

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Wednesday, 20th December, 1939.

The Council met at 10.30 a.m., pursuant to adjournment, His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government, the Hon. G. D. OWEN, C.M.G., President, in the Chair.

PRESENT.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary (Acting), Mr. G. C. Green, M.B.E.

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

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

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

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

The Hon. Peer Bucchus (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 the 19th of December, 1939, as printed and circulated, were confirmed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS.

SPECIAL PASSAGE ALLOWANCES FOR GOVERNMENT OFFICERS.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Mr. G. C. Green, Acting), communicated the following message :—

MESSAGE NO. 6.

Honourable Members of Legislative Council,
In view of the large increase in the cost of steamship fares as a result of the present international situation, the Council is invited to approve of the payment to Government Officers who were on leave at the outbreak of war, of a sum limited to the difference between the cost which they would normally have borne on account of their return passage, and the expenses which they actually incur in returning to the Colony; such assistance to be granted only in respect of officers and those members of their families who accompanied them on leave and return with them.

2. Members are no doubt aware that several Government officers were on board the s.s. "Simon Bolivar" when she was sunk by enemy action in November last. To those who survived the disaster the Netherlands Steamship Company has offered free passages by another of their vessels, or alternatively a refund of 50% of the passage money paid. Certain of these officials are unwilling to proceed by another Dutch ship, and the Council is asked to agree.

(a) In those cases in which the cost of the passage is normally a charge against Government, to the cost of the officer's passage by a vessel other than Dutch, being borne by Government, and

(b) In the case of officers paying their own passages, to a refund of the amount which they will have to spend on return passages, including loss on ticket for the "Simon Bolivar," over and above the pre-war cost of return passages.

G. D. OWEN,

Officer Administering the Government.
19th December, 1939.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES.

SPECIAL PASSAGE ALLOWANCES FOR
GOVERNMENT OFFICERS.

The Colonial Secretary (Acting) gave notice of the following motion :—

THAT, with reference to the Officer Administering the Government's Message No. 6 of 19th December, 1939, this Council approves of the proposals therein set out for the payment of special passage allowances to Government Officers in circumstances arising out of the War, and undertakes to provide the necessary funds.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

EXCISE DUTIES ON COCONUT PRODUCTS.

Mr. D'ANDRADE (Comptroller of Customs) : I beg to move the following motion :—

Be it Resolved.—That, in pursuance of section 20 of the Coconut Products (Control) Ordinance, 1935, as re-enacted by the Coconut Products (Control) (Amendment) Ordinance, 1939, this Council hereby fixes the following duties to be raised, levied and collected as from the date hereof on coconut products which have been manufactured in the Colony and are delivered for consumption in the Colony :—

(a) upon every gallon of deodorised coconut oil	...	\$0.12
(b) upon every 100 lbs. of lard and butter substitute	...	\$0.42

It would be remembered that the import duties on lard, which in May, 1934, had been fixed at \$2.40 under the British Preferential tariff and \$7.20 under the General tariff with the view of affording protection to lard compounds manufactured in the Colony, were reduced to 57 cents and \$1.72 respectively in January, 1939. This amendment was made in order to implement the Anglo-United States Trade Agreement of 1938 in so far as that particular item in the tariff was affected, and the rates fixed were the highest which could have been imposed without infringing the Canada-West-Indies Trade Agreement of 1925.

In August last, two Ordinances were enacted—the Customs Duties (Amendment) Ordinance, No. 4 of 1939 and the Coconut Products (Control) (Amendment) Ordinance, 1939—both of which have a bearing upon the incidence of taxation on lard and other edible fats. The former imposed high rates of duties on all margarines

other than table margarine and the latter allowed the duty on edible oils to remain at the old rate. The purpose of this amendment was to afford protection to lard products manufactured in the Colony which had to meet serious competition from the white lard which was being imported. It was feared, however, that as the result of closing the doors to the importation of white margarine, there would be imported in its place large quantities of lard. As it was not possible to reimpose the old rate of import duties on that particular product, the local industry was afforded relief by means of the removal of the Excise duties which were payable on edible oils and lard compounds. That was achieved by the enactment of the Coconut Products (Amendment) Ordinance, 1939, which repealed Section 20 of the Coconut Products (Control) Ordinance, 1935, whereby the Excise duties on edible oils and lard substitute were fixed at 12 cents per gallon and 42 cents per 100 lbs. respectively. There was also substituted a new section which provided for the imposition of Excise duties on coconut products by a resolution of this Council.

In moving the Second Reading of the Bill which was then being enacted as the Customs Duties (Amendment) Ordinance, No. 4 of 1939, to which I have already referred, I reminded hon. Members that the Government of Canada had given notice of the termination of the Canada-West Indies Trade Agreement, and stated that when the new Agreement was being negotiated efforts would be made to exclude therefrom clauses similar to those in the old Agreement which preclude us from increasing the duties on lard. I also stated that when that is done it will be necessary to review the whole situation in regard to the manufacture of those products in the Colony.

Owing to the outbreak of war, all the arrangements which were being made for the holding of the Conference at Ottawa had to be abandoned, and it seems extremely unlikely that such a Conference will be held while the War lasts. It will not be possible therefore to increase the Import duties on lard, but the same effect which was desired—the protection of the local products—will be achieved in another way, and that is by means of Im-

port Licences. The reason, therefore, for suspending the collection of these Excise duties no longer remain, and the object of this motion is to reimpose the same rates which were previously payable.

I may mention that provision is also made for the levying of a duty on butter substitute at the same rate as that on lard substitute. The reason for that is, when those duties were first levied there were only two products being manufactured—deodorised coconut oil and lard substitute—but within recent years the local factories have been manufacturing margarine on which no duty was payable. If a duty is not imposed on that, then it is very likely that a white margarine similar to that which was being imported and was competing with the local product would be made locally and the imposition of a duty on lard substitute would be of no effect because this white margarine is being largely used as lard substitute.

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

Mr. MACKAY: It is not very often that I rise from my seat to take part in any debate, but I do so on this occasion and say from the outset that I do not intend to support this motion as far as the Excise duty on deodorised coconut oil is concerned. I am quite prepared, however, to support the second part of the motion, because I am quite satisfied from the remarks made by the hon. Comptroller of Customs that there will be a certain amount of protection given to the local industry by way of Import Licences.

As regards the Excise duty on deodorised coconut oil, I am against the imposition for the reason that I do not think Government has the organisation or machinery to collect that tax. If I was satisfied that Government would be able to collect that tax from all those who should and ought to pay, I would have supported that part of the motion, but as the matter stands at present Government will not be able to collect that tax. It will fall on one concern—the Demerara Oil and Cake Mills, Ltd.—which cannot possibly compete with the sellers of deodorised oils unless it is placed on the same footing as those sellers. I happen to be a Director of the Demerara Oil

and Cake Mills, Ltd., and at a previous meeting of Council there was an honourable Member present who happened to be Chairman of the concern. I would like to point out that if this motion is passed there is every possibility of the oil mills closing down. I need hardly tell hon. Members what that would mean. It would mean the collapse of the entire Copra Ordinance, which naturally would be very detrimental indeed to the coconut industry of the Colony. I am willing to support part (b) of the motion, but not part (a).

Mr. PEER BACCHUS: I endorse all that has been said by the hon. speaker who has just taken his seat. Not many months ago we were reminded by the hon. Comptroller of Customs that it was in January of this year the Government gave some relief to the coconut industry by removing the tax on deodorised oils. I have not heard from the hon. mover of the motion that conditions have so changed since then as to justify the reimposition of the tax. Prior to the outbreak of War, the coconut industry was in no better position than it is to-day. Coconuts are being sold from anything between \$6 and \$6.50 per 1,000. Although there is no duty at present on deodorised oils, yet the manufacturer of deodorised oils cannot afford to pay more for coconuts. If this duty is reimposed then the relief deserving of the coconut industry would not be achieved. I am appealing to this Government that though we ought to raise sufficient revenue to balance our budget, during this time of stress, we should go cautiously and not try to raise revenue on an industry which cannot bear the tax, because by so doing the object would not be achieved. If the coconut industry is further taxed, I am afraid, it would be ruined.

Another point to be considered is that if the reimposition of this tax is passed it would obviously increase the cost of deodorised oils to the consumer. That, I think, is an important factor to be considered. We have been told by the hon. mover of the motion that until the Trade Agreement between the West Indies and Canada has been considered the industry will not get the benefit that it ought. It is not possible to discuss that Trade Agreement now and, I think, it is only fair

hat the reimposition of this tax should be postponed until then. The point I would like to stress is that the reimposition of this tax would ruin the industry.

I quite agree that so far as the collection of this tax is concerned Government has not the machinery to collect it and, if I may go further, those responsible for the collection of the tax complain bitterly that the Ordinance is not complete and does not afford them that facility to collect the tax as other Tax Ordinances. I sympathize with the officers who are entrusted with the collection of this tax under the Ordinance and, I think, Government will admit that this Ordinance requires revision. Appeal has been made over and again to Government for a revision of this Ordinance and, I think, we will be told again to-day that it is under consideration. If all these things are not done before the reimposition of this tax, I do not think it is fair to the industry. Government should have given the necessary assistance to the industry by making the Ordinance complete before reimposing the tax. It has led to unfair competition, because it is only the big organization who has to pay the Excise duty through this tax. We have smaller mills manufacturing deodorised oils, but they get away with the duty because the Department that is to collect the tax either has not got the sufficient staff to do so or is unable to do so. I am not excusing the Department. It will be remembered the severe criticism which was levied against that Department for neglecting to collect the tax.

Mr. SEAFORD: I was rather disappointed at the remarks of the hon. mover of the motion. First of all, I desire to know why this tax is being reimposed? Is it because Government requires more money? If that is so, I would like to know how much this tax is likely to bring in? We do not know what the amount is, and it makes any criticism somewhat difficult. I would like also to ask Government if there had been any alteration in the Regulations governing the control of deodorised oils, because I remember before I left the Colony some months ago it was claimed by Government that under the existing Regulations it is quite impossible to carry out the law. Government knew the law was being broken all over the

country and yet was not able to bring those people to account. If you are going to reimpose this Excise tax, it simply means that you are allowing or giving a benefit to those people who have in the past evaded the law in every possible way.

I hold no brief for the Demerara Oil and Cake Mills, Ltd., and have spoken to no one connected with that concern on this matter, but I was rather impressed by what the hon. Nominated Member (Mr. Mackey) said. Should it be the case that they are likely to close down, I regret to think what the consequences would be. I have always maintained in this Council and outside of it that it was the coconut grower that had most to gain by this. It is, I believe, a fact that when the Demerara Oil and Cake Mills, Ltd., started operation they gave a guarantee to Government to have a fixed purchase price for coconuts, but that affected the price of coconuts throughout the Colony. It was for that reason I agreed at the time that certain conditions and assistance should be given to them because of the benefit derived by the growers of coconuts. If they go out of existence, I do not think that anyone would deny the fact that the price of coconuts is bound to drop considerably, and it is the grower who is going to suffer most. For that reason I feel it is a mistake to reimpose this Excise tax at the present moment.

Another point, as far as I can see, is this: Government is trying to do all it can to live within its own four walls as far as possible; that is, Government is endeavouring to grow as much as possible for local consumption and to import as little as possible for local consumption. If this Excise tax is reimposed, how is it going to affect that policy? If these people, who are the only ones Government is capable of collecting this tax from, are going to close down what is going to be the result but the importation of foreign stuff to take the place of the local product. The hon. Comptroller in moving the motion said that they would be protected because now you have an import licence. I take it he meant you can prohibit the importation of these foreign lard substitutes, but I do not quite know how he would be able to tell how much lard substitutes is likely to be produced within the first six months of next year. If you are going to issue or

refuse to give import certificates, you must have a fair idea as to how much can be produced in the Colony, and there is no method of checking that.

I feel, sir, that this is the wrong time to impose Excise duties on foodstuffs produced in this Colony. We want to produce everything we possibly can. We want to encourage the grower of every foodstuff, whether it is coconut, vegetable or anything else in the line of food. We want to send as little money as possible out of the country, and I do feel that Government should be sure of its ground before launching out to reimpose Excise duties on an industry which it was thought advisable to take off, especially if there is no proper machinery for collecting the tax or there are no proper regulations in force for the carrying out of the law.

Mr. JACOB: It is not very often that I find myself in agreement with the hon. Member who has just taken his seat. I must confess that he has actually stated everything that I wanted to say. I have to sympathize in a large measure with the hon. mover of the motion. He has not been able to convince me, though he can convince Government on this matter. This motion is going to injure the same thing that Government pretends to help. Government had pretended in the past several years to help the coconut industry. I want to protest against that pretence. The coconut industry never was helped. This is a step in the wrong direction and it is going to ruin that industry. The other industry, that Government pretends it is going to help now, is going to suffer the same fate. Before I left the Colony four months ago something was brought up here about lard substitutes, and a thorough mess was made of it. It was the revision of certain Excise and Customs duties. Suddenly those duties are now to be reimposed. These changes are resulting in chaos all the time. I wonder whether Government is satisfied that it gets the best advice on Excise and Customs duties? I feel it does not. I feel that if Government really wants to impose duties and to collect additional revenue, this is not the way to do it. I feel very strongly about this matter, and I do urge on Government to withdraw this motion.

The hon. Nominated Member, Mr.

Mackey, referred to one item—deodorised coconut oil—and stated that he was opposed to the reimposition of the tax on that but was somewhat in favour of the tax on lard and butter substitutes. I think both are practically the same. They are products of coconut. I am going to ask the hon. Member to consider whether both should not go. If no further duties were to be put on deodorised coconut oil, no further duties should be put on the other two products. No reasonable arguments have been adduced to convince one to support this motion. Maybe it was because of the criticism which had been made here on the alteration of this Excise duty, and therefore it has been brought back. I do not think it is the right thing to increase the cost of living to the poor man. I think it is unfair that the established concern should be made to pay the duties while the others do not. I urge on Government to withdraw the motion, otherwise it will ruin the already partially-ruined industry and further result in an attempt to ruin another one. I cannot understand Government's policy in this direction at all, and I want to emphasize with all the force at my command that this motion should be withdrawn and Government should receive real, practical, sound advice on these local industries.

Mr. WALCOTT: Your Excellency, I am certainly going to support this motion, because I quite appreciate the explanation which the hon. Comptroller of Customs has given. Perhaps, conditions have changed in the last few weeks, but, as I said the last time this oil question was being considered here, I consider the alteration a confession of weakness on the part of Government. If I am to support this motion to-day, I would like to know that Government now has the machinery to collect all the revenue which should be collected from this deodorised coconut oil. There is no doubt, as I said on the last occasion, one tax-gatherer collected everything that should be collected in Georgetown and the surrounding districts of which he was responsible, but in the other districts nothing to speak of was collected. Government having had time to reconsider the matter should surely give some assurance of the collection of at least the majority of the Excise duties that should be paid on these articles. It seems to me all wrong

that Government should reimpose this tax unless this Council is given the assurance that revenue will benefit. If revenue benefits, then the coconut industry will benefit, but as long as oil can be manufactured illicitly then the coconut producers will not benefit. I think, it is necessary for Government to give some assurance on that point.

Nothing has improved in the way of price to the coconut producer during the last few months. Prices have remained stationary. The price of copra was reduced temporarily and then increased with the hope of increasing the return to the coconut producer, but unless you are going to collect the revenue, which is somewhere in the vicinity of \$30,000 or \$40,000 a year, then any legislation of a similar nature one way or the other is futile. One hon. Member remarked that the Regulations made under the Ordinance do not sufficiently safeguard the collection of these Excise duties. The District Commissioner in Georgetown secured several convictions, and I had it from the Crown Solicitor that prosecutions brought under the present Ordinance would be successful if they were conducted in the right way. I speak very strongly on this matter because I feel strongly for and have every sympathy with the coconut producers of the Colony, and I say Government is not playing the game with them. At the present time we need every bit of revenue we can collect, and we need to conserve all the foodstuffs we can. We further need to do that so as to save the British Government convoying ships to this Colony with supplies of food, which we ourselves can produce here. I am sorry I have to speak so strongly, but I feel the time has come when it is necessary to speak in this way in a matter of this kind.

THE PRESIDENT: Having regard to the small attendance of Unofficial Members of Council and the views expressed by the few hon. Members who are present, I propose to adjourn further discussion on this motion to a subsequent meeting of the Council.

The debate was accordingly adjourned.

MALARIAL RESEARCH INVESTIGATION.

Dr. MACLENNAN (Director of

Medical Services): I beg to move the following motion:—

THAT, with reference to the Officer Administering the Government's Message No. 2, dated 8th December, 1939, this Council accepts a free grant of £2,082 from the Colonial Development Fund towards the cost of maintaining for two years a malaria research investigation unit and requests that an expression of Council's appreciation of this gift be conveyed to the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Colonial Development Advisory Committee.

I do not wish to say very much about this matter. I have already referred at a previous session of the Council to the importance of this scheme and, I think, hon. Members are aware of the position with regard to Malaria in this country and the necessity of having research work carried out so as to enable the Colony to devise schemes for the control of Malaria in the coastal areas and also in connection with new Land Settlement Schemes and Town sites. I merely would like to say this: It is very gratifying and encouraging at a time like this, when the ordinary public health programme has to be curtailed for financial reasons, to know that we are in a position to carry out this scheme and another one mentioned in a motion to be moved subsequently. It is indeed very generous of the Colonial Development Fund Committee to provide the money in these rather trying times, and I would like to take this opportunity of expressing the thanks of Government to them and also to the Rockefeller Foundation, who have contributed to the scheme and given considerable assistance. I also desire to thank publicly the Sugar Producers' Association for having assisted us financially in this scheme, and allowed their officers to be seconded for this work. I do feel that in every way I have had considerable support from everybody concerned, and I am very glad to bring forward this motion.

Mr. CREASE (Director of Education): seconded.

Mr. LUCKHOO: I think you should record our high appreciation of this very magnanimous gift on the part of the Colonial Development Fund Committee, and also our thanks to the Sugar Producers' Association for the help they have given the Medical Department in connection with its health schemes.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion carried.

ESTABLISHMENT OF ANTI-AEDES SERVICE.

Dr. MACLENNAN: I beg to move the following motion:—

THAT, with reference to the Officer Administering the Government's Message No. 3, dated 6th December, 1939, this Council accepts a free grant of £17,685 from the Colonial Development Fund for the establishment of an Anti-aedes service and requests that an expression of Council's appreciation of this gift be conveyed to the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Colonial Development Advisory Committee.

I do not wish to go into any elaborate details, as I have already referred to this scheme on previous occasions in this Council, but I would like to say that we have with us to-day in this country an officer of the Rockefeller Foundation, who is one of their best field workers and experts, to assist in the work. I do feel that if a campaign of this sort, which is calculated to render the coastland non-vulnerable to Yellow Fever—as it is known that the Colony is to some extent vulnerable—is successful and goes on as we hope, the Coastal Belt of the Colony and the Port of Georgetown would be rendered practically non-vulnerable. That is a very important thing because an outbreak of Yellow Fever on the Coastal Belt and in the Port of Georgetown would imperil Imperial lines of communication, which should be a very serious thing for the Colony. There is no question of alarm; it is only a question of taking precautionary measures. It is absolutely essential for the success of the campaign that the wholehearted co-operation of the public be given the Health Authorities.

Mr. CREASE seconded.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion carried.

ROYALTY ON TIMBER.

Mr. WOOD (Conservator of Forests): I beg to move the following motion:—

THAT, in pursuance of section 17 of the Crown Lands Ordinance, Chapter 171, this Council hereby makes the Crown Lands (Amendment) Regulations, 1939, altering the First Schedule to the Principal Regulations with respect to the royalty on timber, as

printed in *Official Gazette Extraordinary* dated 18th December, 1939, and circulated.

When the Budget Statement was read before Council some little time ago it was foreshadowed that for certain reasons—the principal one being to raise revenue—it was intended to impose an Excise duty on sawn timber. We have been endeavouring to draft an Ordinance for some considerable time to enable that to be done, and I and the acting Commissioner of Lands and Mines had long consultations with the Law Officers of the Crown in the matter. The Law Officers themselves have spent a good deal of time, which they could have very ill-afforded, in trying to draft a satisfactory Ordinance, and the upshot of it is that it was found that it would be an extremely difficult Ordinance to draft and bring into force, as it would very definitely impose hardships on the saw-mill industry. It would involve that industry in having to take stock and do certain other things which, in a saw-mill in particular, were very difficult to do.

The necessity for the duty is really to raise \$10,000 which is about the amount of loss which would be incurred through imported lumber no longer being imported into the Colony during the present War. We have explored all the alternatives we can think of to the imposition of an Excise duty on sawn timber. I discussed the question very fully with the leading representatives of the saw-mill industry who, I am bound to say, were willing to co-operate in every way they can. The immediate suggestion they made was, that it would save great difficulty and trouble all round if instead of imposing an Excise duty, an all-round increase is made on royalty paid on timber. The drawback to that really is where the timber on private land benefits through the absence of foreign competition. At present timber on private lands would not be paying any royalty.

We also explored the avenue of taxing the saws used in saw-mills, but, attractive as that method appears to be at first sight, on working it out it would mean that hand-sawing, by which a good deal of work is done, would have to pay in taxes something like \$80 each time they bought a saw, and that

would only last about three years. Consequently we had to put that down and fall back upon increasing the royalty on timber.

The amendment which is proposed to the First Schedule of the Crown Lands Regulations is that whereas in that First Schedule the royalty on greenheart timber is three cents per cubic foot (by string measure) and on timber other than greenheart, or round wood, the specific gravity of which is more than 0.7, the royalty is two cents and on that with not more than 0.7 specific gravity it is one cent, these royalties would be increased—greenheart from three cents to four cents, timber with a specific gravity of more than 0.7 from two cents to two and a half cents, and timber with a specific gravity of not more than 0.7 from one cent to one and a half cent. per cubic foot (string measure).

I can see that there may be this objection raised. It is an objection which, if I were speaking on the other side, I would instantly raise myself. There is undoubtedly a certain amount of difficulty in collecting the whole of our royalties on timber. Some of these difficulties will always be there. To effect complete control of all timber in transit through all our rivers would involve such an increase in the protective staff of the Lands and Mines Department that it would cost more to collect the revenue than the revenue received. There is, however, no doubt that a certain proportion of these royalties, which are not paid at present and which ought to be paid, is due to the fact that the Crown Lands Regulations as regards the collection of royalty have stood still for a great many years, and the timber industry has not benefited by a revision of the Crown Lands Regulations. In regard to the collection of royalty, we believe that we can very considerably tone up our collection. I would like to say in respect of the motion I am moving that we hope and expect we would be able to come before this Council pretty soon with amendments to the Crown Lands Regulations, which would mean that the increase in royalty which we propose to-day would be more widely spread over the industry than it might be at the moment.

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

Mr. SEAFORD: I am not against the collection of this amount which apparently Government requires, but the point I would like to make is that it has been pointed out by the hon. Conservator of Forests that to-day Government is not collecting anything like the amount it should be collecting from this timber business. I am satisfied that the timber people in the Colony have no objections to assisting in the matter, and Government is perfectly right to make up the difference which will be lost on imported lumber and of which the local men will get the benefit. Before making this increase, however, Government should take steps to tighten up the Regulations, otherwise it seems to be putting a premium on dishonesty since the people who are not paying now are going to get more benefit than in the past. Although everyone in the industry is quite willing to pay, the feeling is that the Regulations should be tightened up so as to get at the men, who are avoiding payment of their dues, before this increase is brought in.

Mr. MACKEY: I find myself again in the unfortunate position of being unable to support Government's motion. I fully appreciate that it is Government's desire to raise as much revenue as possible, and if I could conscientiously support the motion I would do so. The hon. Conservator of Forests referred to a conference he had with representatives of the timber industry. I did not happen to be in the Colony at the time, but I have learnt that from the information the hon. Conservator was able to collect from the various representatives he was satisfied—and he has admitted it in Council—that a very considerable amount of revenue was lost to Government. I cannot vouch for the accuracy of it, but I was told that if Government had collected at the old rates, as provided for in the present Regulations, roughly \$42,000 more in revenue would have been obtained. Government is now asking to have those rates amended so that \$10,000 may be raised thereby. My point of view is that if Government would only bring in Regulations to get in all of what should be collected there would be no need for this increase.

On the other hand I am quite ready and willing to support the motion, if Government satisfies this Council that it

is bringing in Regulations which will enable it to collect the revenue from all those who should pay. I suggest that Government in the meanwhile should defer this motion until those Regulations have been brought in. I want it to be quite clear that I am not blaming the Lands and Mines Department at all. In fact I desire to use the expression made by the hon. Member for Western Berbice (Mr. Peer Bacchus) in an earlier debate: I fully sympathize with the Lands and Mines Department in that they are understaffed. They have not the staff to go around and collect the revenue which should be collected. I ask Government to defer this motion until this Council has had time to effect the tightening up of the Crown Lands Regulations.

Mr. JACOB: I am opposed to this motion, not exactly on the same lines as the last two speakers but on the principle involved. There should be no additional taxation on local industries, especially at the present time. I think Government would be well advised to withdraw the motion as it did with the last motion.

The PRESIDENT: I would like to correct the hon. Member. The last motion was not withdrawn, it was adjourned.

Mr. JACOB: Very well, sir. I think Government should adjourn the discussion on this motion. Here again I feel that the assistance given to local industries is going to help this Colony considerably, and I am sorry I cannot agree with the theory propounded by the hon. mover of the motion that because \$10,000 would be lost to revenue therefore \$10,000 must be collected in this way. If that is the kind of statesmanship this Government proposes to adopt, I may not wonder why this Colony is in its present state. The creation of local industries, the fostering of them, and the increased circulation of money thereby mean greater prosperity for all concerned. For the last five years since I have been taking an interest in local politics or statesmanship, the established policy in this Colony has been that the minute some thing is suggested to be manufactured here consideration is given as to how much revenue is to be obtained from that manufacture. That theory is wrong. If that were not so, I do not know how those manufacturing countries all over the world

would get along. Our trouble is that we have not sufficient industries, we do not foster them. We do not manufacture sufficient here, and we do not help the people to produce. That theory is distinctly wrong and betrays a very poor class of statesmanship. I do ask Government to postpone or adjourn the discussion on this motion. I do not think it is the right thing to do at this time. We want as much timber exported as possible. We want those interested in the industry to continue to expand it. I appeal to the hon. Conservator of Forests to endeavour to do all he can to get as much local wood put on the local market. It is a very wise thing to prevent the importation of goods. Looking at the repairs to this Council Chamber I am very disappointed to think that imported lumber—white pine—should be used on a building of this kind. I do not know what is the attitude of this Government, but I do want to stress that it is very poor statesmanship.

Mr. McDAVID (Colonial Treasurer): The hon. Statesman who has just sat down has propounded quite a new theory. Here is a case in which complete protection is being given to a local industry. We have proposed that no imported lumber should be brought into this Colony, and it therefore follows that the industry itself has an opportunity of commanding the complete local market. Is there any reason why the extra profit accruing to that industry by reason of that command of the local market should not contribute to the revenue of the Colony? I can see no reason for suggesting that such action on the part of Government is not statesmanlike. No harm is going to be done the industry, and we have to remember the industry is having an opportunity it would never have had but for this special war measure. I consider that everyone who is reasonable must agree that Government is perfectly right in trying to recover from the industry the equivalent of what it would lose in revenue by the protection given the industry. I do not agree with the theory propounded by the hon. Member.

Mr. WALCOTT: I am not rising to oppose the motion, but instead I specially wish to congratulate the hon. Conservator of Forests on the frank admission he has made in regard to the collection of revenue

from this particular industry. I have heard for some time past that a very great deal more timber has been cut in the Colony than royalty has been received for. I think that it is unfortunate that this Government should ever have had to make such an admission, but I think the franker it is the better. I agree with the hon. Colonial Treasurer when he says that on account of such legislation the industry will be making more money. That is so and, therefore, in the circumstances I do not think they should object to paying more as a temporary measure; but I would also like to hear from the hon. Conservator of Forests what amount of revenue he thinks has been lost to the Colony from timber which has been cut and on which no royalty has been paid, and secondly whether he does not think that the concession given to the Aboriginal Indians to cut timber free of royalty has not been exploited to the benefit not of the Indians but of other sources which are not deserving of it.

Mr. SEAFORD: Before the hon mover of the motion replies, I would like to ask if Government would give an assurance—

THE PRESIDENT: The hon Member has already spoken.

Mr. SEAFORD: Then I shall oppose it. I am sorry,

Mr. LUCKHOO: There is just one point I would like to emphasize in respect of this discussion, and that is the evasion of this duty. Reputable firms have to pay the full amount of duty, but there are others who get away scotch free and, as has been pointed out, that is due to want of sufficient staff to enable the collection of the proper amount for Government. If that was done there would be no necessity to add to this Excise duty, but unfortunately it is admitted that there is not a sufficient staff to go around and make the inspection and collection. I would like an effort to be made by this Department to see that timbers that are brought are properly accounted for, and that the duties to be paid on those timbers are collected. I know certain reputable firms in New Amsterdam have to pay every cent of the duty, but there is the possibility of others getting in their stuff without the payment of one cent towards the revenue of the

Colony. What we are aiming at is the tightening of the Regulations, so that everybody should bear his share of the burden rather than allowing the burden to fall only on the commercial houses, who are honest enough to make a proper account of their dealings, while others in a surreptitious manner evade payment of the duty.

Mr. DIAS: I am in agreement with those hon. Members, who have advocated that Government should take steps to strengthen the Department affected so that revenue payable to Government should not be lost, but I must confess very great disappointment at the arguments which have been adduced by certain speakers, that because Government has not collected all the revenue it should it must stop collecting altogether. That is very illogical, and is so astounding that I cannot follow it. None of those hon. Members who have spoken on the subject will be able to contend that Government has ever received 100 per cent of revenue taxable. That is not so. Somebody always gets away with it. Government Departments do want strengthening, and very often it is urged that it does not cost more to collect than the revenue is worth. It is a mistake to look at it from that point of view. One man only has to know that another has got away with it and he tries to do the same thing, and Government ultimately will have the expense of staffing the Departments properly so that what ought to be paid is collected.

I feel it is very painful to those who pay to know that others do not pay. There are lots of people in this Colony who do not pay Income Tax because they concoct all sorts of accounts and send them in. Is that a reason why Government should not collect Income Tax from everybody? As regards the suggestion that Government should strengthen the Departments, I agree with it, but I do not think that because it costs \$2,000 or \$3,000 more to collect a smaller sum Government should say: "We are abandoning this and will only collect from those honest individuals who pay." That is an exhibition of weakness which should not continue, because I fancy if it is insisted upon to get that extra sum Government would collect more than it anticipates. The best thing is to put one's house in order and find out what the result is.

Mr. PERCY C. WIGHT: I must admit that we seem so inconsistent. We are straining at a gnat and at the same time swallowing a camel. The amount of timber which escapes the payment of dues is so infinitesimal that it is not worth while talking about. If you go and employ extra officers in the districts for this purpose you would be burdening this Colony with additional expenditure annually which is not justifiable. I am going to formally move an amendment that the royalty on greenheart timber be three cents per cubic foot instead of four cents (string measure) and that on timber other than greenheart or round wood, the specific gravity of which is not more than 0.7, be two cents instead of two-and-a-half cents per foot (string measure). I do so because another hon. Member is rather anxious that he should be heard, and it is his suggestion. I feel myself it is not fair at the present moment to inflict any penalty on even those who smuggle timber into town, because the people have given up the cutting of wood and hewing of timber, which is bringing more people to Georgetown and swelling the ranks of our unemployed. The people who are out of town must cut wood in order to make a living. The little loss sustained through one individual is so small that it is not worth talking about. I appeal to hon. Members to support the amendment, and I ask that there be an open vote in this matter.

Mr. SEAFORD: I beg to second the amendment, and in doing so I would like to say that I am not opposed to Government collecting the money from the industry, but I would ask Government, if it is proposed to carry this proposal through, to give an assurance that the Regulations would be ready in the next couple of months. We have known regulations to have taken two years or longer to come out, and that was my reason for objecting to the motion. If Government gives that assurance no one would object to the motion. The second point is that in considering the Regulations I would ask the hon. mover of the original motion to consider the adoption of the method of measurement other than by string measure. It seems to me that if the other method is employed Government would get \$5,000 or \$6,000 more.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: Unfortunately I was not in my seat when certain hon.

Members spoke in Committee. I would like to ask the hon. Conservator of Forests if it is his intention to submit to Government a fixation of the price for the sale of the timber mentioned and, if so, how much that fixation would compare with the price of the imported article? There is also one point I would like to make and that is on the general question of seizures. May I ask Government that in dealing with the question of seizures to exercise a certain amount of discretion and not bind itself entirely to the letter of the law? We know that the letter of the law must be complied with, and also that everyone is supposed to be conversant with the laws of the State to which he is subjected, but there are extenuating circumstances which in themselves may not circumvent the law but give to those people engaged under it the exercise of some discretion—an opportunity of giving a wider interpretation and some relief to those persons who are in the unfortunate circumstances of finding themselves in the position where the timber has been seized. They have lost everything, and it seems that when that timber is put up for re-sale by Government that tends to glut the market and thus affect other persons who may have brought down their timber to sell.

Mr. WOOD: There have been a number of specific points raised, the principal of which, I think, I can answer fairly fully. First of all I seem to have been accused of lack of statesmanship. I was not really claiming to be a statesman at all. I have heard statesmanship defined as being a very ignoble thing for it must always consider the ultimate good of the common people. I seem to remember that yesterday I began to have a dim idea that the hon. Member is conforming to my idea of statesmanship. He eagerly assisted in \$170,000 coming out of the unbudgeted revenue of the Colony to help the poor man. Now he is blaming me for having to find some of it from an industry which is willing to pay for it in return for benefits it will be receiving in other directions.

Mr. JACOB: To a point of correction. That was not the point I made. My point is that it is unreasonable to say that because you are losing \$10,000 from revenue you must collect that amount from the same timber industry. The illustration

my hon. friend has made is not on all fours with the one I made yesterday.

Mr. WOOD: This Council has the power of voting, and no doubt the voting will show how it regards the matter between the hon. Member and myself. Perhaps not successfully I tried to make it clear when discussing the amount to be paid to revenue in royalty, that I was not advocating an increase of staff in the Lands and Mines Department. The difficulties of collection on the whole are not so much due to lack of staff as to the old regulations being very difficult to enforce under modern conditions. I think, I emphasized that if we are going to try to collect all the duty on logs which pass through the country's waterways, the increase of staff involved would unquestionably be greater than the amount of revenue collected. It is only recently that we were able to compute with any reasonable degree of accuracy what the amount of revenue was that we were losing. It was not until we were in a position to find out what the consumption of timber was at the saw-mills and compare it with the amount on which royalty was paid, that we were able to do so.

There are three sources from which the timber is supplied, viz:—(1) Private lands, (2) Private lands in inverted commas because that supply has come out of Government forests and passed through private lands, (3) the old system, which has become out-of-date, of the Aboriginal Indian permit which enables the Indians to cut timber on unlicensed Crown lands without the payment of royalty. That was a provision which was very beneficial in the old days. The Indians lived in reservations, did a little fishing and hunting for their food, and got a little money by bringing out the timber they cut. But to-day the Aboriginal Indian is a timber-worker earning wages. He does not obtain his food in the old way, and he does not get the benefit of this royalty which he has not got to pay. I think the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Walcott, asked about that. I can assure him that in any proposals put up for a change of the Regulations that question is going to be seriously dealt with. The hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Mackey, said that he had heard that Government was losing about \$40,000 in revenue per annum. I can say with certainty that it

is not as high as that, but it is extremely difficult to say exactly how high it is. We have to guess what quantity really comes from private lands, and I would put it at between \$15,000 and \$24,000.

The question of deferring this matter until the Regulations are put before Council is one that is rather difficult to agree to. The expenditure of Government goes on a war-time scale and the revenue must come along to meet it, and if we defer this matter very long we are going to have our expenditure outrunning our revenue. Although timber is not like some substances where something has to be done at once, at the same time any considerable delay would render the thing out of line.

The question was also asked as to whether we would consider abolishing string measure. I may say that the abolition of string measure is the kingpin in our programme for collecting this royalty. It is a measure of such extreme antiquity that it is only used in one place in the world and there only in regard to a special kind of timber. Apart from its use for royalty purpose in this Colony that is one of the greatest difficulties we are up against. Timber is bought and sold on customary measure. String measure is about 80 to 82 per cent. of the customary measure, but we cannot find out when a person returns the permit what the real volume of the timber is because no commercial dealers deal with string measure but have a different measurement. We have to measure ourselves to find out. This measure is the one on which royalty is assessed. String measure was designed by the devil to defeat the revenue collector. The suggested alteration of these Regulations is fairly well advanced, as we have been having discussions about it for some time. The hon. Member for Western Essequibo gave me rather a fright when he suggested that we may try and fix the price of timber and logs.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: To a point of correction. I did not say "may try"; I was asking if it was Government's intention to do so.

Mr. WOOD: I do not know what the intentions of Government are at the moment, but if I have any power to influence those intentions it would not

be tried. It is an extremely difficult thing to do, though it is done in British Columbia because there the millers and workers quietly say "I can't" and Government takes over, and only a Government Tally-Clerk is permitted to check the volume and quality of logs for sale. But we are not in a position to do that out here. I think those are all the questions which have been asked. I do not know if I have missed any points.

I am prepared to give the assurance that the acting Commissioner of Lands and Mines would submit the draft Regulations within two months. I can only say from my own experience that the Regulations we have submitted have gone through quickly, but I do know that the Law Officers who have been working considerably on this Excise tax spent late nights and Sundays seeing how to get through.

The PRESIDENT: I add my assurance that the Regulations will be dealt with as expeditiously as possible. No hon. Member has spoken on the amendment. I do not know whether the hon. mover of the amendment wishes to withdraw it.

Mr. PERCY C. WIGHT: Having moved it I will stick to it.

Question "That the words of the question stand as in the original motion" put, and agreed to.

Motion carried.

The original motion put, and agreed to.

GOVERNMENT ESSEQUEBO ESTATES
DRAINAGE.

Professor DASH (Director of Agriculture): I beg to move the following motion:—

THAT, with reference to the Officer Administering the Government's Message No. 4 dated 14th December, 1939, and in pursuance of section 11 of the Colonisation Fund Ordinance, 1937, this Council approves of the scheme for the improvement of the drainage of the Government estates on the Essequibo Coast (including certain reconditioning works) set out in Legislative Council Paper No. 28 of 1939, involving (a) a grant of \$25,000 and (b) a loan of a sum not exceeding \$5,000 from the Development Trust Fund.

I have no desire to detain the Council over this motion which is clearly set out in the Order of the Day. The position, I think, is well understood. Owing to difficulties which arose in financing the Essequibo Estates for some years now, we have had to await, as it were, the turning of the tide. With the inauguration of the Colonial Trust Fund it has been found possible, even though as a war emergency measure, to initiate a more forward policy in respect of the utilization of those properties. The value, too, of the estates should be considerably enhanced as the result of the drainage works now being undertaken on the Essequibo Coast. In view of the importance of the "Grow more food" campaign, the time appears to be opportune for the development contemplated, and the expenditure of this money should bring a fair measure of prosperity to the Essequibo Coast, where I know these proposals are very much welcome as a further step towards the expansion of the rice industry in particular.

The Council Paper which dealt with the whole subject was circulated to hon. Members, and the details of the scheme would be found therein. I do not think I need add anything further at this stage. I therefore beg to move the motion standing in my name which, I am sure, in view of all the facts of the case would be welcome to every hon. Member.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: I have very much pleasure in seconding the motion. The only matter for cavil I have against it is that it has not gone as far as the report of the Director of Public Works and Sea Defences—Legislative Council Paper No. 28 of 1939—has recommended. With Your Excellency's permission I will read portions of that Report. Paragraphs 18 and 19 of Appendix I of that Report states

On 4th November, 1938, I sent you an estimate of the cost (\$126,000) of reconditioning all main drainage and irrigation works on the Essequibo Coast. So far an expenditure of only \$10,500 has been sanctioned for the reconstruction of the Capoey Lake relief sluice, and the construction of a relief weir to the Tapacooma Lake. The former work is completed and the latter will be finished by the end of the year. The revised estimate of \$126,000 included \$16,900 for other works directly affecting the drainage and irrigation of the Government estates, i.e., strengthening and raising back dams, repair and reconstruction of kokers and intakes and the raising and

repairing of dams to the main irrigation trench, etc. I cannot guarantee that some of the structures which are in a bad state of repair may not collapse this year or next year, or that low dams may not be breached.

Although no expenditure is essential now, part or the whole of the \$16,000 will certainly have to be expended in the near future to ensure the safety of the main drainage and irrigation system.

It seems that Government has found it necessary to effect repairs to the drainage works on their properties. Would it not be asking this Council to draw the very rash presumption that the other estates on the Essequibo Coast might find themselves in a similar position? I am going to ask Government to give serious and urgent consideration to the recommendation of the hon. Director of Public Works and Sea Defences, even if it means applying the same method as Government has applied here—approach the same Fund in the same manner as Government has done in this motion which is now before Council.

Mr. JACOB: I rise to support this motion on this occasion. My only grouse is whether the amount is being beneficially and profitably spent. But seven months ago when I visited the Essequibo Coast complaints were made to me—complaints from one end of the Coast to the other—that only certain people were getting work and that was because they did certain things. That is a very serious complaint. I think Government has been advised about that. I just want to take this opportunity of stating what I heard so that there should be some record of it. I do not want to say much about it, however, because it criticizes very strongly both the Public Works and the Agricultural Departments. Apart from the rice industry—the hon. mover stated that industry would benefit—efforts should be made to have other minor industries running side by side with it, such as cattle rearing (I heard something said yesterday about breeding-centre), coconut industry and poultry industry. There is no doubt that all these things can be done together. I do urge that when rice is being considered it must not be considered separately or singly but as a complementary industry to others.

I do urge that when amounts are being spent for irrigation and drainage by the Public Works Department, Government

will take a little more interest in seeing that the amounts are beneficially and profitably spent. I have great confidence that these industries—rice, cattle, poultry and other minor industries—can be properly built up in this Colony. There is a feeling in high quarters that they will not pay, but I do not share that view. Provided the people are properly encouraged I have every confidence that these industries will do a great deal of good for the Colony. This is a step in the right direction.

Mr. CASE (Director of Public Works and Sea Defences): May I point out to the hon. Member for Western Essequibo (Mr. C. V. Wight) that this motion deals only with internal drainage. The question of main drainage is dealt with in the report of the Committee which is now under consideration by Government.

Professor DASH: I have nothing to add. I appreciate what the hon. Member for North Western District (Mr. Jacob) has said and, I think, the question of the industries of this Colony has been ventilated so frequently in this Council that there is nothing I can usefully add at this juncture.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion carried.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING RULES.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Acting): That concludes the business on the Order of the Day. There is a motion on the first schedule which, with the permission of the Council, I would like to be dealt with to-day. Therefore I move the suspension of the Standing Rules and Orders to enable me to move the motion standing in my name on the first schedule.

Mr. DIAS seconded.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion carried.

SPECIAL PASSAGE ALLOWANCES FOR
GOVERNMENT OFFICERS.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Acting): I beg to move the following motion—

THAT with reference to the Officer Administering the Government's Message No. 6 of 19th December, 1939, this Council approves of the proposals therein set out for the payment of special passage allowances to Government Officers in circumstances arising out of the War and undertakes to provide the necessary funds.

Prior to the outbreak of war there were several Government Officers who had proceeded abroad on leave and they subsequently found themselves in the unfortunate position of having to get back to the Colony at an increased cost. They had no option, and indeed there are still some officers who have not yet returned. They are not in the same category as officers who may have proceeded since the outbreak of war and know exactly what the cost of passages would be to them. Those officers were left in the position of having to come back by the best means possible. The position was considered by the Secretary of State for the Colonies not only in relation to this Colony but in relation to other Colonies.

As explained in the Message laid before Council, it has been felt that in justice to those officers they should be granted a sum limited to the difference between the cost which they would normally have borne on account of their return passages and the expenses which they actually incur in returning to the Colony. In addition to that, there is the specific case of those Government Officers who were on the ill-fated "Simon Bolivar." There were several of them, and some are unwilling to return by a Dutch boat. In this connection there is a printer's error in the Message which says: "Certain of these officials are willing to proceed by another Dutch ship." It is that they are "unwilling." The proposal is that those officers should not be forced to accept the offer made to them by the Netherlands Steamship Company, which was to the effect that if they travelled by another of the Company's boats they would have free passages. It is not considered fair that any officer should be forced to travel by another Dutch boat under existing conditions, as we all know that at present in order to

travel by a Dutch boat the officer would have to travel through the danger zone of the North Sea, thus running the gauntlet of the enemy who has no respect for anybody.

It is proposed, apart from the general principle which is set out in paragraph 1 of the Message, that in the case of those officers who were on the "Simon Bolivar" we should agree that in the case of a first appointment where the entire cost of the passage is borne by Government the passage should be provided by another boat. In that case 50 per cent. of the cost of the passage on the Dutch boat will be returned to Government, and that means Government will be paying a passage and a half to bring the official out.

It is further proposed that where officers were paying their own passages they should be refunded the amount which they would have to spend on new return passages, including the loss suffered on the tickets for the "Simon Bolivar," over and above the pre-war cost of their return passages. The word "previous" in the last line of the Message should read "pre-war." That follows generally the principle set out in paragraph 1 of the Message.

Mr. JACOB: This motion has my entire sympathy, but I think it should have gone a little further. As one who had travelled quite recently back to the Colony, and as one who had intended to travel on a Dutch ship—in fact I may have been on the "Simon Bolivar"—I can appreciate what the motion means. I think other hon. Members of Council would bear me out in what I have to say. I sympathize exceedingly with those unfortunate people who were on the ill-fated ship and with the relatives of those who have died. I think Government should do all it can to help those people.

I would like to enquire whether an officer on leave on full pay, whose case is being considered, would be given full pay as long as he remained outside the Colony through no fault of his own. I think there are some officers who have to incur additional expenses for maintenance etc., and while they are being helped by some of the Companies I think each individual case should be gone into and they be compensated. The motion has my entire support, and I trust that if

all the points raised have not been considered they would be and, if necessary, this motion would be amended to include an amount for such compensation. I do share the view of some of those officials who are in England now, that it is the best thing to travel on a British ship. Even on a British ship there is such a high tension which is better imagined than described. It is not a pleasant experience to be travelling these days, and I do not think any hon. Member will object to our doing everything possible for those officers who are on leave and find themselves in England awaiting return passages to this Colony.

Mr. MACKEY: Having opposed Government twice for the morning, it gives me great pleasure to support this motion in all sincerity. It has my whole-hearted support.

Mr. LUCKHOO: I am very grateful to Government for having introduced this motion. Berbice is hard hit in the matter as two doctors were returning for the County—one, I understand, was very seriously injured and the other not so bad. This motion will enable them to get something to meet the difference in the cost of their return passages.

As regards the point raised by the hon. Member for North Western District, as to if those Government Officers who are detained in London as the result of the unfortunate incident would be given their full pay during the enforced extended period of their leave, I think it is one that may be considered by Government. If anything can be done in the matter to relieve the situation, I think, we should be very grateful to Your Excellency for doing so.

Mr. PERCY C. WIGHT: With regard to the question asked by the hon. Member for North Western District I observe in the Message it says: "payment of a sum limited to the difference between the cost which they would normally have borne on account of their return passages and the expenses which they actually incur in returning to the Colony. . . ." It seems to my mind that this motion carries with it the expenditure incurred by any of those parties whilst in England and on the way out to the Colony. I do not know whether it is meant that way. The hon. Colonial Secretary referred to it in the same

language used in the Message. I would like that explained.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Acting): This is the second motion that it has been my privilege and honour to present to this Council at this Session, and it has been my good fortune to receive the ready response and sympathy of the Council to both. I wish to assure hon. Members that the question of extended leave to officers, who are forced to remain abroad while awaiting passage, has actually received Government's consideration. While no definite decision has been arrived at, I can assure hon. Members that the question is receiving every sympathy. I was actually on the point of making recommendation to His Excellency, which will be forwarded to him within a day or two. The motion, as it stands deals, solely with passages. The hon. Member for Georgetown Central (Mr. Percy C. Wight) was referring to the Message which dealt solely with passages, and the motion also deals entirely with passages. On the question of leave that is covered or can be covered by the general Leave Regulations. That will be a matter for His Excellency's decision.

Mr. JACOB: To a point of explanation. It is not a question of leave and passages only. What about the question of the living and incidental expenses of Government Officers due to the "Simon Bolivar" disaster?

THE PRESIDENT: That question has not arisen. What Government has now under investigation is the question of extending officers' leave on full pay instead of on half pay.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion carried.

YULETIDE GREETINGS.

THE PRESIDENT: As it is unlikely that Council will meet before the close of the year, I desire to avail myself of this opportunity to offer hon. Members my best wishes for a happy Christmas and prosperous New Year.

Mr. DIAS: Your Excellency has anticipated me. I wish on behalf of this Council to wish Your Excellency a happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year, and to state what a pleasant time we had sitting under your presidentship.

The Council adjourned *sine die*.