

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Wednesday, 16th January, 1935.

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

PRESENT.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Hon. N. Cannon (Georgetown North).

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

The Hon. J. Eleazar (Berbice River).

The Hon. J. Gonsalves (Georgetown South).

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

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

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

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

The Hon. Peer Bacchus (Western Berbice).

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

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

MINUTES.

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

UNOFFICIAL NOTICE.

CANALS POLDER DRAINAGE.

Mr. WILLS gave notice of the following questions :—

1. Will Government state what are the prospects of the Nos. 1 and 2 Canals Polder obtaining from the Imperial Government the suggested grant of \$181,800 for the purpose of carrying out works to improve the existing drainage and conservancy systems of the Polder areas as recommended by the Floods Investigation Committee, 1934? (Legislative Council No. 13/1934).

2. Is Government aware that the Polder Ordinance, Chapter 174, is extremely defective and tends to perpetuate the unsatisfactory conditions existing in the said Canals?

3. Will Government, therefore, take immediate steps to introduce a new Polder Ordinance containing such provisions as will meet the present needs of the Canals Polder district?

ORDER OF THE DAY.

POLICE PENSIONS.

Mr. WILLS, on behalf of Dr. SINGH, asked the following questions :—

1.—(a) How many non-commissioned officers and men of the Police Force have agreed to come under the New Pensions Ordinance, 37 of 1923?

(b) Were they instructed by their officers on the advantages of the said Ordinance? (Vol. 2 p. 731).

2.—(a) How many of these men have since died before completing 20 years' service?

(b) Have any of the dependents of the deceased received lump sum for the services of the deceased?

(c) If so, how many have received?

(d) If not all, why?

3. Is it true that a mistake was discovered in the New Pensions Ordinance after it came into force? If so, were the non-commissioned officers and men of the Police Force who had come under this Ordinance told of the mistake by their superior officers?

4. If there was a mistake subsequently discovered in Ordinance 37 of 1928, will the men who had agreed to come under that Ordinance be permitted to return to the old Ordinance under which they had joined the Police Force prior to 1928?

5. Can any provision be made under the New Pensions Ordinance 37 of 1928 for any N.C.O. or man who has not completed 20 years' service in the Police Force?

6.—(a) How much sick leave on full pay is given to N.C.O.'s and men of the Police Force detained through illness in a public hospital?

(b) If the illness lasts for 2 or 3 months and the individual is not the cause of his illness, what salary is paid to him?

7. Is it true that since Ordinance 37 of 1928 has been in force quite a number of policemen have been paid only half salary during illness in Hospital although they have not been responsible for their illness?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Mr. P. W. King), replied as follows:—

1.—(a) 633.

(b) Yes.

2.—(a) 14.

(b) Yes.

(c) In 9 cases a gratuity equal to the lump sum for which the deceased would have been eligible had he retired on medical grounds has been paid; in 2 cases a compassionate gratuity has been paid.

(d) Government has been advised that there is no authority in the Constabulary Ordinance, Chapter 30, for the payment of lump sum gratuities to the dependents of constables who die before completing 20 years' service.

3. The answer is in the negative.

4. See answer to question 3.

5. The question of the general revision of the pensions provisions of the Constabulary Ordinance, Chapter 30, is now engaging the attention of Government and this matter will receive consideration.

6.—(a) 28 days in any one year. After such period and provided such sickness has not been caused by misconduct, vacation leave may be granted by the Inspector-General to any well conducted non-commissioned officer or constable on the following scale:—

(i) exceeding fourteen days but not exceeding one month on full pay in any one year;

(ii) not exceeding three months on full pay in addition to casual leave in respect of each period of four years' service;

(iii) not exceeding four weeks on half pay in respect of each period of two years' service.

It is, therefore, possible for a constable to be absent from duty owing to sickness for a period of 2 months and 14 days on full pay. If however, no vacation leave has been taken in respect of four years' service he would, in addition to 14 days casual leave, be granted three months plus 28 days sick leave, all on full pay.

(b) If injured on duty full pay for any period approved of by the Inspector-General during recovery from the injury, irrespective of service.

7. Yes, after all full pay leave has been exhausted in cases where the illness has not been caused by injury received in the execution of duty.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES.

The Council resolved itself into Committee and resumed consideration of the Estimates of Expenditure to be defrayed from Revenue for the year ending 31st December, 1935.

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION HEADQUARTERS.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: When the Council adjourned yesterday afternoon I had practically concluded my remarks with regard to the salaries of the District Commissioners. I, however, just wish to say that in view of the fact that the District Commissioners are people who should be specially selected for the positions they have to fill I do not consider that the salaries which it is proposed to pay them are in any way excessive. They seem to me quite reasonable amounts to be paid for the work that has to be performed.

Mention is made in the Memorandum of the good work the Commissioners did during the flood period. There was no intention whatever to detract from the work that was done by other people during the floods. All that was intended was to set out that the Commissioners had done good work, as Government fully appreciated the good work done by other people.

I will now deal with the salaries of the Assistant Commissioners, and it seems to me from the trend of the debate that there is no very strong objection to the rates of pay proposed, but the objection seems to be to the gentlemen who will fill those posts being called Assistant District Commissioners. I do not know that there is very much in a name, and I am submitting to the Council that the rate of pay pro-

posed for the Assistant Commissioners, namely £400 to £500 a year, is not in any way out of proportion to the duties they will be called upon to perform. The whole staff of the District Administration has to be specially selected for the various posts they have to fill. That being so, and as they will obviously have special qualifications for the posts they have to fill, I do not consider that the salaries proposed to be paid to them are in any way excessive. Those officers will be selected in the usual way. They will be on probation for a year as is usual with Government, and if they do not come up to expectation naturally they will be withdrawn from the Service.

The main objection, so far as I gathered from the trend of the debate, was that we should not call them Assistant District Commissioners. These are not new posts. The Assistant Commissioners will take the place of a Class I. officer in one District and a Class II. officer in another District. Those posts will be abolished and the two posts of Assistant District Commissioners will be substituted. It merely means an increase in the pay which Government considers desirable if the District Administration Scheme is to work smoothly and with advantage to the Colony. The intention is that the officers who go into the District Administration should remain on the District Administration side of the Service and should devote their time to studying those problems. They will acquire special knowledge in the Service and should be encouraged to remain there. In order to encourage them to do so these posts are being put into the District Administration so that they may have something to look forward to, and those below will aspire to entering the Service.

There was one remark made during the debate to which I would like to refer. The hon. Member for Central Demerara said that at the beginning of the year there was a terrible rush at the Commissioners Office to pay licences. I think he is a little bit mistaken as to the exact period of the year. I think the rush during past years has been round about February when the two months' grace expired. That is the time when most people pay licences, waiting until the very last day, and the Department is rushed. I know at one time when I was Crown Solicitor the

Chief Commissary asked me whether he could not extend the time for a day as some people claimed that it was no fault of theirs. I told him it was the people's own fault for waiting for two months.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: Is it a privilege or the law? We have until February 28th to pay licences; why pay before?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I am afraid that is not the law. The law says if you pay your first instalment by the 28th of February you can pay in moieties, but it is not the law that you have until the 28th of February to pay anything. Licences become due on the 1st of January. It is only a privilege allowed you to pay by the 28th of February. I think I have covered all the ground in the debate. There are one or two points which I do not think it is necessary to reply to. The hon. Member for Berbice River said he discussed the matter with a gentleman who said he had no use for District Administration. He is probably one of those gentlemen who has no use for any sort of administration that interferes with him in any way. The Commissioners have been styled "Meddlesome Matties." When you have to do your duty some people do think you are meddlesome. In conclusion I would say that as I have stated in the Memorandum, the position has been very carefully considered by Government, and I would recommend to the Council that the staff required is necessary, and that the amounts which the Council is asked to vote in order that the Scheme should continue to do the good work it has been doing are very reasonable indeed.

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION—BERBICE DISTRICT.

Item 1a—District Commissioner (\$3,120—\$120—\$3,840), \$2,520.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I move that the item be carried out at last year's figure. In doing so Your Excellency will permit me to make a few hints on what the Colonial Secretary has just said. He intimated that those officers have been selected for this particular work. They have succeeded so well that they have not been able to collect revenue, but their salaries should be increased.

THE CHAIRMAN: It has been pointed

out that this increase is an increment, and I cannot permit the hon. Member on every item to start some fresh discussion on some point that is not material to the item under discussion. If the hon. Member wants to vote against the item he can do so.

MR. ELEAZAR: If it is Your Excellency's intention that I should be muzzled and gagged—

THE CHAIRMAN: I think the hon. Member is not justified in saying that.

MR. ELEAZAR: I beg to withdraw it.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think hon. Members are satisfied that the matter was fully debated yesterday, and not only I but other Members are anxious to complete the work of the Council this week. We have more work to do. I have no objection to the hon. Member speaking, provided he does not repeat what he has already said on more than one occasion.

MR. ELEAZAR: I come here in the interest of the community, and if Government will just have me say "Aye" and "No" without saying anything to show why these items should not go through then I have no business here, especially in my state of health. You say it is a matter of increments, but Government must remember that this rate of pay is an increase on the rate of pay as well as an increment. It is an increased figure with increments on the increase. I suggest that the item should be at the original figure and that the increments should flow accordingly.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think the hon. Member must look at his figures. In 1934 the salary was \$2,400. Add to that an increment of \$120 and you will get \$2,520.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The figure last year was the salary drawn by Mr. Long who was then District Commissioner. Mr. Macnie took over from Mr. Long some time this year and the salary of \$2,520 is the actual salary Mr. Macnie has been drawing. If Mr. Macnie is appointed, or whoever is appointed to the District Commissioner's job, if the item is passed he will probably go into the higher scale. The actual amount the

Council is asked to vote is the actual salary of Mr. Macnie.

MR. ELEAZAR: If that is the case I would not object to it.

Item passed.

Dr. Singh entered the Chamber and took his seat.

Item 1b—Assistant District Commissioner (\$1,920—\$96—\$2,400) \$1,920.

MR. ELEAZAR: I move that this item be deleted. I cannot conceive of any reason why an Assistant District Commissioner is required. If it is for the reason given, that dog licences have not been collected, then Government should appoint Commissaries. The intention is to appoint new officers to the Districts and we are told they are to be specially selected. I do not know on what plan they are going to be selected. It is not playing the game when their salaries are to be higher than those of doctors and magistrates, and when we know that the Assistant Commissioners are to replace 3rd grade Commissaries.

MR. DE AGUIAR: As far as I am concerned it seems to me that the desire is to strengthen the staff in this particular Department, but following on the remarks I made yesterday afternoon I am in a bit of a quandary because I think I made it perfectly clear that my main objection was to the creation of new posts in this Department. What occurred to me when I made the remarks yesterday was that if this Department requires strengthening by the appointment of an officer in the higher branch of the Service the position might be met by appointing a Class I. officer, but when you compare the scale of salaries for the Service with the salary now proposed I am debarred from making that suggestion because the minimum salary of a Class I. clerk is \$1,716 and the maximum \$2,004. The proposed scale for the Assistant District Commissioners is \$1,920 to \$2,400. Nor can I suggest the creation of the post of Chief Clerk because the salary is \$2,124 to \$2,484. I am in agreement with the view that in order to protect the revenue the staff should be strengthened, but I do not think the post required is that of Assistant District Commissioner. I have an idea of the officer who is likely to get this position.

At least I hope my idea is correct. That officer, according to the Estimate, was a Class II. officer last year. I would like to hear something on the point. If he was a Class II. officer then it seems to me that—assuming that he reaches the maximum of \$1,620—to carry him up to \$1,920 is rather a big jump. It would be better if he were promoted to Class I. and given the maximum of that Class.

Mr. SEAFORD: From what I heard yesterday, especially from the hon. Member for Berbice River and also from other Members, I feel it is necessary to strengthen the Department. I do not know much about Berbice, but there is a good deal in what the hon. Member for Central Demerara has said. I am not in the fortunate position of knowing who is recommended for this position, but it is perhaps rather a big jump to take an officer from Class II. and put him up to the maximum of Class I. I think Government should consider the point raised by the hon. Member for Central Demerara.

THE CHAIRMAN: I will proceed to put the item.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I would like some explanation as to what are to be the duties of the Assistant Commissioners. Is it a name we are to pay for?

Mr. DE AGUIAR: I would like to have an answer whether the officer I have in mind is a Class II. officer.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: That appears on the Estimate. Last year there were two Class II. officers, now there is only one Class I. officer, but it does not necessarily follow that he will be appointed to this position at all. Last year the gentleman who was up there was a Class II. officer. He is still, there but it does not follow that he will be appointed to the position.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: Last year we were told we had two Class II. officers. I think we have reached the stage when we should be a little more frank with one another. May I ask whether this Class II. officer on the Estimate is Mr. Roberts?

THE CHAIRMAN: One of the Class II. officers is Mr. Roberts.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: Last year we had two of them, but for 1935 we have one Class II. officer. Government must know whether the salary for that Class II. officer provided here is for Mr. Roberts.

Mr. LUCKHOO: Has the Class II. officer reached the maximum of the old scale, \$1,800?

THE CHAIRMAN: We are not quite certain. If there were two Class II. officers last year one was Mr. Roberts and the other, I think, was Mr. Mittelholzer. The officer who is provided for here is an officer other than Mr. Roberts, but I am not quite certain who he is at the moment.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: Last year we had two Class II. officers, one of whom was Mr. Roberts.

THE CHAIRMAN: Who the other one was we are not quite certain.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: On the 1935 Estimate we have one Class II. officer. I am asking if he is Mr. Roberts.

THE CHAIRMAN: No, it is the other officer.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: Then he is not in the Service.

THE CHAIRMAN: He is in the Service. It is the other officer, not Mr. Roberts.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: Is Mr. Roberts a 2nd Class officer or a Class II. officer?

THE CHAIRMAN: He is a Class II. officer and may have had the salary attached to his office transferred because he was probably getting that salary before the re-grading of the Service. What the hon. Member wants to do is to move that the officer who is to be called Assistant District Commissioner should get a salary rather less than what appears on the Estimate. In other words, one hon. Member moved the deletion of the item and the other has moved that it be carried out at the maximum or minimum of a 1st Class officer.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: My idea is to strengthen the staff of the Department by the addition of a Class I. officer.

Mr. ELEAZAR: If Government is willing to reduce the item but to strengthen the staff I will not object. What I am objecting to is to calling the officer Assistant District Commissioner and giving him such a big leap in pay. If Government reduces the pay to that of a Class I. officer I would have no objection at all.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think if I gave the salaries per annum in pounds it would be easier to explain why it was that Government selected this particular range of salary for these two new posts to be created. The pay of a Chief Clerk is £442.10s. a year rising to £517.10s. a year. It is not considered that the Assistant District Commissioners should fall in the same category as Chief Clerks, but at the same time it is desirable to put them in a Class slightly higher than that which carries a salary of £317 10s. to £417.10s. so it was decided to put them on the scale up to £500. I do not see why hon. Members want to quibble over a couple of pounds. Hon. Members must leave these small matters of detail to Government.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: What hon. Members would like to see is a little bit of consistency on the part of Government. We want to see grading continued.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I move that we call the officer Chief Clerk and give him a Chief Clerk's pay. There is a good deal of dissatisfaction already over this matter, more than Government can imagine.

THE CHAIRMAN: I will proceed to put the item as printed.

The Committee divided and voted:—

Ayes—Messrs. Cannon, Wood, Mullin, D'Andrade, McDavid, Dias, Smellie, Dr. Henderson, Major Craig, Professor Dash, Major Bain Gray, the Attorney-General and the Colonial Secretary—13.

Noes—Messrs. Walcott, Wills, Peer Bacchus, Seaford, Austin, Dr. Jung Bahadur Singh, De Aguiar, Gonsalves, Eleazar, Wight, Luckhoo and Brassington—12.

Item passed.

Item 1*d*—5 Class III. Officers, \$4,335.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: I observe that

the note says:—"One new appointment. Provision also for promotion of Probationer." When these five officers reach the maximum of Class III. clerks it means that the vote will be \$6,000. It is the ultimate increase to the Colony that concerns me.

Item passed.

Item 3—House rent, \$300.

Mr. ELEAZAR: Is that for the District Commissioner?

THE CHAIRMAN: It has been going on for some years.

Mr. ELEAZAR: Is he paying Government rent? He gets a free house and \$25 per month again. He lives in a Government building.

THE CHAIRMAN: I will have to look into it. The amount has been voted for the past three years. There is nothing new about it. I will get the information for the hon. Member.

Item 8—Purchase of Boat, \$50.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move that the item be amended to read "Purchase of Launch and Boat, \$2,550" so as to provide for a launch for the District Commissioner to replace one that has been in the service for years. It is absolutely necessary for revenue and other purposes.

Item passed.

WEST COAST DEMERARA DISTRICT.

Item 9*a*—District Commissioner (\$3,120—\$120—\$3,840), \$3,600.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move that this item be reduced to \$3,600.

Mr. WALCOTT: I do not approve of the idea of the reduction. As Your Excellency knows well enough I am entirely opposed to this District Administration Scheme as carried on at present. I cannot help thinking that it is nothing but a farce. I am not going to waste too much of your time, but it is right for me to say what I think about it. If we are to carry out District Administration as I feel it should be carried out, and as it is in other countries, the District Commissioners should be direct representatives of the

Government. They should not come under various Heads in Georgetown as they do at present. They should be directly responsible to the Governor for their administration. That was the intention of the original Scheme, and if that had been carried out we might have seen decent and justifiable District Administration. But as the Scheme is carried on to-day I feel that the Commissioners are not being paid sufficient if they are to occupy the positions I think they should occupy. If they are not occupying those positions I feel that no good purpose is being served by such a Scheme as we have at present. In view of that I feel that Government should either decide on a policy of making the District Administration what it ought to be or abolish it altogether, returning to the old system of Commissaries and Village Inspectors. It is easy enough for Government to say that this Scheme is costing less money. I am perfectly certain that in a few years Government will realise that it is costing very much more than the old system and giving no more satisfaction. (Hear, hear).

We have now come to the point where we want Assistant District Commissioners, and we are going to perpetuate something which I can hardly believe Government does not realise is unsatisfactory. I know we had District Commissioners in the North West and the Rupununi. Those districts are a long way from Georgetown and cannot get in touch with Government quickly, therefore it was essential to have men put in control of those districts. Everybody came under the Commissioner in the North West and in the Rupununi, but I am quite sure that in so far as the East Demerara is concerned there are a very few officers who come under the District Commissioner or care whether he says right or wrong. Under the original Scheme it was intended that only the Police and the Magistrates should be exempt, but under the present Scheme only the Commissaries are directly under the control of the District Commissioner. Agricultural Instructors, Sanitary Inspectors, Doctors, Postmasters and everybody go their own way. The District Commissioner is a figure-head, not through his fault but on account of the unfortunate position in which the Government has placed him. I oppose the whole of this District Administration Scheme, other than as regards the North

West and the Rupununi, as a matter of principle. I say it is costing us a lot more money and will cost a great deal more money in years to come, and the sooner the Government realises that it has made a mistake, own up to it and go back to what obtained before, the better for this Colony. We are just wasting more money.

One reason given by the Colonial Secretary why we should continue to have this District Administration Scheme as at present is that the District Commissioners can coerce Government into giving more money to the villages; that since the Scheme was inaugurated the villages have got more money out of Government than they could get before. I have heard Government say that the villages are always begging for money, yet Government has put it in black and white that one of the reasons why the District Administration is a success and should be continued is because the District Commissioners have been able to get more money out of the Government to give to the villages. I feel very strongly on the matter, but it is no use wasting time because I know that Government intends to carry it through notwithstanding any protest that might be made.

Item reduced to \$3,360.

Item 9*b*—Assistant District Commissioner (\$1,920—\$96—\$2,400), \$480.

MR. DE AGUIAR: I move the deletion of this item and the insertion of a new item "1 Class I. Clerk, \$1,716."

THE CHAIRMAN: I will proceed to put the item as printed.

The Council divided and voted:—

Ayes—Messrs. Cannon, Dr. Henderson, Wood, Mullin, D'Andrade, McDavid, Major Craig, Professor Dash, Major Bain Gray, Dias, Smellie, the Attorney-General and the Colonial Secretary—13.

Noes—Messrs. Walcott, Wills, Peer Bacclus, Seaford, Austin, Dr. Jung Bahadur Singh, De Aguiar, Gonsalves, Eleazar, Wight, Luckhoo and Brassington—12.

Item passed as printed.

Item 9*c*—2 Class III. Officers, \$1,104.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move that this item be amended to read:—"1 Class III. Officer, \$456."

Item passed as amended.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move the insertion of a new item "9f. Clerk-Interpreter (\$360—\$48—\$600)—, \$600."

Item passed.

Item 9i—Ranger and Revenue Runner \$468.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I move the deletion of this item on principle. I read in the newspapers that this is a post created for a particular individual, but Government should stop and think twice. There is very little wood-cutting in the Mahaicony creek, and the Department of Lands and Mines has nothing for the officer to do, therefore somebody discovers that a Ranger is required. A job has been created for a particular officer who finds it difficult to educate his children. I do not know who the officer is.

Mr. MULLIN (Commissioner of Lands and Mines): Perhaps it will ease the hon. Member's mind if he knows that I am concerned with this as Commissioner of Lands and Mines. The Forest Rangers, as they were then called, were under the Department of Lands and Mines, and we were called upon by the Government, as the result of the desire for economy, to reduce the staff, and we did so from top to bottom. Some of the Rangers had to go and we chose districts in which less amount of revenue would be lost. We reduced two in the Berbice District to one and we took off the Ranger who used to be attached to the Mahaica-Mahaicony-Abary District. We knew there was a certain loss of revenue going on there, but when the District Commissioner drew attention to the fact and asked me if I could not have another Ranger appointed I told him I did not think we could justify the appointment of a Ranger merely for forests, but that if he could do revenue work as well and be under the District Administration Scheme then it would be justified.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: Isn't that a frank admission that Government does not know for which Department the officer is working?

THE CHAIRMAN: I do not think the hon. Member understood the Commissioner of Lands and Mines.

Mr. ELEAZAR: A Revenue Runner is usually a constable or a policeman. This is only creating this job for this gentleman because he has too many children to maintain.

Mr. SEAFORD: I am in favour of this item as long as Government promises that the officer will not go about in a motor boat.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The Ranger will travel in a corial or boat.

Item passed.

GEORGETOWN AND EAST BANK, DEMERARA DISTRICT.

Item 17a—District Commissioner (\$2,400—\$120—\$3,120), \$3,090.

Mr. WALCOTT: May I ask where is the Commissioner stationed?

THE CHAIRMAN: In Georgetown.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move the insertion of a new item "17g.—House Allowance, District Commissioner, \$480," to bring him into line with others who either receive an allowance or occupy a Government house.

Mr. LUCKHOO: The principle of this thing seems to be wrong. Under what consideration is this officer given a house allowance? Heads of Departments are not given house allowances. There does not seem to be any necessity for this item.

Mr. SMELLIE: I am not in favour of this. I do not know of any other case where Government officers living in Georgetown are given house allowances. I can quite understand it in country districts. I do not think it is right.

The Council divided and voted:—

Ayes—Messrs. Cannon, Dr. Henderson, Wood, Mullin, D'Andrade, McDavid, Major Craig, Professor Dash, Major Bain Gray, the Attorney-General and the Colonial Secretary—11.

Noes—Messrs. Walcott, Wills, Peer Bacchus, Seaford, Austin, Dr. Jung

Bahadur Singh, De Aguiar, Gonsalves, Eleazar, Wight, Luckhoo, Brassington, Dias and Smellie—14.

Motion lost.

WEST COAST DEMERARA DISTRICT.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move the insertion of a new item "32—House Allowance and Rent, \$510." This is in connection with the West Coast of Demerara. I think during one of the debates it was mentioned that there was only one house occupied by the Inspector of Police, and arrangements have been made for the only house we could get at a rental of \$45 per month.

Mr. ELEAZAR: Wasn't the house built for the Commissioner? If that is so, what is the Inspector doing in it?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The house was originally built for the Inspector of Police.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: But previous Commissioners lived there.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: We had a debate about it and it was pointed out that if the District Commissioner lived there he would have to travel 12 miles to his office, and that it was much more convenient to have the Inspector living in the house because it was in the centre of his district, and that the District Commissioner should find a house nearer to his office.

Dr. SINGH: At the inception of the Scheme the Commissioner lived at Vreed-en-Hoop. It was only lately that he went to Leonora.

THE CHAIRMAN: By departmental arrangement. We want to go back to the original position that the Commissioner should live at Vreed-en-Hoop.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I have heard nothing said about the Committee that recommended that no further house allowances be given. A District Postmaster has been denied the house allowance which his predecessors got.

Item passed.

ESSEQUEBO DISTRICT.

Item 34a—District Commissioner (\$2,400—\$120—\$3,120), \$3,360.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: I move that this item be struck out. This is in no way personal to the present holder of the office because he will be retired at the end of March, I believe, and the note says:—"Personal to present holder. On retirement of the present holder of the office the salary to be fixed on the scale \$2,400—\$120—\$3,120." In its scheme of reconstruction Government has thought it fit to create the post of Assistant District Commissioner for Berbice and for East Demerara, but has not thought it necessary to make any addition to the District Commissioners' Scheme as regards Essequibo. I pointed out yesterday that the present holder of the office has to perform a multiplicity of duties. He is in charge of the Onderneeming School which, prior to this fad—each Governor has some fad or new idea for which we have to foot the bill—was a whole-time job with the addition of Immigration work. Besides the supervision of the Onderneeming School the District Commissioner has Commissaries' work to do with one assistant, District Engineer's work, and the supervision of sea defences, a job which requires one man, and he also has drainage and irrigation schemes to look after. It is true that while he should have the oversight of all the Agricultural Instructors stationed at Anna Regina, he has nothing to do with them. He has the supervision of Charity and the Pomeroon River. He is a Jack-of-all-trades and master of none. He cannot be. I am making no attack on the Commissioner; he has done his best under impossible conditions.

Besides the loss of revenue the Colony has lost considerable sums on account of his being unable to give the supervision that would have been given if there was a separate District Engineer there. There was a breach in the Tapacooma conservancy. The task assigned to him was stupendous, the result being dissatisfaction, everybody wanting him at the same time. The Hon. Mr. Walcott has suggested exactly what I said yesterday, that we should revert to the old system that obtained before the late Sir Gordon Guggisberg came here. The Hon. Mr

Dias has thought fit to say I was the only Member who was against this Scheme. The speeches that have been made by various Electives prove that to be incorrect. It is true that there are some Electives who admit that a certain amount of work has been done by the Commissioners. I admit myself that the officers charged with the carrying out of the Scheme have done the best possible, but it is the Scheme that is at fault. The Colony is losing and is going to lose thousands of dollars. This Scheme was not initiated by Your Excellency although you have been in the Colony 10 years. It is a strange thing that with Your Excellency's knowledge of this Colony, and with your experience in other parts of His Majesty's Dominions, you did not bring it forward, nor did Sir Cecil Rodwell, but we got it from Sir Gordon Guggisberg.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think the hon. Member is wrong. I had something to do with the Scheme before Sir Gordon Guggisberg came.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: That does not alter the trend of my argument. If you did it was not laid before the Council until Sir Gordon came here, and Sir Harry Moorhouse came and wrote a lot of things. Every new Governor who comes here has something that he wants done, some little fad. Essequibo has been shamefully neglected, and by nobody more than the late Governor. I am extremely sorry, but I am not afraid to say it, that if Sir Edward Denham had been here I would have had a long list of charges to put against him in connection with Essequibo and the promises he made to me. This is the climax of it. The Commissioner is to be given less salary and is not to have any assistant. He is to go on fighting the sea and giving the people drainage and irrigation. It is impossible. Those of us who live long enough will see what a terrible drag this Scheme will be on the expenditure of this Colony.

Mr. CANNON: I said all I had to say about the Scheme in very few words yesterday. I am in agreement with the hon. Member in all he has said about the Commissioner of Essequibo being overworked, but I had hoped he would have moved that an assistant be appointed, and I would have seconded it. As he has not

done so I move that an assistant be appointed.

THE CHAIRMAN: In this District and also in the Berbice District the question of dual appointment—that is making the District Engineer Commissioner as well—has not proved a success. It was tried and in the Berbice District it was given up, and in the future it will be given up in this District. The District Commissioner provided for on this estimate will be a whole-time officer and might retain supervision of the Onderneeming School, which I think will do no harm. As regards being District Engineer or Agricultural officer, I do not think the officer who will probably succeed the Commissioner in Essequibo will be either competent to carry out the District Engineer's work or will be a trained agriculturist. The present Commissioner certainly has too much to do.

Mr. SEAFORD: Do I understand that a District Engineer will be appointed to Essequibo this year?

THE CHAIRMAN: Probably next year.

Mr. SEAFORD: There are very important works to be carried out as regards sea defences.

Major CRAIG (Director of Public Works): So far as engineering is concerned the holder of the office of District Commissioner is a trained engineer and has on that account been able to carry out the duties of a District Engineer, but with the duties of a Commissioner added he has not sufficient time to do all, and I have repeatedly asked for a whole-time District Engineer and I hope I will get one this year. I shall certainly ask for one.

Mr. SEAFORD: What about the works to be carried out? It is impossible for the Commissioner to carry them out.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: With regard to the promised support of the hon. Member for Georgetown North, of an assistant to the District Commissioner in Essequibo, I am asking for increased supervision in Essequibo, but not on the lines laid out under the District Administration. I want another Commissary and a District Engineer, and I want a man to look after the Onderneeming School.

THE CHAIRMAN: The position in regard to this District at the moment is that the present officer, who is due to retire, is being retained until such time this year when the new Governor can decide what is to be done with the District when he goes. It is obvious that he has had too much work to do and has not been able to look after the engineering work and the District work as well. I think the position is that on his retirement an officer will be appointed who will be a whole-time District Commissioner, and then the point will arise as to the District Engineer, and if desirable, somebody to look after the Onderneeming School. The time has not come to take a decision in the matter. All we are doing is to continue the salary.

Mr. SEAFORD: Government admits that it has been impossible for this officer to carry on the work. Are we still going to let him attempt it for another year?

THE CHAIRMAN: No, less than a year; until the new Governor arrives.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: I withdraw my amendment. Government has admitted that the Essequibo Coast is suffering materially under this Scheme.

Mr. WIGHT: I would like to have an answer to the Hon. Mr. Seaford's question whether Government proposes to appoint a District Engineer for Essequibo this year. I understand that a Commission has been appointed by Your Excellency to inquire into the position in Essequibo. I happen to be now very seriously interested in the Essequibo Coast, and if a District Engineer is not sent down immediately things are going to be very serious. As I said yesterday, I happen to have gone down there and seen how money has been thrown away. I am not blaming the present Director of Public Works because he is not responsible, but if Government got an independent engineer to go down there and make a report on the money that has been thrown away this Council would be very much surprised. I feel that it is in the interest of the few people left there that a District Engineer should be sent down, and I am positive that if Members would visit the Coast they would agree with me entirely. Undoubtedly, the Commissioner cannot

cope with the work. It is impossible. Government has struck off the travelling vote for the Essequibo Coast, but has given the East and West Coasts. The Essequibo Coast, which requires more supervision and more travelling, is given an inadequate sum of money. I am going to be a bug in the Government's rug until some attention is given to Essequibo.

Item passed.

NORTH WEST DISTRICT.

Item 40a—District Commissioner (\$2,400—\$120—\$3,120), \$2,640.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I was wondering whether Government would increase this item. The Commissioner of the North West District, the only man who is doing the work of a Commissioner, is getting less than the others.

Item passed.

COLONIAL DEVELOPMENT FUND SCHEMES.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Colonial Treasurer undertook to produce a statement which he hoped would so simplify matters as to enable hon. Members to understand the items better.

Mr. McDAVID (Colonial Treasurer): I have prepared a statement showing details of expenditure from the Colonial Development Fund, loans and grants. It was not possible to include it in the Estimate, so I have prepared it as an Appendix which shows all the grants and loans, with the expenditure prior to 1933, the expenditure in 1933 and 1934, and the estimate for 1935. It also shows how the total expenditure balances with the total of the grants and loans. I think if the items shown in the column for 1935 in the Appendix are put that would meet the needs of the Council.

Items passed.

Mr. McDAVID: There are certain other grants and loans of which information has been received, but which are not included in that statement. The information will be communicated as a formal Message to the Council. Meanwhile I should like to put on record that the Advisory Committee of the Colonial

Development Fund has informed Government of the following new grants and loans :—

Grant of £15,380 for a Tuberculosis Hospital, Georgetown; Grant of £3,125 for a Venereal Disease Clinic, Georgetown; Grant of £3,000 and a Loan of £3,000 for a new Market and Latrine, also a new Fish Market, New Amsterdam; a Loan of £7,000 to continue the Geological Survey in 1935; a Grant of £88 per annum towards the Colony's contribution to the Colonial Agricultural Scholarship Scheme (£79 only is required for 1935).

The information will be communicated as a formal Message, and a Resolution will be taken approving of these grants and loans. Later on they will be inserted in Supplementary Estimate.

Mr. CANNON: Is that all we are going to get?

Mr. SEAFORD: These grants and loans have been asked for by this Government in the majority of cases, and I feel that Government might consult this Council before it asks for loans and grants. The Council might be able to put up suggestions which might never occur to Government. We appreciate any grant we get, but if we are going to get £10,000 we may be able to put up suggestions whereby the money might be much better expended. Government borrows money to carry out certain works of which this Council knows absolutely nothing. Before any loan is made, however small it might be, I think the Council should be consulted.

Mr. McDAVID: I was only giving advance information. A Message will be communicated to the Council formally, giving details of the loans and grants, and the reasons why Government obtained them. It will then be for the Council, when a motion is taken, either to refuse the loans or suggest modifications to Government. With regard to the first two items, grants for a Tuberculosis Hospital and a Venereal Disease Clinic in Georgetown, they were based on a recommendation by Sir Wilfred Beveridge. I think information as regards his report was conveyed to the Council.

THE CHAIRMAN: When these loans and grants are put before the Council, if the motion is adopted the money is borrowed. No money is borrowed before.

We might ask if the Committee would give money for such an object, but it is not before the motion is adopted that the loan is taken.

Mr. SEAFORD: We may say we do not want a loan for that purpose. I think that before the Imperial Government is asked for a loan this Council should be able to suggest what that loan should be used for. I was asked by the Colonial Development Committee if I knew anything about these grants and I said I never heard about them until they had been given.

THE CHAIRMAN: That is not quite correct because we explore the position and ask whether the Colonial Development Committee would grant a certain sum for a certain object, which might be the result of something brought up in the Council. That being so, we then bring the matter to the Council and pass a motion that the money should be borrowed. If the Council does not approve of the motion the procedure would be that we would not ask for it. At the same time it is competent for any Member of the Council to move a motion or bring up some item for which money should be borrowed. Both of these loans have been obtained as the result of representations by people in this Colony.

Mr. SEAFORD: That cannot be correct. The money for the dredger has been loaned already, but that was never sanctioned by the Council. No one knows anything about it. I understand the dredger is on its way. That is a case in point.

Mr. SMELLIE: When I was in England last year I was asked a question about the dredger and I was told that the Government had only asked for £28,000 and it was going to cost £32,000. I said "Why hold it up? Let the Colony know." They said that the Government knew all about it but never applied for the other £4,000. I said I would be glad if they would communicate with the Government of this Colony and they did so. What has been done in this Colony and what information has been given to this Council I do not know. That is what I did when in England last year.

THE CHAIRMAN: It was passed by

Resolution No. 7 of April last year. Comparatively recently we were told the dredger was going to cost this extra £4,000.

Mr. SEAFORD: That is exactly my point, that £4,000 has been loaned us and we know nothing about it.

Mr. LUCKHOO: As far as the loan for the Municipality of New Amsterdam is concerned, we have already undertaken to provide £3,000 for the work during the present year. That vote would not be subject to the approval of this Council.

THE CHAIRMAN: That is Municipal money.

POST OFFICE.

Item 1 (11)—Postmaster, New Amsterdam (\$1,284 to \$2,280 by \$72), \$1,296.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move that this item be increased to \$1,428. The Postmaster, Mr. Dublin, who was removed from Suddie to New Amsterdam, is to get two increments. The matter was raised by the hon. Member for Berbice River and approved, but it was overlooked.

Item increased to \$1,428.

ROADS, RIVERS, CREEKS AND PORTAGES.

Item 12—Clearing Rivers and Creeks, \$2,200.

Major CRAIG: I move that this item be increased by \$500 for the purpose of cleaning the Akiwini creek in Essequibo, which is in a very bad state.

Item increased to \$2,700.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

Item 13—Guiana Scholarships—Allowances to Scholars, \$4,536; Expenses of examination, \$50; Passages of Scholars, \$330; Fees to Director of Colonial Scholars, \$72—\$4,988.

Major BAIN GRAY (Director of Education): It is necessary to increase this item by \$360, bringing it up to \$5,348. The increase is in connection with the expenses of the examination. A new examination is now being taken, a special examination of the University of London,

and the fees which the candidates have been paying £2.5s., will not be sufficient on this occasion. It has therefore been decided by Government that for this year at least Government will pay the additional cost of the examination which amounts to \$360.

Item increased to \$5,348.

POST OFFICE—SAVINGS BANK BRANCH.

Item 1b—1 Class II. Clerk, \$1,812.

Mr. McDAVID: The hon. Member for Central Demerara questioned the figures but I am now satisfied that they are right. The explanatory note is inaccurate. It should read "Salary at maximum of Class II. equal to \$1,620 with a Service Allowance of \$192."

Item passed.

LEGISLATURE.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I ask Your Excellency's permission to revert to the Head "Legislature," and crave your indulgence to endeavour to resuscitate an item which used to appear on these estimates but was dropped some time ago. In view of what transpired yesterday and before yesterday I wonder whether an item of \$1,000 cannot be inserted in these estimates for refreshment for this Council. (Laughter). I am doing it seriously, because I have a recollection that when we used to meet during the luncheon interval in the Committee Room we were able to discuss matters at the luncheon table and return to the Council Chamber almost certain of what we were going to do, thus saving a good deal of debate. For some reason or other a busybody on one of the newspapers kept on labouring the point, and some Members got cold feet and decided to abandon the luncheon in order to please that gentleman's whims. Members of the Council never meet to discuss matters before they come into the Council, and we have sometimes opposed things which we would not otherwise oppose. The small amount of \$1,000 would provide the possibility of our meeting during luncheon time and discussing matters which would be useful to the community. The imputation of the gentleman I referred to could not touch me at all.

Mr. BRASSINGTON: I have much

pleasure in supporting the suggestion, and I think the fact that it has come from the hon. Member for Berbice River will add great weight to it. I do not think the people of the Colony whom we represent would grudge the amount. There is no doubt that it would mean that we would be able to meet together at some time.

THE CHAIRMAN: I enjoyed the Legislative Council luncheon at which I used to preside. The only objection is that one sat from 11 o'clock until half-past one without a break, because we debated during lunch. (Laughter). I think it did serve a useful purpose when we were able to discuss points of difficulty, and I think it did hasten the work of putting through the estimates, but I do not suggest that

anything be done now. There will be a new Council elected this year and I suggest that the matter be brought up again. We have no place to have lunch in now because the room is now an office, and I do not know where it could be taken. We might be able to go across to the Ice House or somewhere else. (Laughter). I would suggest that the matter be not lost sight of, but should be brought up when the new Council is elected.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I thank Your Excellency. I may not be there to enjoy it but I am making the path smooth for those who are coming after me.

The Council resumed and adjourned until the following day at 11 o'clock.