the productive side in this Colony. I do not think the suggestion made is a very statesmanlike one.

The Council resumed.

Notice was given that at the next or subsequent meeting of the Council it would be moved that the Bill be read a third time and passed. (*Mr. D'Andrade*).

BUDGET DEBATE.

The Council resumed the debate on the following motion:—

That this Council approves of the Estimates of Expenditure to be defrayed from revenue during the year ending 31st December, 1940, which have been laid on the table.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: Before I proceed with my remarks on the motion I wish to join with the hon. member for Eastern Berbice (Mr. Luckhoo) who, on behalf of the Council, at the opening of the session expressed our thanks to Your Excellency for the lucid speech you delivered on the state of the Colony's finances for the current year, and your reasonable exposition in respect of next year. Your Excellency has administered the affairs of the Colony for only a short while, and in spite of a number of difficulties you have done it well. You are leaving us very shortly, and it should be recorded that in the performance of your duties you have displayed firmness with understanding, and if any faults were found with any decisions you had to make there was a feeling of satisfaction that you were guided by the firm conviction that those decisions were taken in

the best interests of all concerned. I would like to add that I am not expressing my own opinion, but views I have heard expressed quite freely by many people in various walks of life. We will be sorry, sir, when you are gone, and you will take with you our grateful thanks for the service you have so ably rendered to the Colony during the time you administered the affairs of the Government.

Dealing now with the estimates it is my view that it should be stated quite definitely for the benefit of all concerned that the true position of the budget for 1940 is that taxation must be increased in order to meet expenditure, because we can no longer rely on grants-in-aid from the Imperial Government. We have had that assistance for a period of about eight years. It commenced in 1931, and altogether we have received from the Imperial Government in that form a sum very nearly amounting to \$4,000,000. The actual figures taken from the report of the Colonial Treasurer for 1938 are \$3,894,577.80. Of that sum \$2,637,600 was received as loans-in-aid and \$1,256,977.80 as grants-in-aid. We are grateful, and we have always been grateful for that assistance, especially starting at the time it did, when the Colony's financial position was at its lowest ebb.

There is one lesson this war should teach us, and that is that we should try to make ourselves independent by making full use of our own resources. We now know that no grant-in-aid was received from the Imperial Government this year, and we also know now that the expenditure for this year will be met principally as a result of a windfall to the Treasury from two large deceased estates. We also know that as this source of revenue cannot be depended upon it becomes necessary, especially at this time, to increase taxation in order to carry Government expenditure at its present level. It is my view that in spite of the opinions of those who have had something favourable to say about them, those grants-in-aid weakened—certainly not strengthened—our economic structure. If we were taught to cut our coats according to the length of our cloth at that time we might have been able to make ends meet, and in that way stand on our own feet, and the necessity to increase taxation in the form proposed to-

day might not have arisen. How many times in this Council have I not been asked when I criticised Government expenditure "What is the use of opposing the item when it is not our money we are spending?" I should like to say here and now that on many occasions I sat down in despair at those views when they were expressed by persons who, in my opinion, were competent to express better opinions than I could.

Now what is the position in respect of 1940? We are going to balance our budget by reducing expenditure, in my view in places where we can least afford. I sympathize with Government when it says we can no longer build concrete strip roads. We have to suspend action in that direction because there is no money to do it, but would it be reasonable to say that the continuation of that work would not be in the interest of the Colony generally? Would it not improve our roads? Would it not provide a certain amount of employment? If, therefore, that is one of the means we have to adopt in order to balance our budget for 1940 it seems to me that we will very surely find ourselves in a position, perhaps even worse than we were in 1931. I make that statement because our expenditure to-day is far in advance of what it was in 1931. Our administrative costs have increased in various directions. New departments have been created, new services introduced, and in this respect I would pause to say that I would be the last person to oppose any service for the benefit of the people of the Colony, whether social, medical or educational. The question to be considered is how best could this be done? I must confess that at the present moment I am not in a position to offer very much assistance. The reasons for that must be obvious.

Before I pass on to some of those reasons, Your Excellency will no doubt permit me to make a passing remark on the revenue side of the budget. I think it must be admitted that the existing forms of taxation must be increased because we are unable to find any new avenues of taxation. It must be admitted at this stage that many of those forms of taxation are heavy and burdensome. I am supported in that view by the report of the Taxation Committee. As a matter of fact the Taxation

Committee stated in their report that the present forms of taxation are high, and I think in one instance they suggested some relief for the diamond industry. Not very long ago this Council afforded that relief in accordance with the recommendation made by the Committee, but a short while ago we re-imposed taxation in another form on that particular industry.

What I am most concerned about is the expenditure side of the question, and I regret that, working as we do in this Council, a fuller opportunity is not afforded hon. members to make a complete and thorough examination of Government expenditure. I think it will be admitted that the last thorough examination of Government expenditure was made when the Financial Commissioners visited the Colony. First of all I should say that certain economies were suggested, some of which were adopted, but in some cases expenditure was increased again as time went on and as the financial position of the Colony improved. Nevertheless it will be agreed that since that time a complete examination of Government expenditure has not been made. The reason for that is clear. I have already referred to the fact that no opportunity is afforded hon. members to make this examination. Sitting as we do at sessions of this kind, going through the estimates, passing one item after another, asking questions and receiving answers is not, in my opinion, sufficient examination of Government expenditure. I know it will be said that the Council is not allowed to initiate money votes. I know that in 99 cases out of 100 every item of expenditure that is put before this Council has previously been submitted to the Secretary of State for approval.

Let us examine that phase of the matter for a moment. If Government decides on the expenditure of a certain sum of money and the proposal is put forward to the Secretary of State and approved it is then put before this Council for approval. Would it be reasonable to expect that whatever opposition hon. members might put forward to the scheme, that proposal would not go through? I have sat here day after day and seen measures brought before the Council which we were told had been submitted to and approved by the Secretary of State. Having obtained that approval the matter was at

an end so far as we were concerned. I have no desire whatever to make any criticism of the Secretary of State's authority to deal with those matters, but what I do desire to state is that the time must come, if it has not yet arrived, when some other system should be introduced before such measures are dealt with in that form. The reason I make that firm statement is because there is another side of the picture. Let us take the case of this Council approving of an item that was not previously submitted to the Secretary of State. It has happened here before and it will happen again.

There are several items in the estimates before us to-day, to which I will refer later on, which have not yet been submitted to the Secretary of State for approval. Let us assume that those items will be approved by this Council, but when they are referred to the Secretary of State he disapproves of them. What will be the position? I should like Government to answer that question in its reply to this debate. I know the answer will be that the money would not be spent under that particular head. Before I make that remark I should add that whatever sum of money is involved it must be understood that that sum having been included in the budget for the period, and assuming that revenue estimates come up to expectation, there should be a surplus available. But what do we find in such a case? This Council is approached to sanction excesses under various heads, and that is how the surplus disappears. If Government could at the end of the period inform the Council that as a result of the Secretary of State's disapproval of items amounting to \$100 or \$200 there had been a saving to that extent, and that the amount would be carried forward, perhaps I should never have made any remark on the subject, but my experience has been that there being a sum of money available as a result of the Secretary of State's disapproval of items, excesses under various heads arise, and what should have been a surplus immediately disappears. I lay all that at the door of these grants-in-aid. If we did not have grants-in-aid to fall back upon several items on our budget would never have appeared in the first instance. We have got those items with us, and now that the shoe pinches we have to make a very serious effort to tighten our belts in

order to find sufficient money to carry on the Government.

It seems to me that some better system ought to be introduced in order to meet criticisms such as I have just made. I am reluctant to suggest that there ought to be a permanent Committee to investigate and enquire into all items of expenditure of Government money. I know that some people consider it absurd to oppose the expenditure of public money, but as representatives of the people it is our solemn duty to see that public money is properly spent. Would it not be a good thing for Government? It would avoid a number of criticisms. It might save some of the scandal we hear of every now and then. Why is it that any estimate that is put forward by a Government department cannot be taken as accurate? Why is it that in 99 cases out of 100 an estimate submitted by a Government department is exceeded? Is it only the result of bad drafting, bad preparation, unskilled workmen or bad administration? I answer all those questions with one word "No." Not always. Very often the fault lies deeper than that, and the only means this Government can adopt is to introduce a system such as the one I have suggested. It is only a suggestion which can be improved upon.

I know it is the general desire that several of the important Departments of Government should be run on commercial lines. That may be one means, but we have spoken of it in this Council until we are tired. If that is unfavourable to Government then there is the alternative suggestion of the appointment of a Committee. Such a Committee should, and I feel certain would put forward proposals to Government for a reduction of the heavy cost of administration. It must be admitted that there is a certain amount of overlapping in Government departments, but even when a clear case of overlapping is brought to the notice of Government with a view to amalgamation, for some reason or another the amalgamation never takes place. It has been suggested here time and again that the amalgamation of the Forest Department with the Department of Lands and Mines might result in a saving. An opportunity presents itself again for such an amalgamation, and I feel sure that if consideration is given to the

proposal now it will be found that an even greater amalgamation can be made with the Department of Lands and Mines. I consider it was a very poor solution when it was decided to amalgamate Local Government with Labour. I express that view in order that it might be put on record. I do not think a Department such as the Department of Labour and Local Government would ever work satisfactorily. If Government had any good intentions of lending assistance to labour it should have created a special Labour Department as distinct from that of Local Government. I have in mind the rising cost of that Department, and I am perfectly satisfied that a separation can be effected without any increased cost. As a matter of fact I should not be surprised if the separation resulted in a saving. Altogether that Department has become so top-heavy with the number of duties the officials have to perform, that one of these days it will become even more important than the offices in this building, and the result of it all will be that the services rendered to the community will be exceedingly poor. You cannot mix labour affairs with local government.

We have been spending other people's money before and, of course, there was nothing more to be said about it, but the time has now come when all the money we are going to spend will belong to the taxpayers of this Colony. The time has come when elected members of this Council in particular must voice their disapproval whenever it is their view that Government has embarked on a wilful waste of public money. I have made passing reference to the items which have not yet received the approval of the Secretary of State. The more important of those items I find total \$108,744. I may support many and perhaps all of them, but I ask the question again: if the Secretary of State does not approve of those items, or the expenditure of the money, will Government give an undertaking that this large sum of money would not be spent, or would be earmarked for expenditure which has been curtailed, for instance expenditure on the maintenance of roads? I shudder to think that instead of that the money would be used to make up excesses in Government departments, or perhaps to complete schemes which are not yet completed, although the money voted for those schemes has

already been spent. I refer, for instance, to the Best Hospital. I think I am right in saying that most, if not all of the money provided for that purpose has already been spent, and it is not yet completed. That is one of the weak links in the chain. Those are the things to which greater attention should be paid. I am almost tempted to suggest, following upon all I have said, that those items which have not yet been approved by the Secretary of State should be deferred until his views are known. Unless I receive some assurance from Government—and I do not know just how far Government can give an assurance that the Secretary of State will finally approve of them—perhaps we might consider those items without further comment.

In none of my speeches during a debate of this kind have I ever attempted to refer to items on the estimate in detail, because I know that full opportunity will be afforded me when those items are reached. I feel very strongly on this question, and I do hope that the suggestions I have put forward will receive serious consideration, because now that the time has come when we have to pay our way it is our duty to see where economies can be effected. I am perfectly satisfied that we cannot do that properly around this table. I am also satisfied—and in this I join issue with the Colonial Secretary—that in Select Committee we could hardly make much headway for various reasons. If Government will not accept the suggestion put forward many times for more efficient control, whether administrative or advisory, of the various Departments we will never be able to stop the criticisms and the scandals we hear of from time to time. I have no desire to prolong this debate. I have spoken in general terms, and I hope that what I have said will receive the careful and serious consideration it deserves.

Mr. LUCKHOO: Sir, I wish to take this opportunity to endorse the remarks made by the hon. member for Central Demerara (Mr. De Aguiar) in regard to the eminent service you have rendered to this Colony. Your Excellency's zeal in that direction is well known, and the community feels that it owes a great debt of gratitude to you, sir, for the great energy, tact and zeal you have shown in many directions. With reference to Your Excel-

lency's Address at the opening of the session I should like to say that we acknowledge gratefully the financial assistance we have received from the Mother Country during the period of stress and strain, and it is only right that we should place on record our gratitude for the munificent liberality with which she has treated this Colony. Now that we have to provide all the money required to meet our expenditure I take it that it is the imperative duty of Government to see that economies are effected in every possible direction. We cannot now place any excessive dependence on the Imperial Government for financial help, and therefore we must carry on with the firm determination to shoulder our burden and responsibility. At this time when the Empire is at war it behoves every individual to do his very best with a determination to carry out his obligations as a citizen. If Your Excellency was unable to paint a very attractive picture in your Address it was because you had not the material with which to do so. Your Excellency's speech was clear, precise and unadorned.

With regard to Government's agricultural policy I should like to draw the Council's attention to the report of the Land Settlement Committee which was issued not very many months ago. It is a document which should receive the earnest and anxious consideration of Government with respect to the settlement of people on the land, and providing them with facilities for producing more, particularly in these times. That report was submitted by a Committee consisting of the Commissioner of Labour and Local Government (Convener), the Director of Public Works, the Commissioner of Lands and Mines, the Government Medical Officer of Health, and the Deputy Director of Agriculture. I consider it a very important contribution to the question of land settlement, and I invite Government's serious consideration of the various points set out in that report. There is a statement in that report which I think can bear repetition here. Paragraph 60 of the report states:—

60. Owing to the limited time at our disposal, the Committee has been unable to do more than to outline the principles of land settlement. But we feel that under proper guidance, and if the co-operation of the technical Departments is assured, land settlement is the best method of bringing about the economical,

intellectual and social advancement of the rural population.

Your Excellency has probably heard from time to time cries for drainage and irrigation of the coastlands of the Colony. They have been repeated many times in this Council, and I am well aware of Government's anxiety over this very pressing question. I know that steps have been taken to make engineering surveys which must be made before any land settlement scheme can be adopted. It is well that the public should know that the matter is receiving the attention of Government, and I hope that early steps will be taken to carry out in some form some of the recommendations contained in this report. The importance of agriculture to the prosperity of this country cannot be too frequently emphasized. In spite of adverse conditions the farmers have always displayed those qualities of fortitude, courage and resolution with which adversity can only be combated.

Your Excellency referred in your speech to the endeavours made to cultivate more food products to replace those which are now being imported. I know as a fact that on a certain estate in the County of Berbice—and I daresay it will be carried out in other parts of the Colony—steps are now being taken to have the resident labourers removed and settled not far away from the scene of their activities. The lands have been laid out at their own expense, the matter has been fully gone into and I hope that at an early date the scheme will be put into execution and will result in increased production in that locality, and benefit to the people residing in the vicinity. I refer to what is known as the Bath settlement scheme. It is well that the public should know of it and Government should assist them in every possible way in order to make the scheme a success. The people will be given grazing lands and rice lands set aside for agricultural development, and in every possible way help will be given them so that they may become a happy peasantry. Encouragement of that sort I hope will not be confined to the people in that particular County. I know that the sugar planters in other parts of the County of Berbice are making it attractive for people to settle down in order that they may carry on their ordinary vocation, and I

hope that whatever measure is brought forward Government will lend its support and co-operation.

There is another point I would like to mention in connection with these schemes and that is with regard to the repatriation of East Indians in this Colony to their home country. Government is under a definite obligation to provide those people with return passages. Why can't Government evolve a scheme which would prove attractive to those people who contemplate returning to India in order to induce them to remain in the Colony under certain special conditions? Wouldn't it be a profitable investment on the part of Government? I admit that in years past Government attempted a measure of that kind, and there is now a settlement which has been laid out for the purpose of providing those people with land in lieu of back passages. If that scheme is a success in that part of the Colony surely it should be a success in other parts. In the report I have quoted the Committee states :—

39. Under Section 193 of the Immigration Ordinance, Chapter 208, Government may make a grant of land to an immigrant entitled to a return passage to India in lieu of such right, and it is considered that immigrants entitled to repatriation should be given special facilities to acquire land in settlements. The Committee recommends that the following grants be made in lieu of return passage rights:—

To a single immigrant...3-acre cultivation lot.
House lot to be paid for.

To an immigrant and wife...3-acre cultivation lot and house lot.

To an immigrant and wife with one or more children...Two 3-acre cultivation lots and a house lot.

It is considered that the cost to Government of these grants of land should be a charge on the Immigration Fund to the limit of the liability of the Fund for the repatriation expenses of the immigrants selected.

The report also speaks of allotments. It says :—

41. At present the management of the sugar estates provide their resident labourers with allotments for the cultivation of rice and ground provisions. Facilities for grazing cattle are also provided. The quantity of land available varies from estate to estate, and on some estates no land is allotted to labourers.

Then in paragraph 55 of the report we find :—

55. The survey of the Corentyne Coast is not yet completed and the Committee is therefore

not in a position to make definite recommendations, but the Committee suggests that, on completion of the survey, adjoining estates be purchased and reconditioned and added to the present village districts. Failing this, the question of empoldering the areas between the present back boundaries of these villages and the Sand Reef should be considered. The areas, when drained, should be sold to villagers on similar terms as those recommended for land settlement areas, and the boundaries of the village districts altered to include the new area. The new lands will then be rated for maintenance by the Local Authority who would be responsible for the administration.

I wish to lay particular emphasis on those recommendations, because I feel that Government would be taking a step in the right direction by encouraging people to settle on the land and giving them every opportunity to make themselves happy and prosperous. Plns. Albion, Port Maurant and Skeldon are doing their very best. They have their own pumping plants which irrigate the rice lands as well as the provision lands. If that can be achieved by sugar estate proprietors why can't Government make some attempt in that direction? I emphasise that point because representations have been made to me that Government has done nothing to relieve the people of this burden. Your Excellency will probably receive a deputation in the next few days from farmers in certain areas on the Corentyne asking Government for a loan to enable them to take in a large acreage of land for rice cultivation. If they can urge reasonable grounds for such a loan I think Your Excellency will sympathetically consider their case and grant their request. At any rate the question of improved conditions in the coastal areas is one which is deserving of Your Excellency's sympathetic support.

With regard to the suggestion that a Committee should go into the financial matters of Government, I understand that such a Committee exists in Trinidad. I take it that members of this Council are entitled to approach the Heads of Departments and get any information they want on any point, and if there is any difficulty in getting information from the Head of a Department they can approach the Colonial Secretary. I do not know whether that would help to expedite the business of the Council, but in any case I think members of the Council have the fullest opportunity of debating any item on the estimates. I hope Government will take every care

to see that expenditure is kept within reasonable bounds. The present situation demands that Government should proceed cautiously, keeping its eyes open at the same time for opportunities which may present themselves for development in every possible direction.

There are certain votes with respect to the medical and social services which will certainly receive my full support, and I trust Your Excellency will go into the points I have mentioned, and that they will be borne in mind by Government during the discussions which will take place.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I am not sure whether the hon. member who has just taken his seat has entered into a conspiracy with anyone to curtail my speech. If so I shall disappoint them, because I intend on this occasion, time being a very important factor, to be very brief in what I have to say, leaving a good deal of what I have to say to be said when dealing with the particular items. But this being the last occasion on which Your Excellency will preside over this Council, I cannot allow the occasion to pass without expressing my own view, and the views of the entire community, with respect to the satisfaction felt with the administration of the affairs of the country during your short regime here. ("Hear, hear"). Your Excellency's administration in the difficult situation of the Colony has met with almost immeasurable success. At any rate the whole community is exceedingly satisfied with what you have done so far, notwithstanding the fact that it has been your misfortune to introduce one of the most vicious pieces of legislation that has ever disgraced this Council since the 1928 Order in Council. I refer to the Petroleum Bill, but in spite of that I cannot help feeling that the country as a whole is abundantly pleased with the brilliance of your achievements in the administration of the affairs of the country. The reputation of this country is that it has been the graveyard of many a brilliant career, but you have succeeded where men who may have been considered very able have failed. When that is said I think I have said all that might be said of Your Excellency.

It cannot be gainsaid that the administration of this country is overburdened. The cost of administration is far too high

at any period, and still more so at a period such as this. Any criticisms I may have made had no reference to you, sir, but to the policy which you did not adumbrate, which you found and administered with such eminent success. I do not disagree with the hon. member for Eastern Berbice (Mr. Luckhoo) when he says that Government must get money and therefore we must increase taxation. My view is that Government must get money but Government must assist production. The late Sir Gordon Guggisberg had a way of requesting Heads of Departments to submit their estimates to him, and he would go through them and request them to cut them down by say \$10,000. That policy worked, and it did not kill the soil. Some officers had to give up a small portion of their salaries, but when better times came the cuts were restored. It is unnecessary to tax the necessaries of life because Government is curtailing the pure water supply scheme. Nearly every well on the Corentyne has gone out of commission, and in the case of those which are still flowing you have to wait for an hour to get a bucket of water. Some means should be found whereby the water can be pumped. Water is one of the greatest necessities of life, yet its supply is being curtailed by Government.

At this stage the Council adjourned for the luncheon recess until 2 p.m.

2 p.m.—

Mr. ELEAZAR: At the adjournment I was endeavouring to point out to Government that the policy, which it has adopted for some time, is the reverse of what one should expect in real statesmanship. I was pointing out then, that Government in order to reduce expenses has considered it advisable to curtail the work on pure water supply—such a necessary work especially on the Corentyne Coast where nearly every well is either out of commission or is nearly so. Take another instance: the work on strip roads, a real necessity in road-building, is to cease. Road-building has been swallowing up hundreds of thousands of dollars of this country all along, and with the advent of tremendous motor lorries matters were made ever so much worse. The strip roads promised to give relief in that direction, but Government finds it necessary to curtail that work. Government in order to save money has

actually removed such a road as the one from New Amsterdam to Mara—25 miles—from its road programme. From the layman's point of view it seems that so little is required now in comparison with the cost if Government should have to renovate the road. A very small amount now will make the road useful for three or four years to come. Your Excellency, we are in the throes of war and we appreciate the fact, that as a consequence we have to stand on our own legs and cannot expect financial help from the Imperial Exchequer. What can an enlightened Government do in such circumstances? I admit, and I venture to propound, that it should first of all reduce some of its best and most necessary establishments. This Government has not done that, but is now actually creating a new post, an officer to manage labour, as if labour needs any management at all at a time like this. Supposing it was thought that it needed it before the war, do we require now an innovation of that kind? I do not think so. I believe these projects were estimated for before the outbreak of war, but since the war where is the necessity to have this new and expensive post? An enlightened Government would have reduced its votes and would have endeavoured to utilize every penny on productive works so as to produce more. When money is necessary, according to the hon. Member for Eastern Berbice (Mr. Luckhoo), you put on more taxes. Any old woman in the street can do that, but is that statesmanship? What is required in such circumstances is to produce more. How is Government going to produce more?—Government is going to tax the producer a little more and withdraw from him the means whereby he can produce more. I say, sir, that is not good policy.

I speak in respect of the gold industry. It is well known that the backbone of the gold industry of this Colony is the pork-knocker. He has been the pioneer in finding areas, but he cannot now afford to go further afield and break new ground. I suggested to Government to send out prospecting parties to break new ground, as when the shout is given men will flock there and in that way more gold will be produced. Government has not done that, but instead has appointed a number of geologists who have openly said: "What we are doing cannot benefit the small man. We are not prospectors. You must get

prospecting parties and send them out." Government is prepared to reduce expenditure in another way and in every case at the expense of the taxpayer. The policy of Government is not to make people go to the field. In every other country in the world the first creditor is the ploughman. Government is not doing a single thing in these estimates to show its intention to stimulate production, and yet Government finds it necessary to create new posts, increase salaries, and at the same time punish the man who is really paying the piper. I do not know what Government or anybody would think of a merchant who, on finding his business is in a bad way, sets about to take on additional clerks at higher salaries, to increase the salaries of those already engaged, to increase his prices and to reduce his stock. What is he doing but courting disaster. Government is doing the same thing in another way, but cannot court disaster because the milch cow is there—the humble taxpayer. I cannot stand for that. Your Excellency is not responsible for that policy; you came and met it, and I must say you have managed exceedingly well to carry through without the worst coming about in your regime.

There is so much in respect of these estimates as to what the Secretary of State will say and what he will approve and not approve, that I hope this is the last time I will hear that. After we have been standing on our own legs and spending our own monies, we do not want any dictation from 4,000 miles away. It is true that we have got grants-in-aid from the Imperial Government, but we were told how to spend the money, upon whom to spend it, and how to squander it. I have heard it said in respect of items placed on the Estimates that Government did not know what the Secretary of State for the Colonies would say about them. Perhaps, Your Excellency, I have got the wrong impression about the whole thing, but I do not think so. When in this Council Government reluctantly accepts anything that has been forced upon it by public opinion, Government says: "All right," and then all of a sudden a short time after one hears that the Secretary of State does not approve of it. My view is, it was first not approved this side, and then went from this side to the other side. I submit it is a system of obscurantism

which is prevailing. The Secretary of State is not going to oppose this Government on a point of policy. He is without any knowledge of the facts except what he gleans from someone's writings. As I have said, now that we are given an opportunity and we are going to balance our budget—though we have been doing that all the time and up to 1928 when it was said that we could not do it and those who were going to take it over would do it, but it has not been done since, though a kind of legerdemain attempt was made two or three years ago but it was not real—I hope that when we have done it we will hear no more about the Secretary of State and his satellites telling us how to spend our money. We will be masters of our own house, and there can be no excuse then for Imperial control.

The hon. Comptroller of Customs remarked that hon. Members had objected to the taxation as proposed but did not suggest what should be taxed. I am not here to teach highly paid Government Officials their business. They are the persons to look around and tell Government what to do. If I am asked, however, to tell them I would not hesitate. I know hundreds of thousands of acres of Crown Lands are occupied for years by people carrying on industries and paying a nominal rent. Why cannot they be made to buy the land outright and the money put in the Government Exchequer, or the rents be increased? No one is there to see that, because they refuse to see it. It is because the people, who advise Government on these points, are the people who are to benefit. Therefore when I am challenged here to give an example of my allegation I can always give it. Government is not being well served. When a certain Department is told to do so and so, the reply is: "This thing cannot be done;" eventually Government is asked to try it as an experiment, and the next year after the expenditure of much money we are told that the experiment must cease so as to save money. That policy has been going on too long and should cease, especially in these times of stress when we are faced with a calamity. The 1914 War did not touch us in the same way as the present war, although in the last war some of our men went to the Front and made sacrifices. This very day we have families mourning the loss of their loved ones as the

direct result of the present conflict. While that is going on, what is this Government's policy? Instead of bringing home to the community that each man must consider himself at his post as a soldier fighting against the enemy, Government still finds it necessary to tax the poor man's rice in his pot, Government still finds it necessary to increase the cost of the poor man's sugar. Although the producer does not get a cent more for it—so I am told by sugar producers—yet the people who are retailing sugar charge a cent more for every pound that is sold to the community, and with Government's permission and consent. Everything else becomes more expensive to the humble individual, and the man who is living in luxury continues untouched. This is not a form of Government that people can tolerate, if the people are to be pressed all the time with high prices for everything. I do not know an article which is not taxed in so far as the poor man is concerned. His food, his clothing, his everything is taxed, and that is because Government will not make any attempt to improve and increase production. When Government is told that, Government Officials tell you: "You do not say how to do it!" Let Government take away the \$30,000 which it is proposed to use for the curing of crabwood. It may be a good idea and when it was adumbrated the war was not on. To-day thousands of dollars are required to produce as quickly as possible, not to cure crabwood to sell to Government Departments. Government cannot afford to try out experiments now, and yet that is the policy Government is pursuing. That is a blind policy, a policy that can carry us nowhere except to increase and further increase taxation. There is a limit even to that. There is such a thing as the last straw, and I do not know how much further Government intends to go if the war continues. The war will not be finished in a year's time—the hon. Member on my right says he is looking forward to the war ending next year, but that is only a hope—and we all have to look forward to times of greater stress than now. Apart from the mourning which some of our fellow-colonists are suffering to-day, as the result of the war, there is no reason why this Colony should not be self-supporting. When we come to the several heads in the Estimates I intend to draw Government's attention to more of what I have

said in a general way. I intend to point out to Government one particular instance which I will give now.

Take the Head Bailiff who is stationed in Georgetown to-day. He was Head Bailiff in New Amsterdam when I went there. He is one of the ablest men in his own line in the Government Service. If he had remained in New Amsterdam he would have been getting \$57.60 per month, but he came to Georgetown on promotion as Head Bailiff and, though he has at least six times as much work to do as when he was in New Amsterdam, he is now drawing the magnificent sum of \$56 per month. What kind of policy is that? How can that be honest? Here is a man leaving on promotion a post with a salary of \$57.60 to take on more responsibility for \$56 per month when his immediate predecessor got \$90 per month on an incremental scale, which he had expected to get. That is what is happening now. How can anybody find anything equitable to justify a thing of that kind? It is not the first time such has occurred. Your Excellency must have remembered, it was discovered that a man left a post at \$40 per month on promotion and got \$26 per month in his new post, and you generously had it reversed at once. The same thing is existing to-day and, I hope, Your Excellency will put it right as you have done on the previous occasion.

Those are the ways in which I say Government is not well served, not only in bringing in measures of retrenchment but in not supplying Government with measures for production. Those Departments that are spending large sums of money should assist Government in times like these and show how economy can be effected without doing violence to justice and fairplay, but they are not doing that. I wish to repeat again that Your Excellency has earned the highest possible congratulations of the whole community, and to say without fear of contradiction that I know of no instance where the people have showered encomiums as Your Excellency has received. As far as Your Excellency is concerned it is richly deserved. You have always endeavoured to hold the scale of justice with a very even hand in this Colony.

Mr. JACOB: I think this is the fifth occasion on which I have the privilege and

honour to speak on a Budget Statement, and I find myself agreeing nearly 100 per cent. with what I had said in this Council on the first occasion. I have endeavoured to co-operate with Government, and at this stage I do want to say that I endorse all that has been said concerning Your Excellency by the previous hon. Members who have spoken. We are fortunate in having you at this particular time, and I am glad that matters have fairly worked smoothly. There is a lot to be said on the Budget Statement itself, but I find myself at a great disadvantage, having arrived in the Colony just four days ago and not having had time to go through the Estimates very closely. I think that hon. Members of Council should be given more opportunity to study the Estimates and other documents which have been placed on the table. If it is the intention of Government to get the fullest co-operation possible—and I think we have heard that over and over—then hon. Members should be given an opportunity to go into these matters a little more carefully. Looking around to-day I am disappointed to see so many seats vacant in this Council. Whether it is the intention of Government to make it so for us I do not know, but on the whole I do think the time has arrived when this Constitution of ours should be changed and that very quickly. My hon. friend, the Member for Central Demerara (Mr. De Aguiar), referred to it, but I would ask him to be a little more precise, a little more pointedly, when referring to a question of that kind.

I want to make it perfectly clear that I am not at all satisfied with the affairs of Government. I do not know who is the Government, and I do not know if any hon. Member of Council can say. After 100 years of British rule in this country we find ourselves in a very serious state, and since the Constitution has been changed ten or twelve years ago the position has become very much worse, and I do want to say that I am not a party to this sort of affairs. It is true that we happen to be members of the Government and are parties to everything that goes on here, but I do protest sincerely against the attitude of Government and the way in which the Colony is being administered through the nature of our Constitution. Early steps should be taken to have this Constitution changed, and I hope the

Royal Commission would make a recommendation in that respect. I want to refer to the attitude Jamaica has adopted. I want to appeal to the Elected and Nominated Members of this Council that we should make a move in that direction. We should agree here among ourselves that the Constitution should be changed. A Committee should go into the matter. I do not know if it is necessary to move a motion here, and I do not know what would be the fate of such a motion, but I think we should endeavour to do something to put the affairs of the Colony on a better footing. Having said that, I want to refer to one or two items appearing on the Estimates.

I want to refer to Labour and Local Government and the appointment of an Industrial Adviser as recommended by Major Orde-Browne. I do not think that in the present economic state of the Colony a new and additional officer should be employed by this Government. That is a new post, and I do not want to say that it has been the policy of the Imperial Government to foist this post upon us and when we are short in our revenues to come along and say: "We are going to give grants-in-aid." In the past I had urged that we should refuse these grants-in-aid, not because they were not useful but because the principle was bad. To-day we find ourselves in the position that we will not get any more grants-in-aid and our expenditure is steadily increasing. I do not know how many new officers are placed on the Estimates, but I think an Industrial Adviser is not necessary at this stage. Major Orde-Browne's report and recommendations may be all right, but the present financial position of the Colony does not permit of the appointment. I think the Commissioner of Labour ought to be able to advise Government on every phase of labour in this Colony, and I can foresee a Commissioner of Labour and a Deputy Commissioner of Labour, as the policy of Government seems to be that wherever you have a Head you must have a Deputy. I shall oppose that item, and I do hope that it will not be passed. I intend to say something more about that if I have the opportunity to do so in the next few days. I do urge that this is not the time to increase salaries, pensions, lump sum payments and the like. This is not the time to employ a new and additional officer.

The Colony cannot afford to pay the expenditure involved.

As a result of the creation of this Labour Department we find ourselves in no better position. You have created that Department but have done nothing to find employment for the people who want employment. The creation of that Department is not going to help the progress of the country. Government is very quick to find posts for people and to create new departments, but does very little indeed to create production and to increase production. I do not think I have exaggerated the position. I have said it here over and over again that there are large numbers of unemployed in the Colony. I think a conservative estimate would be about 10,000 unemployed or under-employed (as Government chooses to call it) at the present time. What is being done to find employment for those people? I have interviewed every Administrator on the matter as soon as I had the opportunity of doing so, and they all say: "Yes, we are going to do something in the matter. We are appointing committees and getting reports." I see, however, there is nothing on the Estimates to show that something is being done. That is the direction in which money should be spent, but what is more?

Industries that have been in existence have been allowed to go the wrong way—I refer particularly to the rice industry. That industry was considered to be the second industry of the Colony. It is the second agricultural industry and the second industry of the Colony. Government felt that the industry should be helped and began to help it by creating an Ordinance in 1932, which has been amended from time to time. When that Ordinance came into operation I opposed it and said that it was not done in the right way. I have devoted considerable time to it, and I venture to say with all confidence that I feel quite confident and qualified to speak on this question. I do not think that can be disputed. The remarks I am going to make, while they may be caustic, are necessary and are made with the intention of making that industry better.

There are two classes of thought here, and one has always said that we have lost our markets for rice. We have never had any markets at all. We have never been able to supply those markets, and there-

fore we could have lost none. The potential markets, that we have, purchase approximately 60,000 tons of rice, but we have never had 30,000 tons at any one time to supply them. In 1932 we exported a little over 28,000 tons of rice. In 1933 we exported 29,000 tons and the value of rice was then \$36.40 per ton. Three years prior to then the values were \$48, \$44 and \$41 per ton, respectively. When the control of the trade came into operation the value of rice was, according to the Report of the Director of Agriculture, \$38.40 per ton. Since then the values have been \$39.60, \$44.70, \$39.40, \$41.70, \$44.70. It can be safely said that three years before control came in the price of rice was practically the same as it is today. In fact those years' figures are slightly higher. On this score it has been urged that there was a lower price resultant from lower production. I venture to suggest with all confidence that view cannot be accepted. It was not a question of price, because three years before control came in the price was as it is now and, if anything, higher. Having served in an advisory capacity on that Board since its formation, I want to say emphatically that had the advice of the Committee been accepted the price of rice would have been greater than that stated in this report. Therefore the question of price and the statements that are made now that we are going to get better prices and increased production, I cannot believe at all. I do not think it is a question of price. What I do want to say is this: We have got to profit by past experience. Here is an industry that was built up by certain people unaided and against Government policy. Rather than Government helping it, Government has in the past done every thing possible to strangle this industry. The word "strangle" may be considered strong, but I repeat what had been said by the Elected Members of this Council to the then Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, Viscount Halifax, when he visited this Colony. An address was presented to him in which it was stated that Government had brought in legislation to actually *strangle* that industry. In spite of all that, the industry rose to what it was before this kind of help came in. The Marketing Board, I understand, is coming to an end now and, therefore, I can speak freely on what has happened in the past.

If the Rice Marketing Board had the interest of the industry at heart, it would have certainly made recommendations from time to time to increase the production of rice, but from 29,000 tons it came down to 14,700 tons. I would admit that the drought was responsible for that. It further came down to 10,500 tons due to drought and floods, and then it began to rise to 20,000 tons in 1936, 18,000 tons in 1937, and 12,000 tons in 1938. This year I do not think it will be more than 14,000 tons. After six years an industry with an export figure of 29,000 tons has been reduced this year to less than half that quantity. Yet Government is so well satisfied with what has been done that it refuses to do better. If this Government is satisfied, I want to assure Government that the community and those interested have never been satisfied in the past and are not satisfied at the present time. I speak with the authority of the British Guiana East Indians' Association and those primarily associated with the industry. It does not matter what hon. Members of Council say, I can prove what I say if the Council gives me an opportunity to do so. I want to say how the affairs of the Board have been conducted. The members changed from time to time, and I am not going to say anything about those members who are not officers of this Government, but those who are members of the Governor in Council must share the responsibility and take the blame. Those members are the hon. Director of Agriculture and the hon. Comptroller of Customs. If I remember rightly those two gentlemen have been on that Board from its inception, and if this industry finds itself in a perilous position the responsibility must be placed somewhere. The responsibility is with the Government and those concerned with the Governor in Council. If Government is satisfied that those officers of Government have done well in bringing the industry down from 29,000 tons to 14,000 tons (export figures) then I say I am not satisfied, and as a representative of the people of the country I say they are not at all satisfied with the industry.

I believe regulations have been framed as a war measure for Government to take over the whole industry. I want to plead with Your Excellency that that is not the right thing to do. I cannot imagine that Your Excellency has authority to do that.

I cannot imagine that the Defence of the Realm Regulations give Your Excellency power to take over the whole industry. I concede that you must control it in some way, but I do protest against the action of Government in taking over the whole rice industry. Government appointed a Committee last year with very drastic powers. I happened to have been a member of that Committee, and I recommended after very careful consideration with the majority of the members that something should be done about Essequibo. I do not know how it will be worked and if it will be successful. That was somewhat socialistic, however. The recommendations were made. Those concerned were, I think, practically satisfied that they had no alternative but to agree that the people were not going to lose everything but were going to get adequate compensation for the time and energy spent in building up the industry. I do not know what has happened about that, but some wiseacre, some genius, has advised this Government that this is the opportune time for something to be done by taking over the whole industry. The new Board has practically the same personnel excepting that the hon. Colonial Treasurer is to be substituted for the hon. Comptroller of Customs. I think the hon. Colonial Treasurer has enough work to do otherwise. He may have the inclination and a genuine desire to help, but I do not think he is fully qualified to help in that direction. While I give him credit for the energy he will put into it, I maintain he is not qualified to be Chairman of the Board. I want to make that statement here because I hope in the years to come, as I have referred to the state of the industry during the last six years, to have the opportunity to refer to what I have said will happen during the coming years.

I am not at all satisfied that the Board, as at present constituted, is sufficiently capable and competent to control the whole rice industry of this Colony. Government can, however, do what it pleases, but I want to say Government should very cautiously and very carefully go into this matter, and should consult and take the advice of those competent to give that advice. As I said just now, this industry was built up by certain people and by certain interests. I think those interests are adequately represented on

that Board, but I do not think the people are adequately represented. At one time the Rice Marketing Board had not one Indian on it, and at another time but one Indian who, as the result of his place of residence and the time of the meetings, could not have rendered any service to that Board. When I was a member of the Advisory Committee and attended the meetings of the Board, that gentleman was absent from nearly every meeting and, if the rules had been strictly adhered to, his seat should have been declared vacant.

THE PRESIDENT: I cannot allow the hon. Member to speak about a person who is not a Member of Council.

Mr. JACOB: I am willing to prove what I say. If the minutes of the Rice Marketing Board were to be consulted, it would be seen that if a member absents himself from three meetings without reasonable cause his seat becomes vacant. I do want to impress upon Your Excellency that in making this statement, I do so with no vindictiveness but with a genuine desire to see the industry progress. I do want to ask, if it is fair to the community for an industry to be controlled and the people concerned not to be adequately represented on the Board that controls that industry. The East Indians' Association had taken this matter up with Government over and over. They have written about it and have represented the matter to the Colonial Office and to this Government, but with the kind of dictatorship which obtains in these parts we can get no further. It is only by referring to these matters and making the kind of statements that I make, that Government pays some heed. An industry has been built up by certain people and you do not have those people to advise how the industry should be run. Government may as well ask the Attorney-General to fill the post of Comptroller of Customs, both being technical posts, and likewise the Director of Medical Services to fill the post of Director of Agriculture. That is what in effect Government has done with the industry. Government will not appoint the right people to the right places, but only makes its appointees square pegs in round holes. I do protest against Government doing things in this wrong way. Some of the people are practically bankrupt, and the proposed suggestion is going to mean the driving of hundreds of

them out of employment. Government has started to employ some people. I have heard the names of them, and not a single Indian is among them. Why this industry should not give benefit to those who built it up is beyond my comprehension. I do not want to raise other matters. I do not want to go to the big political question, but I do ask Government to consider the people of this country in their respective positions. I want to conclude on this phase of my address with the remark that Government ought to go very cautiously and not act arbitrarily in taking over the rice industry and running it in the way it is proposed. I am not against control. In fact I welcome control to some extent, but I welcome the right kind of help. This industry must be helped by the laying out of suitable lands, irrigating and draining the lands, and giving the people money to plant rice. This industry is not going to improve by taking hold of the rice and trying to make money out of it. It may succeed at present owing to war conditions, but I do not think it is going to help the industry.

I want to say something about the expenses of this Board. While this industry was languishing and while it required help of every kind, Grading fees, Marketing Board fees, and Licensing fees were being collected from exporters who had to collect them from the growers. Those amounts were put aside from time to time. Rather than give the industry something, money was taken out of the industry and wasted. \$318 per month was the expenditure of the Marketing Board, as stated in the *Official Gazette* of the 4th November. The expenditure was \$259.39 in excess of revenue. Although the revenue was not able to meet expenditure, yet the people concerned were being told that the Board has done so well and is going to do a little better for them. On the whole the more I look into this matter, the more I do feel Government is wrongly advised and is not doing the right thing in respect of this industry. My hon. friend, the Member for Central Demerara (Mr. De Aguiar) referred to the Constitution—

Mr. DE AGUIAR: To a point of correction. I did not use the word "Constitution." The hon. Member is trying to read my thoughts.

Mr. JACOB: I do not think the hon,

Member used the word "Constitution." In referring to the defective control of expenditure he made reference to grant-in-aid. I think, Your Excellency is aware of an instance in which \$188,000 of loan grant-in-aid—I think that is the correct term—was being spent on the Canals Polder. I happened to be a member of that Authority. I endeavoured at no little personal inconvenience to follow the expenditure of that money very closely and to see that the money was being properly spent. I was surprised to hear the hon. Member say what I was going to say. When I questioned how the money was being spent, when I asked that I should see every item of expenditure as a member of the Authority, the then Chairman told me: "Oh, no; it is not necessary for you to see that. You have no control over that money. It is a grant-in-aid." I do not want to say much about it, but I do feel I am no figurehead when I am on any Board or Authority, and as a member I must be made aware of what is going on and of every amount that is being spent. I am sorry to say that a lot of that money has been mis-spent. When enquiries were made, proper information was never given. I was obstructed in every possible way and was not given the right information in time with the result, as I said just now, the money was mis-spent. I do hope that when the whole amount is spent, that area will get the benefit that it requires. When a certain trench was dug there costing about \$35,000, and I told the then Chairman, the hon. Director of Public Works, that the trench was not properly dug as it was commenced from the wrong end, the gentleman agreed but said that his predecessor did that. When one enquires of certain Government Officers about anything they often say: "My Deputy is looking after that." When money is wasted and we get no results, we just have to take it easy. That is the way of Government. I think there should be a change. The expenditure of this \$188,000 on the Canals Polder was not properly done, and it is time that Government appoint some committee, as has been suggested by the hon. Member for Central Demerara, to control public expenditure, particularly on public works in outlying districts.

On the question of roads and public works expenditure generally, I am not

going to add to the burden at the present time. I am not going to add fire to fury, but I do think that the confidence of the Elected Members of this Council and their services should be utilized to a greater extent so as to check the public waste, which is going on and which should be within the knowledge of Government. I propose to say something more about this aspect of the matter privately, but I do ask Government to consider well and devise every possible means to check public waste and ensure that when money is spent value is received for it. The Public Works Department should be controlled in a different way. I have raised the question here over and over again and I have suggested several things, but they have been opposed from time to time. I am, however, glad to see there has been a change. Just before I left this Colony four months ago I referred to a particular matter, and I am very pleased that Your Excellency—I understand you have been primarily responsible—has instituted certain enquiries which have had good results. When the various heads on the Estimates are being discussed, I shall endeavour to make other observations and, I hope, I shall make constructive criticism resulting in the improvement of the Colony.

Mr. JACKSON: After the series of complaints by the hon. Member for North Western District embodied in his—what I term—warm address, I think the air needs clarifying a little. I am not a rice expert although I eat it, and I will not touch upon that question. I would like to say that the gratitude of this Colony to the Imperial Government for the service rendered by providing funds for balancing receipts with expenditure should not be clouded by any remarks regarding any untoward effects, real or imaginary, that might have impeded the independence of the Colony. However much we might laud Government at the present time for attempting to balance the Budget, it should not be lost sight of that in ordinary circumstances and in normal times any attempt to increase taxation to the extent that it is intended at the present time would have met with strong opposition. In these circumstances and in these abnormal times, I am quite sure, the people of this Colony will be prepared to meet any eventuality, and I have no doubt that although taxation will be increased to a certain

extent British Guiana will not be so ungrateful as to raise a voice against what is being done to meet these trying times. I do not visualize there can be any difficulty in getting the Estimates through during this session, for in my opinion they are arranged on conservative lines and ought really to meet with the approval of Council.

Reference has been made to Your Excellency's impending departure. Your virtues have been acclaimed, and the hon. Member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar) referred to what he regards as your "unfortunate" position in introducing in this Council what he calls "a vicious Bill" bearing reference to the Petroleum Bill; but I want to assure Your Excellency that whatever may be the criticism at the present time against that Bill or Ordinance you will live to have praises showered upon your head for having had the courage to bring forward that Bill before this Council, because I believe that with the finding of oil in this Colony British Guiana will be benefited to a very great extent. Personally I consider the move to search for oil in this Colony and the necessary Ordinance that has been passed a great move on towards the progress of this Colony, and I am convinced that any measure, however important it may be, that might cause a little annoyance to some people should be proceeded with when the general good is considered. I have no doubt, sir, that we shall get through the Estimates as quickly as possible, and time will be given towards the close for us to make whatever valedictory remarks we may be pleased to make before you retire from this Colony. I wish to say here and now that if there are two characteristics that we observe during your presidency over this Council, they are fair-mindedness and firmness coupled with a desire to do the best that can be done in the circumstances. I say this now, but I trust I shall have an opportunity to say something more before you retire.

Mr. CASE (Director of Public Works and Sea Defences): The hon. Member for North Western District referred to me as Chairman of the Canals Polder Authority and said that he failed to get information from me. I challenge that statement. It is absolutely incorrect.

Mr. JACOB: I did not refer to the present Director of Public Works. As a matter of fact I do want to say—

THE PRESIDENT: The hon. Member cannot speak again. We are in Council. He can do so when we get into the Committee stage.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The hon. Member for Central Demerara (Mr. De Aguiar) said he thought there should be a complete examination of Government expenditure, and I presume he meant, by the Unofficial Members of the Council. He went on to suggest that Government might consider the appointment of a permanent committee to enquire into all items of expenditure. I am not quite sure what the hon. Member has in mind, whether it should be a permanent committee which would consider all items of proposed expenditure before they are submitted to the Legislative Council—that is done in some Colonies; there is a Standing Finance Committee and Government submits to that Body items of expenditure before they are brought to the Council—or that when the time comes to deal with the Annual Estimates an Estimates Committee may be appointed—that, I know, is done in some cases; it is not a permanent committee but one appointed year by year. On the other hand the hon. Member may have in mind a committee to make sure that expenditure voted is properly spent. If that is what the hon. Member meant, and he said in respect of all items, that committee would certainly have a very busy time. I think what the hon. Member meant was that there should be a committee to whom all items of doubtful expenditure might be deferred for investigation; but there is already machinery for Government to take action when it is considered that money has been mis-spent. Using the word "mis-spent" reminds me of what the hon. Member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob) said a minute ago. He has accused a certain Department of mis-spending money. I do not for a moment believe that is so. I only refer to it to point out that items of expenditure in connection with the Canals Polder go before a Board, and it does not seem that the Board in that case has been very successful, if what the hon. Member says is true.

The hon. Member for Central Demerara

went on to ask Government to guarantee that in the event of the Secretary of State for the Colonies not approving of the items which have not so far been approved by him, the equivalent amount of money would be shown as savings at the end of the year. It is impossible to give any such guarantee. I can only guarantee the money will not be spent on those particular items, but I can not imagine that we will be so fortunate as to go through a year without having to come before the Council with Supplementary Estimates. Therefore the money will no doubt be used either to supplement other items or, perhaps, for expenditure on roads, as he hopes we may be able to find money for that in the near future.

The hon. Member for Eastern Berbice (Mr. Luckhoo) referred at length to the Land Settlement Scheme, and I would just like to mention that the position in regard to that is that engineering and agricultural surveys have been decided upon in respect of two of the three areas suggested by the Committee for settlement, namely Pln. Anna Regina *cum annexis*, Essequibo, and the Craig—Garden of Eden area, East Bank, Demerara. The surveys in respect of Anna Regina have been completed and the report has just come to hand. I understand that the surveys in respect of the Craig-Garden of Eden area will also very soon be submitted to Government. Due consideration will be given to the question as to whether those areas should be converted into Land Settlement areas.

The hon. member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar), I gather, hopes it would never be necessary for this Government to look to the Imperial Government for grants-in-aid. I hope not, too, but I think we should be very thankful. We have received within the last few years a considerable sum from the Imperial Government. It is difficult to see how the Colony can carry on without assistance. I would like to draw hon. Members' attention to the fact that there is only a very small margin of revenue over expenditure in the 1940 Estimates, the figure being \$87,500. I do not think hon. Members need look very far. We shall have to find money for several other works in the near future. Hon. Members know the question of doing something to the West Coast Railway has to be considered, and we have to find money for that. Government also has to

consider how it can help Junior Government employees, if prices continue to rise. I only mention that, because although the Estimates show a small surplus of \$87,000 we still have to find a considerable amount of money during the next few months, and I do not think we ought to make up our minds at this stage not to look to the Imperial Government ever again for assistance.

I shall consider the case of the officer referred to by the hon. Member. I am afraid I do not know the facts, but now that the matter has been brought to the notice of Government it will be investigated. The hon. Member also referred to the lack of measures to increase production. Perhaps in a year's time we will be able to say it has been possible to do something in that direction. Hon. Members are aware that everything is being done to increase the output of rice, and to take advantage of the War to make much more use of rice and export it to our neighbours and, probably, import less flour and also less timber, and encourage work on our timber grants. There is also on his way here the Tobacco Expert and, therefore, there will be some measure of production in that direction in the near future.

The hon. Member for North Western District made a very definite statement, I think, that the members of the Rice Marketing Board are responsible for the small export of rice as compared with the year 1936. I see no reason to blame members of the Board. They had certain duties to perform and those have been performed. I should think it is more likely due to the low price of padi, and the fact that a minimum price having been fixed for padi rice-growers should be encouraged to plant more padi. The export, I can assure the hon. Member if that is done, will increase rapidly.

I think I have referred to most of the points raised by hon. Members. If I have omitted any and I am reminded, I shall refer to it. I move that the Council resolve itself into Committee to consider the Estimates of Expenditure to be defrayed from Revenue during the year ending 31st December, 1940, which have been laid on the table.

Question put, and agreed to.

Council in Committee.

ESTIMATES—1940.

LEGISLATURE.

Item 4—Registration and Election Expenses, \$4,400.

Mr. PEER BACCHUS: I want to remind Government that in past years for the purpose of Elections many Returning Officers were made Commissioners of Oaths to Affidavits. Candidates are occasioned unnecessary travel to get to Commissioners of Oaths especially when they are far away from the town.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I would be glad if the hon. Member indicate the inconvenience suffered. Does he mean there are no Commissioners in the districts to whom persons can go?

Mr. PEER BACCHUS: There is no Commissioner on the West Coast, Berbice, and at the last General Elections I had to request that one be sent there from New Amsterdam. I think it was in the Essequebo District, a candidate had similar experience when it was found that his declaration was bad; he had to travel to Georgetown before he could have had it done in time to lodge with the Returning Officer.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I shall look into the matter and see if it is necessary to have anything done.

Mr. WOOLFORD: I did not hear what the hon. Member was asking about declarations. A candidate can swear to his declaration at the time of his nomination and hand it in. It has to be done within forty-eight hours, but it has not to be sworn to within that period of time. The law must be conformed to at the time of nomination.

Mr. PEER BACCHUS: The declaration has to be filed after nomination. I think that one of the objections is that declaration cannot be made before nomination.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Colonial Secretary has already said that he will look into the matter.

AGRICULTURE.

Mr. ELEAZAR: Under this Head, as

I have always said, perhaps it is a misfortune that I cannot see eye to eye with the hon. Director of Agriculture, but I do say that for this amount of money we are spending every year on this Department the results obtained are hardly worth mentioning. I am going to suggest to Government that now that the post of Deputy Director is vacant a considerable saving can be made in that respect, and I am going to move its deletion. To be very candid, I have never at any time felt that it is necessary to have a Deputy Director at all. The Agricultural Department, I take it, is there to advise agriculturists generally when they come up against something that is difficult. The Department will do the research work and give advice as to the best plants to be used, the best period of the year to plant etc., and leave it to the agriculturists to accept their advice or otherwise. In this country the people by practical experience have certain ideas which do not tally with the theory propounded by this Department, and the Department instead of taking upon itself the duty of compelling people to do things their way should content itself with looking after the duties of the office. If that was done there would be no necessity for this array of 'ologists in that Department, from whom we do not get the very best results that we ought. I know of my own knowledge that most of the minor industries of the Colony had not been initiated by the Department of Agriculture in the past. Those are industries the Department found existing, and most of them have been initiated purely by the industry and energy of the poor man in the business. The rice industry was started by the farmers putting a few handful of seeds in the small drains of their provision farms. That was found to be doing well, and the man with plenty of land at his disposal put a little more seed in his swampy land and that yielded good results. In that way the industry expanded, and Sir Alexander Swettenham, having been in the East and seen the similarity of conditions obtaining there and those here, told the people when he was being welcomed to plant coconuts and rice. But the Director has advised the people to cut down some of those coconut trees as they have too many. The people would not cut them down as they held that if they got one coconut from one tree they would be satisfied. The

people did not wait for the Department to tell them what to grow or even how to grow it. The Department with its scientific knowledge can help them when they come up against difficulties, but the Department goes the other way about it. The Department feels it must push everything, and it pushes everything wrongly, like it has done in the case of the Banana Industry. It is now busy at La Belle Alliance, and when it is finished you will not have a thing there.

I think I ought to mention this case. The hon. Director will have an opportunity to reply. Government recently adumbrated a plan for increasing production in the districts and, I think, Government has since put that in the hands of the hon. Director. From what I have gathered from certain quarters—I hope my information is wrong—the hon. Director of Agriculture is seeking to push down the people's throat what he wants them to do. One man asked me a pertinent question. He said to me: "You mean to say Government is going to allow us to plant a whole bed of cassava?" I said to him: "Why not, if that is what you can grow." He said he would exchange some of the cassava with the man who grows something else. I, however, forced him to grow cassava. Those are the ways in which Government is misdirected and as a result does not get much benefit. I understand Bel Air Park is to be used with the view of making this production a reality. I do not want to use a hard term. You do not want to go to Bel Air Park to plough it up for that purpose. You have plenty of waste land where people had been trying and trying, and all the people want is a little help. We are not so bankrupt for places to plant that we must go to Bel Air Park. That is a misdirection by the Department. Let the Department go into the country districts and find out from the people there what their difficulties are, and also find out how the land can best be cultivated and what help the people want. I do implore Government and the hon. Director of Agriculture and his Department to address their minds to something real, not something like the Rodwell's peanut patch, where \$60 was spent on an acre of nut cultivation and only \$30 was got back in return. That was under the direction of the Director of Agriculture,

and for all that you can only hear a flow of oratory. He likes to be "it" all the time. The man on the spot must be counted; take him into the picture and you will get along well. We need more in return for this large expenditure on this Department. I am going to move the reduction of one or two items and if Government sees with me, perhaps, they may be reduced. For this large sum of money expended on this Department, I think, we ought to get something more out of the Department.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: I interpret the compliment paid by the hon. Member for Berbice River on the attempt to reduce this Head as a tribute to the draftsman of these estimates, because I am not up to the present satisfied in my mind that there is a reduction, which he hopes for. There is an apparent reduction in respect of the Estimates as printed, but, as we are all accustomed to receive from this Department, there have been the usual transfers and cross entries in respect of the various heads that I am not so sure that in another year or two what appears now to be a slight reduction of \$2,000 may result in an increase of perhaps twice that sum. I merely want to say right away that I support the suggestion that for the present at least, especially in view of the hard times, the appointment of a Deputy Director of Agriculture should be held over. I make that suggestion with all sincerity, and I will go one step further and say that this Department should be told definitely that for the present at least no attempt should be made to increase the establishment. If hon. Members examine these estimates, I think, they will agree with me that even now an attempt is being made to increase the establishment here. Of course it shows a reduction at present, but I do not know what will appear later on.

This reduction, to my mind, has been due to a reduction in wages to those men on the lower grade, but we have a proposal to put one officer on the Fixed Establishment, and immediately we will have our pension costs rising. I refer to the Assistant Plant Breeder. There are so many cross entries, that I think the hon. Member for Berbice River really intended to compliment the draftsman of these estimates, I have always compli-

mented him. Unless I have the full particulars—and here again I wish to remind hon. Members of Council of what I referred to this morning—and one can make the same comparison from year to year, it is extremely difficult to follow the estimates as presented to this Council by this Department. What surprises me is that I do not see a new 'ologist here. I suppose we cannot find any as the Universities of the world have stopped rolling them out. Perhaps, that is a treat which is in store for us next year or the year after. I may mention *en passant* just casually that it is proposed to appoint a new Agricultural Superintendent. It is not clear whether it is a new post or it is the filling of a post which has become vacant, but there again you find notes here like "Interchange of posts between Colonial Secretary's Office and Department of Agriculture." I am strongly of the opinion that before 1941 is reached this head is going to be increased again by \$2,000.

I am sorry the hon. Member for Eastern Demerara (Mr. Humphrys) is not here. He did not seem to appreciate the point made this morning in respect of the Colony's financial position. What I was endeavouring to point out was that the time has come when we have got to reduce our administrative cost, and I do urge that something should be done in that direction. I cannot assist this Council and this Government with a proper investigation of the estimates of this Department without full particulars and information being available, as there have been too many cross entries.

THE CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members may speak generally on this Head at the present time, and then later on I will put the various items separately, so that hon. Members will have a chance of speaking on the particular items that they wish to speak on.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: In relation to this Head I was going to suggest, as the hon. Member for Central Demerara has done, that we should reduce our administrative cost. That is one way in looking at it. I would also suggest that we should increase our exports generally. One would be interested to know exactly what exports the Department has shown any activity

in generating. It seems that we have here quite a lot of rice. It is unfortunate that the project of establishing a Central Rice Mill in Essequibo has been held up. In Essequibo everything depends on agriculture. The hon. Director of Agriculture in his own report as Chairman of the Essequibo Coast Commission has definitely pointed out "rice is not so stabled for the economic reconstruction of any district and there must be some other substantial product." If I have interpreted his words wrongly he may call me to order. What have we done in finding satisfactory products and satisfactory exports? Government is doing all it can to see that the grower is protected and also the consumer. I would suggest that Government appoint a Committee, which would not take perhaps months and years as several committees do but would perhaps report in two or three days, to see whether this Colony cannot increase its exports of agricultural products and what industries can be developed within the Colony that will create employment. It is also unfortunate that the Committee on Dairy Products, which was appointed on a motion moved by the hon. Member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob) and of which the hon. Director of Agriculture was Chairman, has been dropped. We were told that we would get a certain amount of meat trade by that. That, however, is being dealt with by the Foods Production Committee.

That Committee, while it serves the purpose of trying to develop industries, or to increase exports, or to substitute foodstuffs for that imported, can also extend its activities to other industries which may be developed. I was a little apprehensive and a little disappointed at not hearing from Your Excellency anything dealing with oil or the admirable wood pulp scheme which was put up. I think that Committee would serve a useful purpose in generating or galvanizing into action some thought that we could export other than the recognised exports at the present time. That Committee may be given terms of reference dealing with the comparative statement of revenue from 1928 to 1938, as from that one can derive a considerable amount of assistance in seeing whether there are other avenues of revenue which will not necessarily increase the cost of living to those who are unable to bear it. Hon,

Members will see that there are certain industries we may attempt to develop which may not be necessarily under the protective tariff, as one realizes the crisis the British Nation is passing through at the moment. I think if the suggestion is adopted, some of the unemployment which is at present rampant would be alleviated and we would be able to ameliorate the necessity for a considerable amount of taxation and the necessity for the increased cost of living, which at present is so paramount in the minds of the working class.

Mr. JACOB: The comparative statement that has been issued shows that in 1929 the expenditure under this Head was \$93,977 and the proposed estimate now is \$118,923, but as I do not propose to use that figure I shall refer to the 1939 approved estimate of \$125,977. Subtracting \$93,977 from \$125,977 one gets an excess expenditure of \$32,000 during the last ten years. One would imagine that this Department would be primarily responsible for all the agricultural activities, and it ought to be burdened with the responsibility of making some explanation as to why this or that has not been done. We are paying very nice salaries to all the officers of this Department. I do not think this Department can afford to pay those salaries. I have said so on several previous occasions, and I do so now again. Opportunity should be taken immediately there are vacancies to get officers to work for smaller salaries. I should like to refer Your Excellency to that Island of which you are Governor, and to ask you to take your mind back and see whether the salaries' scale in that Island cannot usefully be applied here. (Voices: No, no). I understand Barbados is a first class Colony and we are, I think, in a lower class in every respect. I think after all the scale of salaries offered here is too high for the present economic condition of the Colony. I am not suggesting that those drawing the present scale of salaries should give up part of that, but new officers should be employed at reduced salaries. Opportunity affords itself for that with the post of Deputy Director of Agriculture. I think it has been suggested that we should deal with that when the item is being taken,

The hon. Member for Western Essequibo, (Mr. C. V. Wight) referred to exports. I recommend to his careful perusal the Administration Report of the Director of Agriculture for 1938. It is useless my attempting to criticize it because you get very little support from the Government side, and as to the hon. writer of the report he is capable of explaining away anything to the satisfaction of Government but not to the satisfaction of the public. When it comes to my constituents they do not see the officers of the Department, except a Junior Official, and I do not think they are keen on seeing any of the Agricultural Officers as they have found that the officers of the Department have not been able to help them all these years. I say that with the authority of every responsible man in that district. When I look at the report what do I see? It starts off with Sugar. I do not know who is going to take the credit for that industry, may—be the hon. Director, maybe others, but I leave that as I do not want to enter into any controversy. Apart from sugar I cannot understand, nor will I be able to understand, what can be said to justify the large expenditure in this Department all these years.

Rice—I have said enough about that already, but I do want to repeat that the export in 1933 was 29,000 tons and the export now is about 14,000 tons—more than 50 per cent. decrease. Coconuts—the value in 1929 was \$314,350 worth of copra exported, and in 1938 the amount was only \$41,613. There has been wonderful improvement along certain lines, but not in the interest of the country nor of the people engaged in the coconut industry. Coffee—the value of the export in 1928 was \$104,000; in 1938 it was \$5,657, and probably in 1939 it would be nearly the same, if not less. Here is an industry which could have been helped. I should certainly like to hear an explanation from Your Excellency as to what has happened from the visit of the hon. Director of Agriculture and myself to Suriname, Dutch Guiana, and what has happened to the report of the Select Committee with recommendations to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. There is complete silence, and I understand that the price of coffee now is about twelve cents per pound as compared with

four and five cents some little time ago. If that industry had been helped when help was necessary and was urged, it would have been in a flourishing condition to-day. But I knew the policy of Government in respect of the industry. I suspect the policy of Government now that there is no coffee industry. I am not surprised if the coffee produced now is not sufficient for local consumption. If that is not a serious state of affairs for Government to find itself in, I do not know what is. Surely this Government ought to have done something to help the industry.

In respect of rice, coconut, coffee, and every other commodity in this report, you will find that instead of increased production there is decreased production all the time. I do not know what to say. I see that every attempt is being made now to increase production, and I hope that the scientific means this Department has at its disposal will enable us to double, if not treble, our production within a few years. I want, however, to suggest in all seriousness that some reorganisation be done in this Department, that something be done to let the officers of this Department understand that they are paid to produce more things and better things. I am not at all satisfied with the way in which the Department is being run, the results we are getting, and the increasing expenditure of the Department. Most of the officers of the Department do very little work. I know that is going to be seriously contradicted, but I know what I am talking about. This increased expenditure for the last ten years with decreased production and decreasing population is not at all satisfactory. I do hope that something will be done. Some change is necessary. Salaries should be reduced and the post of Deputy Director of Agriculture should not be filled.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: I am in possession of the particular document referred to by the hon. Member, and I have perused it. That is the reason why I suggest the appointment of the committee, which will go into the question generally of the Department and find out the reason for the decrease or increase of items on comparison with the Comparative Statement of Revenue, and also what revenue we may be able to derive from this source,

Item 1 (2)—Deputy Director of Agriculture, \$4,320.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I move the deletion of the item because the post is now vacant and there has never been the necessity for it. When the request was made, I remember, others and myself protested very strongly against it but the hon. Director in his usual style persuaded the Government. He and another hon. Member, who has since joined the Great Majority, persuaded the Government to agree with him. Now that we are in straits for money, and we need money to produce more things so as to reduce taxation in spite of our present condition, here is an opportunity offered Government, if it is sincere in its retrenchment policy, to show that sincerity by consenting to delete this item from the Estimates. The Department has so many 'ologists now, so many technical assistants, that it ought to be able to carry on without the assistance of this officer. I move the deletion of this item.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: I am supporting the motion of the hon. Member for Berbice River. Whilst I am inclined to the view that, perhaps, the Head of the Department may need a Deputy on certain occasions I am not satisfied in my own mind that in this particular instance it is necessary to appoint a special officer to this post. I am going to suggest to Government in all seriousness and to the hon. Director of Agriculture, to borrow a leaf out of the book of the hon. Director of Medical Services and carry on with one of the officers in his Department at the present time acting as his Deputy. I think it would come with good grace if the hon. Director accepts that suggestion. I am a strong supporter of Government. I have no desire to repeat the figures the hon. Member gave to the Council, but I am in agreement with what he stated.

It is extremely difficult to get up in this Council and make a suggestion that will result in a reduction in the expenditure of this Department to anything near the figure it was in 1929. For that reason, I think the suggestion put forward by the hon. Member for Western Essequibo is a good one. This is one of the Departments that we ought to have a permanent committee sitting to enquire into its

expenditure. This is one of the Departments I had in mind when I told Government this morning that this Council should thoroughly investigate in so far as the expenditure of money is concerned. There are too many 'ologists in this Department. It is top-heavy. While I agree that a Head should have a Deputy, the time has come when we cannot afford to have a special officer for the purpose. You have many qualified men in the Department, and one of them can very well carry the title and do the work of the Deputy Director at present. I am so glad that an opportunity has arisen that hon. Members can put forward a definite suggestion where a reduction of some kind can be made. I think the appointment has not yet been made, because I imagine Government is somewhat embarrassed by the criticisms previously made. If the appointment has not yet been made, I do entreat Government to accept the suggestion put forward that the item be deleted at least for the present. If financial prosperity comes to the Colony, then we may be very generous in appointing a special officer to the post.

Mr. JACOB: I am disappointed to think that no attempt has been made to answer any of the points made in the general debate. I do think that there should be some reply. Constituted as this Council is to-day, even if we were full it might not be possible to get any reduction of this vote. Apart from this item, when other items come up I intend to speak on them as well. I do urge that Government take a serious view of the financial position of the Colony. The co-operation of the Elected Members of Council should be encouraged. I use the word advisedly. I am greatly discouraged in this matter. I urge on Government that some more encouragement be given to enable us to assist in the administration of the Government.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: In supporting the

motion by the hon. Member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar) it appears to me that this position is one which is not absolutely necessary. The Department has not only the technical staff but several first class clerks, and surely if the necessity arose one of the number would be in a position to act as Deputy. I know that throughout the administration we have personal allowances being given. I shall deal with that when we come to another head more appropriate. Perhaps a little personal allowance may be given to the person who is acting as Deputy, though I am against the giving of personal allowances to the various officers generally, as surely if it is necessary for such an allowance to be given to the officers concerned they should be transferred to some other Department and thus obviate the necessity for the allowance. That is why I am supporting the motion for the deletion of the item. The only way I will support the appointment of an officer to be designated "Deputy Director of Agriculture" and paid a salary of \$4,320 is if this officer is coming here and if Government deems it fit to appoint the committee as suggested by me (and for that I have the greatest support) to carry out the very words of Your Excellency in your speech, and those very words I shall use in support of the motion.

The Council resumed.

THE PRESIDENT: Before the Council adjourns, I desire to state that normally Wednesday is the day for the taking of Unofficial motions. It is desired to go straight on with the consideration of the Estimates. If hon. Members wish, however, that any Unofficial motion should be placed on the Order of the Day for tomorrow the Order of the Day would be arranged accordingly.

The Council adjourned to the following day at 10.30 a.m.