

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Thursday, 3rd December, 1942.

The Council met at noon, His Excellency the Governor, Sir Gordon Lethem, K.C.M.G., President, in the Chair.

PRESENT:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Hon. M. B. Laing, O.B.E., Commissioner of Local Government.

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

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

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

The Hon. J. Eleazar, (Berbice River).

The Hon. J. I. de Aguiar, (Central Demerara).

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

The Hon. Peer Bacchus, (Western Berbice).

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

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

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

The Clerk read prayers).

MINUTES.

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on the 2nd December, 1942, as printed and circulated, were confirmed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS.

MISLEADING NEWSPAPER HEADLINE.

THE PRESIDENT: I have to announce to hon. Members that if we were sitting under the new Constitution I would have to say "No quorum" and adjourn, but with that useful Official bloc I am able to continue the business.

I have a precis of the telegrams I have had from the Secretary of State for the Colonies on the sugar position which I shall ask the Clerk to circulate to hon. Members at a convenient opportunity to-day. With reference to that I would like to say one thing. The hon. Member for New Amsterdam (Mr. Woolford) advised that we should be careful not to have misrepresented what is actually happening, and thereupon I took the precaution to ask the Press to submit to me the draft of what they were going to publish. That was done, but one of the newspapers has been too quick for me, that is the *Daily Chronicle*. The draft was submitted by both newspapers — the

Daily Argosy with headlines, and the *Daily Chronicle* without headlines. The leading headline in the *Daily Chronicle*—“Sugar Production Cut Ordered by U.K. Government”—is simply not true and is misleading. There is nothing in what I said to justify that. What I did say was that the position was menacing with respect to shipping, and that we would be unable to ship all our sugar in 1943, not that there will be a cut in production. That will continue. Then I said that it will mean that we shall have to look forward to a progressive decline in the planting, and production of sugar. I did not say that a cut has been ordered here and now by the United Kingdom Government. It is merely common-sense, that if we cannot ship all our sugar we should endeavour to do something else useful with the labour, machinery and land available. But again I have to point out that headlines are sometimes misleading, and I will have to ask the Press to submit to me headlines also in future.

The business to-day is to proceed with the Estimates under Head III.—Agriculture. As regards our future business we can sit to-morrow and Wednesday and Thursday of next week. But, personally, I shall be unable to sit with the Council after Thursday of next week; I hope to be able to get through the Estimates by then. We will see how we proceed.

ESTIMATES—1943.

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, 1943, which had been laid on the table.

AGRICULTURE.

Mr. JACOB: Sir, when the Committee adjourned yesterday afternoon I was making the point that in spite of the

fact that everything was being done to increase the production of food of every kind, I could not see very much material advancement or improvement; prices of locally grown foodstuffs are very high due to scarcity, and had it not been for shipments of flour coming in fairly regularly recently the position would have been very alarming. It is not only locally grown food that is scarce but, as Your Excellency stated in your review, we have to import coffee, and I don't know if we are still importing edible oil. At one time we did export those articles. As regards cattle, I think there is still a scarcity due to the reaping of rice recently and the short drought. The price of milk has risen also. All of this tends to show that there is something definitely wrong with this Department. Year in and year out we are told that everything is being done, but during recent years things have gone from bad to worse. This Department is being advised, I think, by a Board. Looking at the personnel of that Board I am not at all impressed with it. Personally I think some of the members are there too long. Some persons believe that once they are appointed to serve on a Board they should be there for life, whether they attend the meetings or not. I do not think that is the correct view. I think the Board of Agriculture should be changed. I think that if this Board had a large majority of Elected Members, who are responsible to the people for their election to this Council and to the Executive Council, there would be greater material progress particularly in this Department. You have several members of this Board who have no responsibility to anybody. They go to the meetings when they like, sit whenever they like and do exactly what they like. Not only is it the case with this Board but other Boards also. This Board is definitely not suited to continue. It has been found to be very unsuitable to advise the Director of Agriculture as regards agriculture generally. I say these things for Your Excellency's information because I know you are very busy, and I do not know if you had the time to go into the personnel

of these Boards. It is time that the personnel of these several Boards and several Committees be gone into with the view of seeing if more useful members cannot be placed on them to advise Government.

Touching on the production of rice—I am not going to touch on the Rice Marketing Board—what is the position? Before rice was controlled, 30,000 tons of rice was exported, but this year I hardly think the exports will be more than 20,000 tons. Last year it was less than that. There must be something wrong. Rice is not being produced. In Your Excellency's review you gave us a reason. On page 9, the last paragraph, Your Excellency states:

"The acreage under rice, for the 1942 Autumn crop, shows a reduction compared with the previous year, according to early crop estimates. The shortfall is principally on the West Coast, Berbice, and is due mainly to attractive employment offering in other fields. For the 1943 Spring crop, strenuous efforts are being made to stimulate increased production on the sugar estates, especially in Berbice, where hitherto a Spring crop has not been grown."

I heard that statement made by the hon. Colonial Treasurer three years ago, and he named the estate to-day—Blairmont Estate—where they are doing all they can to increase the production of rice. I took the trouble to follow that up, and I am almost certain that there has not been a single acre of increased rice production during the last three years on that estate named by him. In fact there has been a reduction, not only on this estate but in that area. What is the cause? The area is dependent for its irrigation on the estates or, in other words, the estates are mainly responsible for the irrigation of that area. While it is true that rice cannot be planted without water, why cannot Government take a keener interest and see that the people are not dependent on the sugar estates and get some independent source of water supply for them? I have written the hon. Colonial Secretary about the West

Coast, Berbice. Recently, in view of certain statements made in high Government circles, I forwarded to Government in the original those letters I had received, so that Government could see the tenor of them and be convinced that they are not inspired or invited. What is the position? I respectfully submit in all humility that the shortfall in rice production on the West Coast, Berbice, is not mainly due to the people going to other parts of the Colony to work. I think Your Excellency has been misled in that matter. The Secretariat has several letters from people in that area pointing out that they want water, that they want an independent supply of water. They even pointed out the extreme difficulty they had in obtaining seed to plant during the last Spring Crop and, I believe, Your Excellency took personal action in the matter, and while the people were willing to pay for the seed they actually got it free. I think the people are very grateful to Your Excellency for that.

The fact is that something is definitely wrong somewhere, not only with this Department but with the people advising the Department and the people controlling several large areas in this Colony. I wish to say that we are in a very favourable position to supply the whole West Indies with rice. We can double or treble our production of rice if we do the thing in the right way. We can produce 30,000, 50,000 or 60,000 tons of rice for export within a few years if serious attempts are made to do it, but I am sorry to say serious attempts are not being made not even now, Your Excellency, to double or treble our production of rice. There is a lack of confidence somewhere. Perhaps, Your Excellency is surprised to hear that, but I move about the country—recently I have been going to various parts of the country every week-end—and I know what I am talking about. I always listen to what is told to me. I urge Government if it wants increased production of food to radically change

its system. The matter has been raised in the House of Commons. On the 24th June, 1942, certain questions were asked by Mr. David Adams and other Members of Parliament about the rice production in British Guiana and the Under-Secretary of State for the Colony replied to the effect that committees have been reorganized and everything is being done to increase the production of rice and foodstuffs. I think the situation must be faced. We have all the means of doubling or trebling our production of rice. Why is it not done? Perhaps, I am looking forward to a job to see after it. That is what I am told when I suggest anything. I will certainly do the job but for gratis. I can do the job.

A petition, dated March, 1942, and signed by 5,499 persons, was sent to Your Excellency. That petition was sponsored by the hon. Member for Essequibo River (Mr. Lee) and myself. What has happened? We have not been treated with the courtesy of a reply. Those people have asked for something, but I am sure they will not get it. Why should they? They are here to be toilers—hewers of wood and drawers of water. They are not to get a living wage. They are not to get anything substantial from the crops they plant. They must be satisfied with 2/- a day, which is not even sufficient to provide dogs' food. 5,499 persons have signed a petition asking for certain specific things and making certain specific recommendations. Your Excellency has that petition before you. I do not know what the Rice Expansion Committee is doing, but I do know that one member of that Committee is hardly ever present in the Legislature. It is in the knowledge of Government that he takes very little interest in the public welfare of the Colony, yet that Member of this Council was appointed on that Committee. The people have a suspicion as to his presence on that Committee, and it is well that Government knows about it. Day after day I come to this Legislature, but I do not see the hon.

Member who sits on my right. If this is taken as an indication of what he does on Committees and Boards, then the sooner Your Excellency revises the method of appointing persons to Committees and Boards the better it will be for all of us. As a matter of fact, I think, that hon. Member had resigned from this Legislature, but for some reason or other he is still a Member.

I am concerned with the progress and prosperity of this country, the land of my birth, the land where I live and expect to die. I want to see progress here. If I have spoken strongly it is because I feel very strongly about it. I have given all my life and efforts to the progress and development of this country. Probably Your Excellency and your advisers are suspicious as to my motives. I cannot understand why, although I have been a Member of this Council for seven years, I have not been put on any permanent Board or Committee. Why is it, may I ask? Have I not taken sufficient interest in public affairs to be able to advise this Government? Is it because I will not "cow-tow" and "hobnob" with those of Government and those who advise Government that I am not on a single Board? I did not place myself here. I have the complete confidence of my constituency, and I challenge anyone to dispute that. But I have not the confidence of certain Members of this Council, particularly those of the Executive Council, because I do not agree with their policy. If I had agreed with their policy I would have been "hail fellow well met" with them. But why should I?

My constituency is very much concerned about this Grow More Food campaign. I am satisfied they have very little confidence in what is going on. I went there a few months ago and spoke strongly to them to put more confidence in Government. The District Commissioner can tell you that I went around with him and impressed upon the people to give the administration a chance. What does all this

tend to? I know what it tends to, and I am very sorry Your Excellency has been very wrongly and badly advised on many matters. I am sorry to say that from my seat in this Legislature.

Mr. SEAFORD: I am rising for information! I was not in my seat at the opening. May I ask if we are still dealing with the Agricultural vote?

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member started the discussion on the Agricultural vote.

Mr. JACOB: I am talking about the Grow More Food campaign and other things. If my hon. friend had been here on time and he was listening he would not have interrupted. There is another matter I wish to refer to. It has been brought to my notice that for the Rice Expansion Scheme in the Mahaicony-Abary area rice mills have been purchased. I do not know if there has been any authority to purchase rice mills or even to rent rice mills. I have seen no authority anywhere. That is tackling a very big question. This Government is going to operate rice mills in the Mahaicony-Abary area. Government is going to buy padi and operate rice mills. If Government were to take over the whole rice industry, not only the marketing side of it but the milling and production, I think, it would be a very good thing. It may be the beginning of the taking over of every other industry. I am in for the nationalization of every industry of the world. Therefore I say do so, but do not begin, as you have done, with rice—with the marketing. Government has begun with marketing before producing, and now Government is going to mill before obtaining the product. For goodness sake begin by producing, then do the milling and then the marketing. You cannot mill when you have not produced. There is very little increased production of rice in the Mahaicony-Abary area. I had asked certain questions and got a reply that a census was

not taken. I ask again for the exact figures of rice acreage and quantity of production for every part of the Colony so that we can know what progress is being made. I would be glad to be advised as to what authority Government has for purchasing rice mills in the Mahaicony-Abary area, and whether it is the policy of Government to own and operate the whole rice industry from production to marketing. I would be glad to be advised on that.

Professor DASH (Director of Agriculture): Sir, there is very little that I need say as the result of the remarks made by hon. Members but, I think, I should deal first of all with the remarks of the hon. Member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar), made yesterday afternoon. I certainly appeal to the hon. Member to observe the rules of the game in the debate. As a Member of this Council I enjoy the same privileges as the hon. Member does and I can be just as ungenerous to him as he has been to me, but I am not going to follow his example because that sort of thing does not help argument. I have never questioned the hon. Member's sincerity when it comes to legal matters in this Council, and I do not think it is fair that he should question mine as regards agriculture. After all the Director of Agriculture—

Mr. ELEAZAR: To a point of correction! I never questioned the hon. Member's sincerity.

Professor DASH: I may say that a Director of Agriculture after all must be primarily concerned with facts. It will be a grave breach of confidence in an officer of my responsibility for me merely to say "Yes" to propositions when they come up just for possibly the temporary advantage of popularity, when in my own consciousness I know that the answer ought to be "No." It does seem to me that the hon. Member from time to time in this Council appears to place a low value on the mental probity of scientifically minded persons. This

much I will say in this connection, that every intelligent person who has visited this country and studied its problems has never disagreed with my main conclusions.

With regard to tobacco, I think it is generally known that it has been always a highly controversial subject as to whether this Colony can produce tobacco in commercial quantities and in competition with other colonies and countries more favourably placed. The Department of Agriculture had tried it and found that expert advice was necessary in dealing with the problems which it encountered. On my own representations to Government the Secretary of State for the Colonies approved of a scheme and provided funds for us to get the services of one of the best informed men in the British Empire on the practical side of tobacco production and curing. In that officer's reports he has indicated that the main difficulties he has met with have nothing to do with curing whatever. He has had success in curing but the hazards of climatic conditions and the soil make it unlikely to obtain crops in commercial quantities in this Colony. Occasionally we will get reasonable crops but we will not succeed year after year.

The story the hon. Member has told is one he has given two or three times in this Council, and he has been corrected that many times to my knowledge. It all points to the fact that the story has been twisted in being told from mouth to mouth like a good many other stories. It has always come about through the misuse or misunderstanding of the word "curing." I have taken the trouble to find out something more about this matter, and what has been told to me is this:

"The questioner asked the Tobacco Officer if he could help him with the curing of "Black Fat" tobacco, but actually what he wanted to know was not the curing but the processing of "Black Fat" tobacco. The officer told him that processing is a trade secret and it was not within his knowledge to give."

It has nothing to do with the curing of tobacco leaf. As I pointed out, according to the officer's findings that provides no great difficulty in this country, it is the production because of soil and climatic conditions. I hope I shall hear the last of that story. I could not follow the hon. Member in his later remarks.

Mr. ELEAZAR: To a point of explanation! The gentleman is in Barbados and it is not likely you will hear anything more about it. What is the use of pursuing it any further?

Professor DASH: From his later remarks I gather that the hon. Member is in favour of Government re-employing retired men instead of younger men as Instructors. From time to time in this Council the hon. Member has expressed himself as being against that practice, and it is surprising that he should bring it up again.

Mr. ELEAZAR: To a point of correction! I said Government should employ such men for the purpose of the Grow More Food campaign instead of apprentices. Their business is to spur on the people to increase production.

Professor DASH: We are not employing apprentices. Passing to the remarks of the hon. Member for North-Western District (Mr. Jacob) in connection with the prices of produce, I think it is an understood matter that is constantly before Members of the Legislative Council Food Production Committee, as what Your Excellency is particularly interested in is the question of relieving the consumer of the higher prices that have been prevailing. These high prices are not entirely due, in fact they are not due at all, to any shortage. The fact is we are having to substitute a number of things for articles which are not coming here any longer, and that is the reason why there will appear to be a possible shortage. There is no shortage, for all the figures indicate a considerable increased production in all lines. It is only a

question of time before prices will come down a little further. There is another point. Farmers are enabled to market their produce more orderly and they are relieved of much of the anxiety in digging out their crops and marketing them in a way which will create a glut. I am surprised to find, however, that the hon. Member who represents a farming constituency appears to resent the better prices the farmers are now getting.

Mr. JACOB: To a point of correction! I think it is very ungenerous for the hon. Director to state that I resent the high prices. I think the least said about it the better. It is wicked.

Professor DASH: The hon. Member went on to discuss the question of production and, I think, hon. Members of this Council and the general public realize what war factors mean. In this instance there has been a certain amount of labour shortage, and there is no question about it that we are handicapped in various directions—labour cost and charges of one kind and another have arisen—and there is not anything we can do about it. It is a world condition. I maintain that our figures all show that there has been a tremendous uplift in recent years in our production, and Government is trying its very best and utmost in encouraging farmers with improved facilities of marketing, guaranteed prices, and in a number of other ways. If they still do not come forward I cannot see how Government is to be blamed for it. It is the peculiarity of human nature which we cannot control.

In so far as rice is concerned, many of the points the hon. Member has brought forward here are largely his own opinion and not based on facts. The doubling and trebling of the rice crop may seem simple to him, but there is the question of milling and marketing to be considered. Those in close contact with the industry appreciate

that it is certainly our desire and wish to do everything possible to ensure that this Colony feeds the West Indies, and steps are being taken to ensure that. So far as the present rice crop is concerned, it is true and we all know the shortfall is not very great, and the reason is what Your Excellency has stated in your review. The actual crop is coming forward very well indeed and the actual production in spite of a falling off in acreage to some small extent, as far as I can see, is quite equal to, if not better than, the last Autumn crop. As far as the quality is concerned, from what I have seen of samples coming from the Rice Marketing Board it is the best I have seen in years. There is nothing further I can usefully add to what I have stated in reply to the remarks of hon. Members.

Mr. McDAVID (Colonial Treasurer): There is one point which ought not to be left unanswered, and that is the one by the hon. Member for North-Western District about the purchase of certain rice mills by the Rice Expansion Committee. In the first place I would like to say this: I will shortly lay on the table a progress report on the work and expenditure by that Committee under the terms of a resolution which was passed in August last. That is the authority. Your Excellency's Message relating to that resolution stated quite definitely that one of the principal functions of the Committee and one of the directions in which the expenditure was to be incurred was the expansion, if possible, of milling facilities in the Colony.

As regards the rice mill at Mahai-cony to which the hon. Member referred, it is a very good factory, well situated near the Railway Station. It was originally constructed by Messrs. Wieting & Richter, Ltd., but was rapidly going out of use and, therefore, the Committee thought it advisable to purchase and recondition that factory, particularly as one of the areas selected for the new works is the Mahai-cony District. That has been

done. It was purchased for \$6,000 and it has been reconditioned.

The other mill to which the hon. Member referred is a factory purchased from the hon. Mr. Peer Bacchus. That factory was in disuse and was purchased, removed and re-erected at the Mahaicony mill as a padi bond. The factory purchased from Mr. Peer Bacchus consisted of a building, engine, huller, and certain other equipment. The building has been re-erected at the site of the Mahaicony mill and the huller is there too, while the engine has been sold. The price paid for the factory is \$2,500 and the amount recovered from the sale of the engine is either \$700 or \$800.

I mention these facts now, as I have heard certain remarks here and also in the Finance Committee and I want no misapprehension in the matter. I think the hon. Member may be a little more generous in acknowledging the position of the exports of rice. The hon. Member and I had something in the nature of a Contract Bridge game in respect of our estimates of rice exports. He made a bid of 8,000 tons and later raised it to 12,000 tons. I said it would be 25,000 tons and I am glad to hear the hon. Member say he thinks it will be 20,000 tons. If the position improves it may be 22,000 tons. I was therefore 80 per cent. right and the hon. Member was 60 per cent. wrong.

Mr. PEER BACCHUS: One point I would like to refer to and that is the remark by the hon. Member for North-Western District challenging Your Excellency's statement that the reduction of the rice crop on the West Coast, Berbice, was not mainly due to the people working elsewhere. I will agree with the hon. Member that it is not mainly due to that, but it mainly contributed to the reduction of the crop on the West Coast, Berbice. For the information of this Council I may say, that so far as that area is concerned the entire area was ploughed

and seed sown, but unfortunately it was faulty seed which had been reaped from the last crop. It will be remembered that at the time of the reaping of the last crop we had a lot of rain which interfered with the germination of the seed during last year, and the people lost badly through bad germination.

The other question which the hon. Member raised about drainage and irrigation is not new to this Council. Government has admitted that the district is very badly drained and irrigated and has started such works in that district so as to improve those conditions. I only hope that those works will be continued and conditions improved. I disagree with the hon. Member when he says that the sugar estates in that area usually supply irrigation water to the farmers in that area. The estates have never supplied irrigation water to the farmers in that area. They have not sufficient irrigation water for themselves and, therefore, can at no time spare any water for the growing of rice even within their vicinity much less to distribute it over the entire area.

Mr. JACOB: To a point of correction! I never said they supply the whole of the West Coast Berbice area. Blairmont usually supplies some water to the Cotton Tree district.

Item—LIVESTOCK, \$10,000.

Mr. JACOB: I wonder if any revenue is received under this subhead, and if so how much? I am inclined to think that if this thing is done in a business-like manner the revenue ought to be received, and there ought not to be all this expenditure year after year by the Department.

Professor DASH: There is a certain amount of revenue shown by the Agricultural Department under Head IV., but what I feel is that in services of this kind we should not aim at making money out of them. I have

always felt that in this Colony we ought to make the fees for such services—stud animals and sale of improved sires of every description—as low as we possibly can, and that policy has had the approval of Government and is generally appreciated by the people who are livestock-minded up and down the country. I have taken the trouble to compare our fees with those charged in certain other Colonies and have been struck with the high rates charged. We here have never adopted that policy, certainly not during my *regimé*. The service fee for a bull is very nominal and the sale price of eggs, poultry, and other items under livestock is very much low. I think it is a mistake to aim at making revenue at the expense of development.

Mr. JACOB: What I feel is that if a larger number of these animals are kept they will pay for themselves. I do not mean that the fees for such services should be more, but that the services of expert and other advice and supervision should be paid for.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: I would like to say for the purpose of record that I regret that the Colonial Office should have thought it advisable to appoint a Livestock Officer from abroad when there is an officer here, from what everyone hears from those who come into contact with the question of livestock, who is very competent and who may have been given this post. It seems to me that in future, perhaps when this new officer arrives here, you may have the question of leave arising. Then you will have the Veterinary Officer being able to act for the Livestock Officer as he is doing now, but on the other hand when the Veterinary Officer goes on leave the Livestock Officer will not be in a position to act for him and someone else will have to be brought in to do so. It does seem regrettable that when there is a local man who can fill the post competently, according to the opinion of everyone with a knowledge of the matter, the appointment should be made outside the Colony.

Mr. JACOB: There is something about a Marketing Officer!

THE CHAIRMAN: It comes under Colonial Development and Welfare.

Mr. JACOB: I have a recollection that one of the officers of the Department went to the United States of America to study the question of Economic Marketing. If it is found desirable to appoint someone I think that the officer in the Department I have referred to should be appointed instead of someone from abroad. I do not know what is there to be marketed at the moment. We cannot supply the markets that want our goods. I think it is a step in the wrong direction, and possibly it may be a very good idea if this officer is going to advise us how to market some of our officers from here rather than our products. We want a Producing Officer rather than a Marketing Officer. We cannot supply the West Indies with all we can produce. Whatever we produce can be sold without any trouble. I do not know what we are going to gain by this appointment.

Head passed as amended.

ANALYST DEPARTMENT.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: I noticed in the *Official Gazette* of two Saturdays ago that one of the officers of the Agricultural Department has been given well merited promotion to the post of Government Analyst. I do hope that will not block the promotion of anyone who is in the Department below the line. It seems to me, as in the case of the Government Analyst who was in the Department for some years and had his promotion blocked when there was a transfer, that the 1st Assistant Analyst will have the same fate meted out to him now in that his promotion will be blocked because this officer will have to serve for another 10 or 15 years in that post. I do hope Gov-

ernment will make every endeavour in some form or other to promote this Officer elsewhere.

The CHAIRMAN: It will be borne in mind.

Head agreed to.

COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE.

Mr. JACOB: I was not present at the Finance Committee meeting when this Head was considered and I take this opportunity to record some of my comments on this Department. I am sorry to say that I do not think this Department is very well served at the present time or even for some time past. I was particularly pleased, and I think the officer himself was pleased, when the Principal Assistant Colonial Secretary was transferred. I think he has benefited by the transfer and we have benefited too by allowing him to go.

Mr. SEAFORD: I do think that is an unfair statement to make. It is most unjust for any Member of this Council to make any such allegation.

Mr. JACOB: I maintain what I have said, and Government knows my opinion on this matter. I am fully justified and privileged to make the statement. As regards the other officers of this Department I believe that at least two of them have been there for too long a time and should be transferred to other Departments. I believe from my correspondence with this Department that several officers there believe that the Colonial Secretariat belongs to them and no one should interfere or offer any suggestion. The time has come when these officers should be promoted. I am suggesting not that they should be reduced in rank or salary but that they be promoted elsewhere and that it will be better for them and for us. I would offer the most strenuous objection if any of the officers of this

Department is promoted to this vacancy. I think they have done very well up to a point and ought to be sent somewhere else, if not out of the Colony out of this Department. I do not think it is fair that officers should remain in a particular Department a long number of years, particularly when they have to do administrative work. It is definitely unfair that only a few officers should be in the Secretariat indefinitely. I have referred certain cases to this Department, one particularly resulting in great hardship to a poor individual, and what they do? An officer looks at the file, sees what had been done when the matter was raised five years ago and comes to the same decision. Nothing new is brought into it. I am referring to the case of Bowandial. His case was referred to the Commissioner of Lands and Mines and he lost, then to the Colonial Secretariat and he lost, then to Your Excellency's predecessor who referred it to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and he lost. (Laughter)- But I am glad to be able to say that after my intervention and my pointing out to the Commissioner of Lands and Mines that the whole system was wrong, the Secretariat was recently so advised by the Secretary of State and the man has got his land back. The matter was in respect of 10 acres of land in the Demerara River on which there were permanent crops and of which the holder was being dispossessed. That is not the only instance, I can point to several where the Secretariat has not acted with fairness to the people concerned.

It is time officers of the Secretariat realize that they are servants of the public and not bosses. Several Officers in the Secretariat believe that. I can refer to one case. I had a very important letter for the Colonial Secretary and sent it by one of my senior clerks who met the Principal Assistant Colonial Secretary and handed it to him. After looking at

the address he told the clerk to hand it to one of the messengers to take to the Colonial Secretary, and my clerk did so. That may be all right for the majority of Members of this Council, but I think it is grossly unfair that a letter having been handed to an officer who was standing just by the door of the Colonial Secretary's office he should refuse to take it and hand it to the addressee. I feel very strongly about it and would not have made the statement unless I had felt so. I feel perfectly satisfied in making the comment even though hon. Members feel otherwise.

Mr. AUSTIN: I would like to say a few words in connexion with what the last speaker has said. I desire to enquire whether the responsibility which Your Excellency, the Colonial Secretary and staff have to face can be properly served with the small staff working now. It seems that in these days where every little tittle-tattle is sent in a letter to the Colonial Secretary's Office by people who ought to know better and it has to be gone into something ought to be done to relieve the Colonial Secretary and the higher officers in his Department of the vast amount of wretched propaganda which is being broadcast throughout the Colony at the present time. The hon. Colonial Secretary in Finance Committee did not ask for anything extra, but I do not think that because he did not ask the Department should not be strengthened by the Legislature. I feel it is my duty to suggest that something be done in this direction to relieve the responsible Officers of the very heavy and onerous duties which they now have to undertake and do undertake in a very faithful and honest way. We have in the various Departments younger men coming along who can be and should be promoted to responsible positions in this office. I think it would be in the best interest of the public as a whole if it was felt that correspondence and other matters would be dealt

with in a quicker way than is possible at the moment. I do feel that the Colonial Secretary and his staff have a tremendous lot of hard and responsible work at the moment and it is unfair to criticize the Department under such conditions as they are working at this moment.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I did not intend to speak on this matter but having heard what the last speaker has said, I think it is fair that I should endorse every word he has said. Unlike the hon. Member for North-Western District (Mr. Jacob), I have always come to the Colonial Secretary's Office at a time when I am not wanted. I have found the Colonial Secretary on his way home with a pile of work, but yet he has remained to give me the information I want. At no time have I experienced any discourtesy or annoyance at my appearance or unwillingness to give me the information I require. I agree that the staff of the Department is very efficient and, if there is any promotion to be given, they should get that promotion where they are. Government should promote the people of the Colony because they understand the people, and very often give better service than the "birds of passage." Of course present company is always excepted (laughter).

Mr. DE AGUIAR: There is one point which struck me rather forcibly and I wish to clear the atmosphere. The hon. Member for North-Western District suggested the promotion of clerks in the Colonial Secretary's Office to another Department or elsewhere. One of my complaints in the past—I believe it is being accepted, very gradually it is true, as a matter of Government policy—is that where an officer is giving valuable service and has had experience in a Department it would be folly to transfer him to another Department. I am sure that after an officer has been for some time in the Colonial Secretariat he must have gained valuable experience. Personal-

ly I would much rather see the system of promoting officers in their own Departments improved and extended if possible.

It is true that I have not the wide experience of the Secretariat which the hon. Member for North-Western District has, and I possibly do not run there very often, either personally or by letters, but what I do know is that the Head of the Department is burdened with a lot of what the hon. Member has referred to as tittle-tattle, and I have been wondering for a long time whether it would not be found practicable to relieve him of some of those duties. Let the Colonial Secretary pass those things on to somebody else and devote his time to more serious matters of State. It is extremely difficult to define the duties of the Colonial Secretary, but under Your Excellency's guidance he may be able to leave certain matters to his assistant and to other senior officers of the Department. It must be remembered that the Colonial Secretariat is the clearing house of the Government Service. Everything goes through there, and it is also a clearing house for Members of this Council, and we should try to relieve the Colonial Secretary of some of the work which should definitely be passed on to other officers.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY : I can assure the last speaker that my assistants do relieve me of a considerable amount of work. I do not think hon. Members realize that members of the public, and also members of the Service, come back again and again if they suspect that a letter, which they have addressed to the Colonial Secretary, and which they consider to be of great importance, has not been seen by the Colonial Secretary. Only five minutes ago I was dealing with a petition to which a reply had recently been sent, but a letter has now come back requesting that I submit that petition to the Governor. That petition had already been submitted to Your Excellency and on your authority the

reply had been sent. It is more than likely that when the petitioner is told that his petition has already been laid before the Governor-in-Council he will ask that it be forwarded to the Secretary of State. The hon. Member for North-Western District (Mr. Jacob) has given a very good example of that.

The officers of my Department do relieve me as far as they possibly can and I am grateful to those Members who have said that they have been treated with courtesy by the members of my staff. I am extremely sorry to hear of one complaint that has been made. I hope I shall not be told that there are several others to which reference has not been made. The one complaint was made about an officer who has left the Colony and I am sorry that he should have been hit upon to say something about his service to the Colony. He was a very loyal and hard-working officer and I am sure if he had heard that statement he would have had some explanation to make. The hon. Member for North-Western District referred to that one incident. He has not referred to the many letters which he has sent to my house between 5 p.m. and 8 p.m., and he cannot say that one single letter has been returned. I think on two occasions I was actually walking into my gate between half-past 6 and 7 when a letter was handed to me from the hon. Member, and I have taken it up to my office in my house and dealt with it.

The hon. Member for North-Western District referred to a petition which he said went to the Secretary of State after he had taken the matter up and the request of the petitioner was granted. I hope the hon. Member will let me have the date of the letter from the Secretariat conveying that information because, speaking from memory, I think the matter is still under reference to the Secretary of State. If I am wrong I should like to correct that statement.

With regard to the transfer of officers of my Department to other Departments I am glad to say that there have been many—not senior officers, of course, because it would have been very difficult, since the outbreak of the war, to have carried on with new senior officers as well as new junior officers. Since I came here in 1939 there have been many promotions from the lower ranks. Officers get an opportunity and they take it, and I am glad to say that more than one of them has been promoted out of the Colony. If my senior officers had been removed as well it would have been extremely difficult to carry on. I have asked for a small increase of staff and I am glad that in Finance Committee Members have granted what I asked for. I should have asked for much more but the policy before you came here, sir, was to carry on as best as we could, and I cannot recollect any increase of staff since the war began. I am sure that hon. Members realize the burden thrown on the Secretariat staff owing to the war. I am very grateful that the small increase for which I have asked has been granted.

Mr. JACOB: The letter to which I referred is dated June 6 from the Colonial Secretary's Office advising the individual concerned that the Secretary of State regretted that he could not intervene on his behalf in connection with the land which he occupied. Since then I took the matter up with the Department of Lands and Mines and the man is in possession of the land again.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I think the hon. Member said that the matter was referred to the Secretary of State after he had taken it up. I would like him to recall the action taken. I know he was told that the matter had been referred to the Secretary of State.

Mr. JACOB: I have here a letter with your signature dated the 19th September, 1942, addressed to me say-

ing that the matter was receiving attention. My point is that an error was made by the Department of Lands and Mines and confirmed by the Secretariat, the Governor and the Secretary of State. After I had taken the matter up the Crown Solicitor advised the Commissioner of Lands and Mines that it would be the best thing to let the man to re-occupy the land.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The second letter is the one I have in mind, which says that the matter is receiving attention. The individual has not been removed from the land.

Mr. DE AGUIAR: My complaint is that the Colonial Secretary had to sign that letter.

Mr. JACOB: The point was that the man was removed from the land and was actually taken to the Magistrate's Court. It is a long story. The correspondence is all here. My point is that the matter was not properly dealt with by the Secretariat from the beginning.

Mr. PERCY C. WIGHT: I was rather disappointed with the Colonial Secretary's reply to the criticisms of his Department, and I am going to repeat what I have said here before. I am thoroughly satisfied that in the Colonial Secretary we have a very capable and hard-working officer, but he undertakes too much. I am asking Your Excellency's personal attention to one particular phase of the subject. I do not think the Colonial Secretary should be the Chairman of the Transport Board. That is almost a whole-time job, and I feel that the Colonial Secretary puts himself out tremendously in order to carry out those duties. I think he has said himself that it is more than one man can do to be Colonial Secretary and Chairman of the Transport Board. He is there very early in the morning and very late at night, and the Chairmanship of the Transport Board is too much to put on his shoulders. I am asking your personal attention to that matter.

I do not like to hear Heads of Departments say that they cannot do without their senior officers. I object strongly to such a remark because no man is indispensable, and he should not be kept in a position because he is useful to a particular Department. An officer should be given an opportunity for promotion to another Department. I have heard the statement made in Committee on more than one occasion and I take this opportunity to express my disagreement with it.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I do not think that a matter which has reached the Law Courts should be sent to Government at all. A man is dispossessed of his land and instead of going to the Law Courts he goes to the Colonial Secretary. The whole Government, including the Secretary of State, is then held up as being incompetent. I do not know how the hon. Member had the nerve to bring the matter before the Council and make such a fuss about it.

Mr. JACOB: I cannot understand my hon. friend. He persists in intervening in matters about which he is ill informed. I have in my possession two grants with the Governor's signature and the Government's seal. One is marked "Absolute grant of Crown land" and the other "Conditional grant of Crown land." The man was not a squatter; he was legally entitled to that land. He had lived there for several years and had permanent coffee and coconut trees on the land.

THE PRESIDENT: Before putting the question I would like to say with all the emphasis at my command that I support what has been said about and by the Colonial Secretary. I think he is carrying on at the moment in circumstances of extreme difficulty. The war emergency has brought about what amounts to a creation of quite a number of new Government Departments—Commodity Control, Rice Expansion, Food Production, Civil Defence,

expansion of the Militia and a number of financial problems—and the Colonial Secretary's Office has been carrying on without any increase of staff for a number of months, and recently without its Principal Assistant Colonial Secretary. I would like to draw the Council's attention to the fact that last year the Audit Department had a larger clerical staff than the Colonial Secretariat. We are now putting on an extra two officers, but I ask Members to consider the bulk of work touching the Colony which has to pass through the Secretariat.

Members are perfectly right in asking why should the Colonial Secretary himself have to handle a whole mass of stuff? The reason is that the public in this Colony simply forces a matter right up to the Head of a Department who has to sign everything. I referred in my speech to what I called my fan mail, which involves a bulk of correspondence, of no great importance, for the personal attention of the Governor. The reply is usually sent out that the Governor has read the document with the greatest interest but it is returned to the writer to be sent to somebody else. Sometimes it is sent to the Colonial Secretariat. That puts a considerable burden on the Colonial Secretary. Personally I blame the other Departments which give the Colonial Secretary far too much to do to consider things which the Heads of these Departments might deal with themselves. I have called attention to that more than once and I intend to follow it up.

There is also far too much posting about of correspondence between Department and Department, and I have told some of them that they must pursue matters themselves right up to the final point before they send them to the Colonial Secretariat for posting to other Departments. I had the case the other day of a comparatively simple matter which should have been dealt with in four days but took four months

instead. My own proposal is, as soon as I can possibly manage it, to bring the office of the Commissioner of Local Government into the Secretariat, except that part of his staff which deals with immigrant East Indians. At present we have correspondence going on from one end of Georgetown to another which should be handled in the principal office. As soon as I can possibly do that I hope to bring it about.

The hon. Member for North-Western District (Mr. Jacob) has referred to certain letters sent by him to the Colonial Secretary. I do not know of the particular one he referred to, but I have given personal direction that certain of his letters should not be answered. I refer to letters which are more or less in the form of a legal query "Have you ceased beating your wife—yes or no?" (laughter). This is no secret; I have told the hon. Member so himself.

I will end by expressing my appreciation of the points raised about the number of Boards on which the Colonial Secretary sits. I agree with the point raised by the hon. Member for Georgetown Central (Mr. Percy C. Wight) and I would repeat my personal appreciation of the tremendous amount of conscientious work put in by the Colonial Secretary himself. (applause).

Head VI. put and agreed to.

CUSTOMS.

Mr. McDAVID: I move that the amendments under this Head as set out in the report of the Finance Committee be approved.

Head put, and agreed to.

EDUCATION.

Mr. McDAVID: I move that the amendments set out in the report of the Finance Committee be approved.

Mr. ELEAZAR: This Department has always had and will always have my whole-hearted support. I am a great advocate of education, but while I endorse everything that is on the estimate here I still have my "doots," and I have always expressed them, as to the quality of the stuff we get for the amount we are paying. I admit the amount is not very large, but we should get better quality, and I do not know that Government is not a contributing factor to what I consider the bad quality of the results which we get. In the first place Government has undertaken, and rightly too, to staff all the schools, but year after year when a school is entitled to four teachers Government says it can only have two. What quality of work can we expect from the schools under such conditions? The present Director is certainly carrying on the policy of his immediate predecessor. That officer and I never agreed on that policy, because it seemed to me to be only one of checking expenditure so as to call it retrenchment. I do not think education is the right subject for retrenchment, but that seemed to be his pet idea and it was carried out.

Year after year examinations are held for pupil teachers at which 200 or 300 boys and girls pass. Then what is called an appointment examination is held, and 60 of the 300 are selected, but only 30 are employed, and the others go out of teaching altogether. I cannot understand that at all, and so far as I am aware no attempt has been made to remedy that state of affairs. If Government undertakes to staff the schools no school should be kept under-staffed only to save expense. The schools should have their full complement of teachers. It is absurd to expect a single teacher to teach 80 children properly in one class.

Another phase of the matter is one which is purely departmental. I do not think the Department should take up so much of the teachers' time in

trying to inculcate certain methods into the schools. I have heard teachers complain over and over that if they do not adopt the methods of teaching suggested by the officers of the Department they are given bad marks. The result is that teachers are compelled to adopt those methods although they do not agree with them. I know it was the policy of the last Director that teachers should abandon the teaching of formal grammar in the schools in favour of spoken English. A child is expected to learn to speak the English language without being taught formal grammar. Good handwriting, which was at one time considered a passport to success in life, is non-existent because copybooks have been abolished from the schools, why I cannot tell. Writing depends very much upon imitation. Those are things which have a bearing upon the quality of what is being taught in the schools. I know that the hon. Mr. Jackson does not agree with me, but it is my opinion that the handwriting in the schools has deteriorated immensely.

The West Indian Readers which are now being used in the schools on the recommendation of the Education Department have no literary merit, and I think it is high time that the Department have no literary merit, Royal Readers until we can get something better. I cannot understand the reason for the change from those classics to the West Indian Readers which should be bought by Government and burnt. They do the children no good but a tremendous amount of harm.

I observe some further provision in the estimate for additional Attendance Officers. I suppose that is due to the constant complaint by the hon. Member for North-Western District (Mr. Jacob) that so many children are out of school. If some parents prefer to send their children to work for 6d. per day rather than to school who is to be blamed for that? Government has

agreed to the idea that it should provide additional Attendance Officers to drive children into school, but it has not the school space to accommodate the children. That is an anomaly surely. The reason why children are not accepted in school until they are six years is because there is not sufficient accommodation in the schools.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am afraid I must point out that there is not a quorum present. This is another example that the Council is being maintained by that useful official *bloc*. (laughter).

(Several Official and Unofficial Members who were in the gallery then returned to the Chamber).

Mr. ELEAZAR: Your Excellency is seeing the result of your Finance Committee. Members attend the meetings of that Committee so as to avoid coming here to say what they should say. They attended those meetings very well because they could do so at their leisure, but the result is—look at the vacant chairs here. You see what it will mean when you try to help Members by shortening their work in Finance Committee.

Mr. SEAFORD: I regret that the hon. Member did not attend the meetings of the Finance Committee. It might have shortened these proceedings by an hour.

Mr. WOOD: It must be disappointing to the hon. Member to find that he can only get a quorum to listen to him when that quorum is brought forcibly into the Chamber. (laughter).

Mr. ELEAZAR: That is why I did not attend the meetings of the Committee. The hon. Mr. Austin will tell you that I told him that Members attended there in order to avoid coming to the Council. Look at the result,

The CHAIRMAN: Look at what the hon. Member has missed.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I am told by a Member here that we have never had the Governor in the chair in Finance Committee before. By its own action Government is preventing itself from getting the full benefit from what it is spending on education. There is one thing I cannot avoid saying, and that is that I see a sort of deadlock over the matter of the school buildings. In spite of the fact that the point has been raised by some high authority I do not think it is good policy to contend that the present buildings belong to the Churches and because they are private property Government should not spend money on them. I think that savours of ingratitude. The denominations have been spending money for years on their school buildings before Government thought of making contributions to their maintenance, and because Government is now asked to pay something more it says it will not repair the buildings because they are private property. I do not think it is fair. Wherever a school can be enlarged in its present condition it should be enlarged. These are some of the defects which Government should cure if it expects to get full value from what it is spending on education.

I wish to compliment those teachers who have qualified themselves. A teacher who devotes his time to study and matriculates, or gets a degree, deserves every encouragement, and the children in his school must derive some benefit from the knowledge he has acquired. I hope the achievements of those teachers will be an incentive to many others to qualify themselves. It is a matter for the Education Department and Government, but I think those teachers who have so qualified themselves without any expectation of remuneration, apart from the salaries they earn, deserve some consideration.

Mr. JACKSON: There are some people who subscribe to the statement

that "as it was in the beginning so shall it be to the end," and I am not surprised at the speech made by the hon. Member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar). I know that his desire to see the children of the Colony properly educated is as great as anyone else's, and that if it were possible to increase the Education vote by a million dollars he would be satisfied, but I think it is right to inform him that as the world advances antiquated methods are dropped and modern views are accepted and acted upon.

The hon. Member referred to the old system of having one examination for pupil teachers at the beginning of their career, and bemoaned the fact that at the present time they have to pass a second and qualifying examination before they are appointed. The present system is an improvement on the old system. For one thing it gives a larger number of children an opportunity to obtain what is called the Primary School Certificate. The old candidates examination has been abolished. At that examination only those who intended to make teaching their profession took part, but the present system gives a child who has spent a number of years in a primary school an opportunity to acquire a certificate showing the standard it attained before leaving school. I know as a matter of fact that in certain places of employment a Primary School Certificate is regarded as a necessity. Quite recently I saw an advertisement for messengers in the Postal Service, and one of the conditions was that applicants should have a Primary School Certificate. The position is that as hundreds of children obtain that certificate they cannot all be employed as pupil teachers, consequently an appointment examination has to be taken. There is nothing wrong about that, and I think it is an improvement on the old system.

The hon. Member also mentioned that teachers have complained that they are compelled to adopt certain methods of teaching which they are

not in favour of. Some teachers teach a subject like Nature Study in the form of a catechism instead of taking the children outside and giving them an opportunity to use their eyes in a proper manner. No one with any degree of thought would say that such a method should be allowed to go on unchallenged. If improved methods have any value at all then, in spite of the fact that some persons prefer to continue in the old way of doing things, they should be compelled to use advanced methods in order to produce advanced results. For one thing I am greatly satisfied that provision has been made for at least two County Inspectors, one for Berbice and the other for Essequibo. Those Inspectors will be expected in the course of their duties to put their fingers on the methods of teachers and discuss with them the best methods to be adopted in order that the best results may be achieved. I think it would be a blessing to the teachers whose vision might be enlarged.

The hon. Member mentioned also that formal grammar had been abolished in the schools by the direction of the Education Department. I remember that some time ago it was ordered in England that the teaching of formal grammar should be abolished. The idea was adopted in this Colony, but as in most cases when anything is tried out in England and is proved a failure, we take it up here and then drop it later. There were some teachers who continued to teach formal grammar because they knew that it was a necessity in this country. However, the change lasted just a few years and the Department, having found out its mistake, resorted to the old method of teaching formal grammar in the schools. I think that in itself is an indication that the hon. Member has not had an opportunity to visit the schools. His interest in the schools may be very great indeed but he has not made his presence felt there.

A great deal has been said about the West Indian Readers. There are numbers of teachers who are not enamoured of these Readers. Some time ago a Committee was formed for the purpose of producing a set of Readers for use in the schools of the Colony. I had the pleasure of sitting on that Committee which put up a scheme to Government with the probable cost of putting it into execution, but it was turned down because at that time Government had not sufficient funds to carry out the project. We thus lost an opportunity to acquire suitable Readers for primary schools in this Colony. A similar attempt was made in Trinidad and the West Indian Readers were produced. It was therefore decided by the Education Department that we should adopt them for use in the schools of this Colony. While the West Indian Readers are not perhaps all we desire, the lessons are practical and they are in a measure suitable for small children. There are illustrations and some very fine questions and answers. I think that in the absence of Readers specially adapted to this Colony the West Indian Reader is not so bad a book. I have nothing to say against the old Royal Readers. They contain very fine rhetorical passages but they are very bulky. In view of the number of subjects in the school curriculum now it is impossible to pay too much attention to reading, and it would be difficult to get through those books within a year.

With respect to the increase in the Education vote that is a thing we must expect. More children are brought into the schools and the salaries of teachers have been increased, although they have not reached a point which can be considered adequate. I compliment Government on taking the view that everything should be done for the benefit of education in the Colony.

Mr. JACOB: I notice that we are taking the whole Education vote, which

is rather a big bite to take at once. I would much prefer to take the estimates page by page. On page 12 I see no real increase, and while the estimate for 1943 appears to be very favourable I still feel that the Education Department needs more staff.

Mr. McDAVID: There is a recommendation in the report of the Finance Committee that the item 1d.—Second Inspector of Schools (\$1,920 by \$120 to \$2,400), \$1,920 be amended to read —2 County Inspectors of Schools, \$3,840, an increase of one.

Mr. JACOB: There is not sufficient supervision of the schools. I hope I am wrong and that there are brighter pupils leaving school. It would be interesting to know how many children leave the Primary Schools with School Leaving certificates. The more I speak with young people throughout the Colony, the more I am convinced that they know so little. I agree with the general remark made by the majority of Members here that the money is not properly spent on education. I wish to impress on the Government the absolute necessity of getting more Inspectors, more Attendance Officers, and that the higher officials in the Department should see that better work is done. I have always supported the Education Vote. I wish that it can be increased by another quarter-million dollars this year so that all the children of school-going age can be in school. I am, however, not surprised that certain hon. Members do not want that. I think they have grown so accustomed to the fact of keeping people ignorant, unlettered, that they think it is the better thing for the Colony and for the whole Empire. So far as I am concerned I will always advocate that every child of school-going age must go to school. I want to urge on Government that there should be sufficient staff to ensure that. Whatever the increased expenditure on page 12 may be, I would be perfectly satisfied, if proper supervision is main-

tained, that the money is well spent. I repeat that we want more Inspectors, more Attendance Officers, and better supervision in regard to the Education Department.

Turning to the next Head "Schools, Institutions and Miscellaneous," I notice that there is an appreciable increase in this vote, but that is not good enough. In fact I am a little surprised that there is not a single Hindi or Muslim Head Teacher in any part of this Colony.

Mr. JACKSON: That is not correct!

Mr. ELEAZAR: To a point of correction! The man at Kildonan is an East Indian, but I don't know whether he is a Hindu or Muslim.

Mr. JACOB: I am somewhat surprised at the hon. Members. I repeat my statement that there is not a single Hindi or Muslim Head Teacher in any of the schools in this Colony.

Mr. ELEAZAR: There are more than one East Indian Head Teacher. There is one at Albion, Mr. Babooram.

Mr. JACOB: Mr. Babooram is a Christian teacher belonging to the Canadian Mission. I wish hon. Members would understand me or make themselves understand English.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I cannot understand the hon. Member. When he says they must teach Hindi in the schools I thought he meant they must have a Hindi teacher.

Mr. JACOB: I think it is time that certain hon. Members of this Council should know the right thing. There is not a single Hindi teacher in charge of a school in the whole Colony. There is not a Muslim Head Teacher in any school in this Colony. One can quite understand this perpetuation of Christian principles. I am a Christian myself.

Mr. ELEAZAR: Are you?

Mr. JACOB : But I do appreciate the other man's point of view. You have a population of 100,000 Hindoos and about 30,000 Muslims in this Colony, and they certainly have children. It is only right and proper that they be considered. It is definitely unfair and unjust that this Department should continue with the policy of not having teachers who would have the full confidence of those people. I know of a case in which a Muslim, who is a fully-trained teacher with a First Class certificate, applied for a senior position in a Government School and was denied that appointment. I know further that a Third Class certificated teacher, who is not trained, was appointed to that position. I am not concerned with the individuals at all, but I do think it is grossly unfair that this Department should have adopted such a policy. I am referring to the Government School at Anna Regina. We have in this Colony the majority of the schools being run by the Denominations. I have no quarrel if they choose to employ Christian teachers only, but I do object with all the force at my command that Government Schools should be run like that. I wish, Sir, there will be an immediate change. I wish that this Government will continue the policy that is being preached day after day—freedom or religion.

Why should the Department of Education not encourage Indian teachers? Why should there not be teachers of all Denominations—Hindi, Muslim and Christians? It is definitely the duty of Government to do that. It is the duty of all Government Officers to perpetuate that system, if they do not then they have neglected their duty. It is a special duty imposed on them by the Statute of Westminster. If hon. Members would be a little more tolerant as regards other people of the community the better it would be for all concerned. I have had talks with the Director of Education on this matter, and I am sorry to say I have not been able to

convince him. I was particularly pleased when Your Excellency stated just now that every Department must assume its own responsibility. That is definitely a responsibility of the Director of Education, and when he has neglected that he has neglected to do his duty. When you refer matters like that to the Secretariat nothing is done. I do not say, however, that the Secretariat is to be blamed. It has been the policy when you go to the Head of a Department with a matter for him to refer you to the Secretariat. He assumes no responsibility. I am glad to hear that system is being changed.

Representations are being made as regards Vernacular Education. There had been an item in these Estimates whereby a certain sum of money was granted year after year for the teaching of the Vernaculars. The Vernaculars mean the Hindi and Urdu languages, the two main Indian languages in this Colony. The matter was done in such a slipshod manner that it was hardly of any practical use. I am going to urge on Your Excellency to continue the grant to well-organized schools for the teaching of them in the same way as French and other languages are being taught in the Higher Schools. I can see no earthly reason why Indian languages should not be taught in the schools. My hon. friends object to the Vernaculars. I think there is going to be one language in India, Hindi. Why should the children here be compelled to learn French in the Higher Schools? You have Chinese, Portuguese and other Nationals in this Colony, but let us have the Indian language taught in the schools. I would like to be informed what is the actual amount spent for teaching the Vernaculars, and I would urge that the amount be increased if it cannot be increased now. I think definite representations are being made that it be increased early next year.

I hope I have not spoken too strongly. I hope my hon. friends

would agree with me that every child in this Colony between the ages of 6 and 12 must be in some school. In some places the age is up to 14. I am hoping the age will be up to 16. I was a little bit disturbed to hear a few days ago that children of school-age are actually working. If I can be certain I can give that information in a confidential manner and a proper investigation will be made, I would certainly give it. I am not certain, if I disclose that information and a proper investigation is made, that victimization will not follow. However, I shall endeavour to pursue that matter myself and I trust the Attendance Officers will go around and do their duty. It may create a hardship among the parents of those unfortunate children, who probably may have no parents, and so something will have to be done for them. Unless we have all the children in the schools we cannot hope to have a better generation in the future. I am sorry if I am not able to convince the hon. Member for Western Essequibo (Mr. C. V. Wight), the hon. Member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar) and the hon. Member on my left (Mr. Jackson) on this policy, but I trust that I have done so in respect of other hon. Members of this Council, and that later on we will have a better educated community in this Colony.

Dr. Singh: Relative to the points raised by the hon. Member for North-Western District (Mr. Jacob), I would like to say on the question of Vernacular Education that the subject is under consideration by the British Guiana East Indian Association, the Muslim League and the Hindu Mahassaba. The question of the appointment of a Muslim teacher to the Anna Regina Government School has engaged Your Excellency's notice in a petition last Saturday, and it will be again discussed by the deputation which will be going to you next Saturday.

Mr C. V. WIGHT: I would like to ask the hon. Director of Education if

his Department has ever considered the question of establishing a Secondary School in the County of Essequibo. If not, why not?

Mr. ELEAZAR: Your Excellency, I did not wish to stop the hon. Mr. Jackson from his flight of oratory for which he is noted in this Council, otherwise I would have asked him not to state the proposition half-way so as to prove it is a fallacy. What I do say is that you get 600 children taking the qualifying examination for Pupil Teachers' Appointment, sixty are successful and thirty of them are left to go without any appointment. What is to become of the other 30? You have the vacancies but you say you can only employ 30 as you have no funds. I do not think the hon. Member has touched the question as to the West Indian Readers. He gave a half-hearted support. I am surprised that he has given that. As to the hon. Member for North-Western District (Mr. Jacob), he has taken my breath away. Why did he desert the religion of his fathers and become a Christian?

Mr. JACOB: I object to that remark.

The CHAIRMAN: I agree. It is a little too personal!

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: The hon. Member's name is not a Hindu name.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I am not given to personalities, but when the hon. Member says he is a Christian and so violently attacks the Government for not perpetuating Hinduism, something he decries himself, Your Excellency must excuse me for being personal. That is good reason why Government should perpetuate Christianity as against Hinduism and Mohammedanism, judging from the hon. Member and others who were taught in these Denominational Schools by teachers who were neither Muslims nor Hindoos. Language is a secondary subject and who wants it must pay for it. The people who want French and other languages pay for them.

The subject on which my hon. friend became very warm is the working of children in the fields. I am going to ask the hon. Member to go into the districts where that is common—I think that is common only to a certain section of the community and my hon. friend knows that section well and can be very useful to that section—and hold public meetings. The people prefer their children to work in the field rather than to be reading in school. I do not think it is the business of the Attendance Officers to go and chase the children out of the ricefields into school. The Attendance Officer visits the house where a child of school-age is living, and if he does not find the child going to any school he puts a summons on the parents and takes care to see the summons served. The parents will go to the Magistrate and say “Boss, me get too much lil picknee; me can’t mind dem.” What is the Magistrate to do? Your Excellency, in things of that kind it is for members of the particular community to do what I do in mine—go and make a row with the people for sending their children to work instead of to school. What is done here is only propaganda, and everybody knows that.

The hon. Member complains about a trained Muslim gentleman not given a school. He said he discussed it with the Director of Education, but he took care not to mention that the Director gave him a reason which would appeal to any reasonable person. But that reason fell on his ear like water on a duck’s back. I always support Education, and I have mentioned here certain things. I think we should improve the quality of the education Government is giving and paying for. The hon. Mr. Jackson distinctly said it was thought in England not to bother with formal grammar but with spoken English. The child hears nothing else, and therefore what else can he speak. It does not want a Solomon to see how absurd it is. In England where the Mother tongue is spoken, the

child hears nothing else, but my hon. friend says the same thing that applies in England can apply to British Guiana. The man was trying an experiment, but I say it is a misdirection of Education.

Mr. CREASE (Director of Education): Sir, I am in rather an unfortunate position this afternoon, because on the one hand we have an ex-schoolmaster, the hon. Member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar), and on the other side also an ex-schoolmaster, the hon. Nominated Member. Mr. Jackson. The remarks which came from the hon. Member for Berbice River have to a very large extent been answered by the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Jackson, but there are one or two points on which I would like to touch. They are rather important ones. The hon. Member for Berbice River has raised the question of staffing in Primary Schools. I would like to point out that the staffing during the past four years has been considerably improved, and every effort is being made to supply the requisite number of teachers for each school in accordance with the Regulations. This is our aim and, I think, before very long it will be reached if we continue at the same rate—to have one teacher for every forty pupils in average attendance. I thoroughly agree that it is impossible for one teacher to teach a class with 80, or 100, or even above that number, which at present obtains in certain schools, and I trust that this will shortly disappear. He also made reference—I believe it is in connection with staffing—to my following the policy of my predecessor. If that reference is in connection with staffing, I think I have answered that.

Another important point is the question of Pupil Teachers’ Appointment Examination. The hon. Member says there are about 300 candidates who take the examination every year, about 60 pass and only about 30 are employed. Then he asks what happens

to the other 270. The answer to that is that the other 270 or at least the other 240 are failures. You cannot prevent a candidate offering himself for the examination. I quite agree that out of the number of Pupil Teachers who pass every year it has not been possible to employ all of them, but with the improvement in staffing as we go along it may become more possible to absorb a greater number than we do at present. If, therefore, a certain number of those candidates who pass the examination are not appointed in the year in which they pass the examination every effort is made to appoint them or to give them first consideration in the following year. (Hear! Hear!!)

Another point the hon. Member raised is the question of discussion between teachers and Inspectors. I do not like the remark he made—"I have often heard it said I don't do this because it will get me bad marks in the examination." I am not quite clear what he means by that. What I am, however, very clear about is that during an inspection every teacher has an opportunity of discussing any point he wishes with the Inspector. As a matter of fact after the inspection is concluded a staff meeting is called of the Head Teacher and all the Assistants, and sometimes these staff meetings take up as much as an hour and a half or two hours. At such a meeting any teacher has an opportunity of bringing forward any point he wishes.

With regard to the appointment of Attendance Officers, I would like to point out that these Officers in addition to their normal duties as Attendance Officers will carry out a very important piece of work recommended in the memoranda recently submitted by the Educational Adviser to the Comptroller of Development and Welfare in the West Indies—a survey of all the school areas in the Colony in order to ascertain where children of school-age are not attending school—and it will also help us in

determining where new schools are wanted. This is work which cannot be done by the Inspectors but can be undertaken by the Attendance Officers.

Coming to the remarks of the hon. Member for North-Western District (Mr. Jacob), I thoroughly agree with him about there not being sufficient supervision of the schools by the Department. That, I hope, will be removed by the appointment of these two new Inspectors. I think I am at liberty to say here that I really want more Inspectors, but I suppose I must be thankful for what I can get. With these two additional Inspectors I feel quite confident that the supervision which the hon. Member thinks should be carried out will receive the attention it requires.

The hon. Member mentioned the non-appointment of a particular teacher at the Government School at Anna Regina. I do not recall that case, but I am quite willing to discuss it with him any time that it is convenient to him. Maybe it happened while I was engaged to a large extent in other work. The question of the teaching of Hindi and Urdu has been already referred to by the hon. Member for Demerara-Essequibo (Dr. Singh). Referring to the matter of children of school-age who are actually at work, I can assure you, Sir, that everything is being done, which can possibly be done with the Attendance Officers we have available, to see that these cases are followed up when they are reported to us. I have had quite a number of cases reported to me, and immediately the Attendance Officers followed them up and, if the reports were found to be true, the children were sent back to school. But I am not sure whether the hon. Member is referring to an old complaint of his about Pln. Farm. If that is so, I feel that the hon. Member missed a fine opportunity of impressing upon the parents the value of sending their children to school regularly and punctually.

I would like, with Your Excellency's permission, to refer to a remark which the hon. Member for the North-Western District made yesterday in his observations when speaking on Your Excellency's Speech. He used the expression—I think I am correct—that he is tired of experts coming here and advising on matters in such a way as to keep the country back. The only expert I have had to deal with is Mr. Hammond, Educational Adviser to the Comptroller of Development and Welfare in the West Indies, and if the hon. Member would only read Mr. Hammond's memoranda recently placed on the table of this Council, I feel, he would be convinced that there is no question whatever of Mr. Hammond making any effort or wanting to keep this country back because the whole of his memoranda simply bristles with advancement.

I would like to take this opportunity, Sir, of saying that a large number of the points raised this afternoon in regard to education, equipment, books etc., will be dealt with by the Committee which Government intends to appoint on the recommendation of Mr. Hammond. I feel that, it would be better to leave them for this Committee rather than to take up the time of this Council now by outlining what it is proposed to do.

Items 1 to 29 taken as a whole and passed.

Item 30 — Grant to Berbice High School for Girls, \$1,500.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I move that the amount be increased by \$1,500. That school is very deserving indeed of better consideration. It had served a very useful purpose in the past and is still serving a useful purpose. Since the Principal, Mr. Dickson, has gone there, I have visited the school and I can assure you he has ideas which are long overdue, but he cannot make bricks without straw.

Mr. CREASE: With regard to that, we have just received from the Canadian Mission Council an application for an increased grant, and that has been discussed and considered by the Education Committee and the proposals about that will shortly be placed before Government. They asked for an increased grant, but the Committee felt it would be better to work out a definite scale of salaries for the teachers so as to enable the school to carry on as a Secondary School rather than to just give this small increase and come back again for another increase.

The CHAIRMAN: It is still under discussion in the Committee?

Mr. CREASE: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: It is a certain amount for salaries and in the normal way it will go to the Executive Council first before making recommendation to the Finance Committee.

Mr. JACOB: I would like to support the remarks of the hon. Member for Berbice. It seems peculiar that the Berbice High School for Boys should get \$3,000 and the Girls' School should only receive one-half that amount. I think they should both get \$3,000. I think girls are even more important than boys.

The CHAIRMAN: Without any prejudice to the rightness of the case put to us here, I think, we need not express an opinion for or against but let it go on its own merits.

Mr. ELEAZAR: This is always the place to ask for an increase of this nature. That does not preclude the Committee from considering the question. It will not be forgotten that they have been given \$3,000. It will ensure the school commencing next year with \$3,000 instead of with \$1,500. If the increase is given Government can still consider what they are getting and give whatever more in addition it things fit

later. The increase is desirable now and later on you can take into consideration this increase that you are giving now. There is nothing to preclude you giving the addition now. I do not know if Your Excellency agrees with me.

The CHAIRMAN: I have a certain amount of personal responsibility. Before making the increase as proposed it requires my specific assent and I know nothing about it. I do not think I can be asked at short notice to support an increase just blindly like that. I think the Executive Council and I are entitled to see the details before it is approved by the Legislative Council. I think the hon. Member for Berbice River missed his opportunity by neglecting to attend the Finance Committee last week when he might have persuaded us on the spot.

Mr. ELEAZAR: The Executive Council had always been in existence when these amounts were added to or deleted in this Council in the manner it is asked to do now.

The CHAIRMAN: But the hon Member is asking me to sanction it blindly.

Mr. ELEAZAR: Certainly I must give arguments to support my proposition, and if this Council is satisfied it would say "Aye" unless Your Excellency is going to vote it out.

Mr. SEAFORD: Any Member who takes his responsibility seriously will require more than what the hon. Member has urged. No attempt has been made to tell us how many boys and girls are on roll at the school. It is very easy to get up here in this Council and move an increase, but there must be reasons given for it.

Mr. JACOB: I am glad for this opportunity to say a few words. Your Excellency will recollect that 30 years ago by an Executive action—The Swet-

tenham Circular—the girls of a certain race in this Colony were prevented from getting ordinary Primary Education until a few years ago when it was removed. Recently when the Training Centre was started Government thought it advisable that girls should go there without passing the necessary qualifying examination for admission. Here again the Education Department selected 10 girls and sent them there, but not a single girl of that particular race was included. The Canadian Mission is working largely among the Indians, and I am certain that if the desired addition is given that Mission will be able to do something more for the Indian girls who are very backward. I think that is one of the grounds for increasing the amount to \$3,000. I am, however, not pressing that the vote be carried at \$3,000. I have simply got up to support the hon. Member for Berbice River because I think the money will be very profitably spent in a direction which is most deserving. I have had an opportunity to talk with the people of the Canadian Mission about it, but I cannot recollect all the circumstances they had urged; they are, however, strongly of the opinion that the girls should be placed on the same footing as the boys,

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I think the attitude taken is the correct one and merits our sympathetic consideration, and certainly we should give it. Speaking for most Members and myself who have a responsibility in the matter, we want to know more about it before actually putting it on the Budget.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I would have been surprised if the hon. Member for North-Western District had sat down and not opposed something for Education. The hon. Member has been here for all these years and only now he has become wise that a proposition of this nature should be put to a Committee first before coming to this Council.

The CHAIRMAN: I must rule that this requires my sanction and I am not prepared to let it go forward without considering it in Executive Council. We will consider it as soon as we can, and I promise to give every consideration to the points raised.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I deplore hon. Members getting up and making you believe I am getting you to do something extraordinary.

Item passed.

SECONDARY SCHOOL FOR ESSEQUEBO.

Item 34—Scholarships to Secondary School, \$11,034.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: May I ask if the hon. Director of Education is considering the question of a Secondary School for Essequibo?

Mr. CREASE: I have thought around it, and I am afraid that is all I can say.

The CHAIRMAN: A Junior Secondary School?

Mr. CREASE: Yes, Sir.

BISHOP'S HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS.

Item 31—Grant to Bishop's High School for Girls, \$4,000.

Mr. McDAVID (Colonial Treasurer): If the Resolution dealing with this school is passed this vote will not be used.

Head passed as amended.

LABOUR DEPARTMENT.

Mr. SEAFORD: I regret I was not in the Colony when this matter was discussed. I do not profess to know the

duties of a Labour Adviser in this Colony. When the Estimates went up last year I then said I trust it would not go to the astronomical heights to which it went in Jamaica, but I see, Sir, it has gone up about 80 per cent. this year. I would like to see "Labour and Industrial Adviser". I am not in a position to say much on the subject. I am only drawing Government's attention to it. I wonder whether it is necessary to have District Labour Advisers. I see there are to be five additional Assistant Labour Advisers. It seems to me that we are going ahead rather quickly with this Department. I understand the Labour Adviser has come here to instruct the Labour Unions how to put their house in order. I do not, however, wish to press the subject.

The CHAIRMAN: We had a very full talk on the details in Finance Committee.

Mr. JACOB: I wish to make some general comments on this Labour Department. This Department has my support 100 per cent., if it is not going to continue to mark time. I have had a few discussions with the Commissioner of Labour and I have had an opportunity to say something in Select Committee, but I want to place certain comments on record for future reference. I have in my hand a copy of the Labour Bulletin of the Labour Department of the United Provinces of India, which has the sanction of the United Provinces Government. I would like to pass it on to Your Excellency for your perusal of it, particularly page 38. This book—the January, 1941, issue — is worth its weight in gold. I wish to goodness the Officers of this Department will copy from pages 38 to 43 and do some of the work that is going on in India at the present time under the Head "Government and Labour Welfare in the United Provinces." It is fairly lengthy and includes every social activity connected with Labour which is inarticulate and

illiterate. I say that particularly because the labour on the sugar plantations in this Colony can be classified with the people of that place. There you have Government Labour Officers working in co-operation with outsiders. The report states:

“For the first time in 1937—38 the Government voted Rs. 10,000 for what is called Labour Welfare Work, which was increased to Rs. 20,000 in the Budget for the year 1938—38. During the financial year 1939—40 the allotment was further increased to Rs. 30,000. The increased allotment has been utilised in opening additional Welfare Centres and in increasing welfare activities.”

It must be appreciated that Labour of a certain kind in this Colony will have to be educated as to their responsibilities. They had not been educated in the past. Nine out of every ten can hardly read or write, and every one of them cannot write a proper letter. In the United Provinces of India it is the duty of the Labour Officer to direct them in such direction and to do this:

“The Welfare staff render various types of services which though minor yet go a long way in establishing good relations such as the restoration of lost children, care of the aged and infirm, writing of petitions, etc.”

I wish the Government here, the Labour Department and Labour Officers would be sympathetic towards that class of labour. I want this Government, the Labour Officers and the Labour Department to be very sympathetic towards that class of Labour, and then we will have greater production, harmony and peace throughout the Colony. See what they do in India! They go around and establish Welfare Centres, equipping them with a dispensary, reading rooms and library, refreshment room, gymnasium, games room, co-operative stores and a children's clinic. Women are employed to go around and teach the people to knit and sew, and Lady Health Visitors to advise the people in ordinary cleanliness and healthy living. It is not going

to be denied here by those responsible for the control of Labour on the sugar estates that this is absolutely necessary work on all the sugar estates in this Colony. I do not want to say some of the things I have seen over a long number of years and continue to see up to last Sunday. I shall have an opportunity, I hope, of taking some of the Officers of this Department to several places and show them for their own benefit. It may be done at my own expense, as I do not wish to put Government to any expense in the matter. It may cause them some worry, some work but not any money. I will be perfectly satisfied to do that. The report further states:

“Newspapers are read out to the illiterate workers. News in the vernacular are also broadcast to the workers from the radios installed at the Centres and from Cinemas once or twice a month, educating the workers as to what is going on not only in India but other places. Lectures are arranged from time to time on special subjects of special interest to workers such as Hygiene, Sanitation, Dietetics, Trade Unionism, Factory Legislation, etc. They are taught not to drink too much but to lead temperate lives. If the Labour Department adopted that policy and educated the labouring class of people it would be doing a very useful service not only to this Colony but to humanity as a whole.”

As regards item (b)—Deputy Commissioner of Labour—I observe that in the Ordinance the post is described as Assistant to the Commissioner of Labour. I would much prefer that the title be changed to conform to the Ordinance. I also notice that three Inspectors of Labour and three Assistant Inspectors are to be appointed, and that there are five vacancies. I trust that suitable persons will be selected, officers who will be able to win the confidence of the working people. I suggest that one of the Inspectors should be a female and I hope that such an appointment will not be opposed by the large employers of labour. I have no one in mind — no candidate for any of those jobs. I hope

that the type of Inspectors appointed in the past will not be appointed in the future. It is special work requiring special knowledge, and Inspectors of Labour should have the confidence of the people.

I wish the Department every success. I have no doubt that the Commissioner of Labour is a conscientious and efficient officer. I trust, therefore, that the other officers who will be appointed will be able to serve not only the employers but the employees who, in most cases, are unlettered.

Mr. WOOD (Conservator of Forests): The hon Member has compared the United Provinces of India with this Colony in regard to the scale on which labour welfare work is carried on. He has given us a definitely glowing picture of free cinemas, education of the labourers, and all that is being done. I understood him to say that the latest allotment by the Government of India for labour welfare work was 30,000 rupees, roughly \$10,000. He also informed us that the number of labourers to be dealt with in this Colony is at least 50,000. I would not pretend for one moment to have such an intimate knowledge of East Indians as the hon. Member has, but he doubtless knows the proverb "In Delhi the streets are paved with gold but Delhi is a very long way." It is on the edge of the United Provinces, but just half the edge of them. When we start to compare what they are doing in the United Provinces, quoting the report they have made about themselves (I have written a few myself) I think it is reasonable to bring these wild statements into some sort of focus with what we are doing here. We have it from the hon. Member that the Labour Department here, whose total vote is \$13,890, has some 50,000 labourers to deal with.

Mr. JACOB: The hon. Member is looking at the wrong column and I think everything he has been saying is wrong.

Mr. WOOD: I must thank the hon. Member for pointing out that it is 36,973 as compared with \$10,000 in the United Provinces. He also said that the Labour Department would have at least 50,000 labourers to deal with.

Mr. JACOB: I stated that the 30,000 rupees was for labour welfare work in the United Provinces of India. It is not the total vote for the Labour Department.

Mr. WOOD: I will now try to bring the 30,000 rupees allotted to the United Provinces into some sort of focus with what is or can be allotted here, and to show that in actual fact we are not so very far behind the United Provinces. I have no doubt that the hon. Member will interrupt me again when I say that he said that the local Labour Department had at least 50,000 labourers to deal with, but I have written the figures down. The United Provinces of India, which is almost the most fertile part of the Ganges plain, has 42 districts. The last one in which I served had a population of two million. The total population of the Provinces is 48 millions of whom 94 per cent. are illiterate. The test of literacy is that a man can sign his name, so that for those 48 million people and the number of free cinemas they can afford to provide out of those 30,000 rupees the number of queues must be definitely long at each performance.

I only wanted to make this point because it seemed to me that the hon. member was trying to make out, or at least asking us to infer that what we are doing here is so very little compared with what they are doing in India, and I felt it might be some help to the Council if I explained what is being done in India and the extent to which it is being done. It is spread over a population at least greater than that of England and Scotland, so that the provision of 30,000 rupees for the work which is being done there is not quite as large as it seems when you

put it against the background of that population. On that comparison it seems to me that the allotment that is being made here is not quite so small as it might seem if we take the comparison made by the hon. Member of its face value.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think the hon. Member was really asking for similar sympathetic treatment for this Department.

Mr. JACOB: I said that that sum of money was being spent on labour welfare work. My friend has compared it with the total vote.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think we appreciate the hon. Member's principal point.

Mr. SEAFORD: I welcome the remark made by the hon. Member about the sugar estates. I hope Government will undertake the work which the sugar estates are now doing for labour welfare. It is a very considerable increase on 30,000 rupees, and if the hon. Member can persuade Government to relieve the sugar estates of it it would be most considerate action on his part, and I would like to thank him for it.

Mr. ELEAZAR: There has been so much clamouring for this Department by certain people who seem to know as much about it as I do—and I know nothing—that I am almost inclined to suggest to Government to give it a trial. We start off with new Departments and burden the taxpayers, then we complain that taxation is so high. We ask for a thing and when we get it we find that we do not want it at all. We started with a Commissioner of Labour and then we give him a Deputy. Where are we going to end with the number of new appointments we are making? I have seen so many new offices created since I have been in this Council that it is astounding. We are piling on the cost of administration all the time.

I do not think the labourer in this country, whether East Indian or African, is the same as the labourer in India or Africa, but supposing he is the same, he gets twopence per day there and cannot afford to go to the cinema. What about it, then, if the Government of India provides him with a free cinema? The Department is already created and appointments are already made or to be made very soon, therefore all I can do is to warn Government that it has created another Department with deputies and assistants before it is started, and it does not know for what it will want a Deputy and three or four assistants.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: I do not know whether I understood the remarks of the hon. Member for North-Western District to mean that this Department should establish a sub-Department for the purpose of social welfare. If that is the intention of the hon. Member then perhaps we will find this vote increasing considerably, and most of the organizations which carry on social welfare work in the Colony will be greatly relieved. I suggest that Government should define very clearly the nature of the work this Department is supposed to be doing or is expected to do.

THE CHAIRMAN: I will now call on the Commissioner of Labour to reply to the points which have been raised.

Mr. FRASER (Commissioner of Labour): I find it difficult to say very much. It is my first experience of meeting such an august body as this, and while the Commissioner has received advice from every quarter he has been asked to define his job, a job which has not, strictly speaking, been defined to him, hon. Members will, I am sure, appreciate my difficulty. I do appreciate this, however, that the estimate makes provision for quite a considerable staff, but I suggest to Members that they should bear in mind that last year provision was

made for a Commissioner, a Deputy Commissioner, three Inspectors of Labour, and one or two clerks. The addition this year is nothing more than provision for a training grade for Inspectors of Labour and the necessary clerical assistance. That is the sum total of the addition made to what was passed last year.

Great play has been made with the necessity of educating the workers in this Colony. If I may say so without any intention of being in the least bit disrespectful, I think the employers in this Colony also require some degree of education, and if that is also to be done I consider that the Department of Labour has quite a big job in hand. We are going to have quite a bit of difficulty in finding people who will satisfy the hon. Member for North-Western District (Mr. Jacob) particularly, as to their competency, ability and activity in the performance of their duties. I suggest to hon. Members that it will be necessary to have a training grade for Inspectors of Labour. Provision is made in the Ordinance for such appointments and I am taking advantage of that.

I can only assure hon. Members that, as a Scotsman, I abhor unnecessary expenditure, and I shall certainly endeavour to carry that policy into the conduct of my Department, but I do feel that I must be given sufficient staff to cover this very big Colony. When I entered the Chamber the hon. Member for Georgetown North (Mr. Seaford) was referring to the estimates of the Trinidad Department of Labour. I would just refer hon. Members to the relative sizes of the two Colonies. The question of population is extremely important, but if officers are to travel it will take very much longer to do so in this Colony than in Trinidad. I do not think there is anything else I can add. No points have been put to me specifically and no motion has been moved.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think the feeling of the Council is that we agreed last year to embark on this new venture and set up a Labour Department, and having come to that decision, which was a wise one, we should start it properly and under circumstances which would give it a fair chance to get ahead and see what it could do. Whilst I appreciate the remarks of the hon. Member for Georgetown North (Mr. Seaford) who referred to the astronomical rise in the cost of working the Labour Department in Jamaica, I must point out that we are not in easy sight of that figure at the moment, and we are going to give the Department every chance of a decent start in 1943.

LANDS AND MINES.

Mr. JACOB: I said what I wanted to say in Finance Committee, but I think it is necessary that some of the remarks I made there should be placed on record. I am sorry to say that I do not think this Department is serving the purpose it is intended to serve. I have received many, and I think Government is aware of the fact that numerous complaints have been made as regards the granting of applications for grazing facilities. I believe the method is bad and that the Regulations should be changed. Apart from that there are defects which should be remedied.

For instance I will cite a particular case. I have the correspondence here. An individual on the East Bank who owned front lands applied for permission to plant rice in the second and extra depths. He made several applications to the Department of Lands and Mines only to be put off from time to time. Then he deliberately planted an acre and a half more than he should have planted on his land. A surveyor was promptly sent up and after a great deal of trouble the man received a Permission, No. 669/41. He paid the rental of \$3 on July 9, 1941, for illegally planting rice there. He was advised to make a writ-

ten application again to the Colonial Secretariat for the land, because the Department of Lands and Mines informed him that the Secretariat had instructed them not to give those lands out. He wrote the Colonial Secretary on November 18, 1941, asking for permission to cultivate rice on all the available frontlands, and received a reply dated December 5 stating that the matter was receiving consideration. He returned to the Department of Lands and Mines, pointing out that the time had expired and said he wanted some of the land for planting. He was told to make application for 15 acres. He wanted the whole lot and wrote an application on May 16, 1942, but he received a reply giving him permission to occupy 15 acres. A letter was then written to the Department of Lands and Mines offering to pay for a survey of the additional area. The whole of that area could have been planted and reaped at the last Autumn crop, but it was not planted because of the restriction imposed by the Colonial Secretariat, the Department of Lands and Mines, and maybe by other interests. The man persisted and wrote several letters, with the result that at long last he has now been granted permission to plant the whole area at the back of his estate. Over 100 acres of rice could have been planted, but as a result of Government's methods the rice was not planted this year.

The people at Craig village, next to Pln. Diamond, had the same difficulty. They have been approaching me for a number of years, and at long last they too have been granted permission to cultivate rice at the rear of their village. So far that is all right, but I have information from all parts of the Colony about the difficulties experienced by rice farmers. It has taken me a considerable time to get certain particulars and to advise the people what to do to obviate those difficulties which Government puts in the way of cultivators. We have been able to solve those difficulties to some extent on the East Bank, but we have

definitely been unable to solve them on the West Bank of Demerara, at the Canals Polder, and on the East and West Coasts of Demerara.

Only a few days ago people asked me to advise them how they could get Crown lands at the rear of their estates on the East Coast extending from Turkeyen to Buxten. Those lands may need drainage facilities after a time, but they are prepared to take the risk. I believe that the lands are held under licence of occupancy by several persons who are holding them up. To bring the matter to a head the Ratepayers' Association of Triumph and Beterverwagting approached the District Commissioner at Enmore and made application for the lands, but they were told that their application would have to be sent to some gentleman on the East Coast. I do not want to call his name, but it appears that if he approves the application will be granted. The point I wish to stress is that the District Commissioner told the farmers that their application for land would have to be sent to a particular source for approval. I have a suspicion that such applications are always sent by the Secretariat to some source for approval.

On the West Coast of Berbice there is the same difficulty, and there is a suit for libel pending. The same thing applies to the Essequibo and Corentyne Coasts. Is that the way to encourage increased production of food and the rearing of cattle? Aren't those difficulties known to every responsible officer of this Government? I have endeavoured during the last two or three years to bring them forcibly to the notice of the officers of Government. The Commissioner of Lands and Mines has been extremely courteous whenever I approached him, but he objected to certain things being done on instructions received. In the case I referred to this morning I suggested going to the Crown Solicitor for a decision, but we were unable to get a decision there.

I appeal to Government that everything should be done to facilitate the production of every kind of food. I do not think Your Excellency has had this matter put to you in this light. The plain fact remains that cultivators of rice and other foodstuffs and cattle farmers are definitely and deliberately hindered by certain officers of Government up to the present time.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I always find myself in difficulty when I have to follow the hon. Member. He does not do things as I do them. He somehow believes every word he is told by those people, and very often they do not disclose the true facts.

Mr. JACOB: I see and hear and I inspect.

Mr. ELEAZAR: I also see and hear, but I see just the opposite. It is true that there is a lot of trouble about these Crown lands but the Department of Lands and Mines is very often in a position of bewilderment as indicated in a case recently before the Court. There is a class of individual who would go to the Department of Lands and Mines and rent a whole area in his name although the second depth is held by some other person, and sometimes he tells the Department that he is doing so on behalf of other people who hold the second depth. I think what is required is an amendment of the Crown Lands Regulations. Those Regulations have been in operation since 1905 and I think they require amendments here and there. A person who holds the front lands should certainly have first claim to the second depth, but if he chooses to allow it to remain unoccupied and Government gives it to somebody else he cannot complain. On the other hand a man who holds the first depth should be given the opportunity to obtain the quantity of land he is entitled to in the second depth so long as he pays for it. If the Regulations were amended and cases were sent direct to the Commissioner with the

true facts I do not think all this trouble would arise. Difficulties arise as the result of the cunning of some people.

I have a grave charge against Government with respect to other Crown lands rented for the bleeding of balata and such substances. Balata grants have been held by certain people in the Colony for many years, and when balata was no longer needed they gave up those lands nominally so as to avoid having to pay rent, but as soon as anybody else makes application for these lands and it is advertised the previous holders make application for the same lands and in most cases they get them. In that way the small man is kept out. Not very long ago certain persons were sent to this Colony to find out whether there was a substance which could be used for making chewing gum. There is a tree known locally as the "cow tree" which yields a milky substance and is found growing amongst the balata trees. These gentlemen who hold balata grants are permitted to bleed balata and like substances, so that the small man who wants to bleed the "cow trees" is again kept out. These things should be enquired into.

The Regulations should also be amended to provide for cases mentioned by the hon. Member for North-Western District (Mr. Jacob). If a person is found growing crops on Crown lands he should invariably be given an opportunity to legalize it. They are not often given that opportunity. For instance a man is given a permit to send out a certain number of logs. Very often his permit does not reach the Department by the time the logs come down. The Ranger seizes the logs and sells them to the highest bidder, and the owner gets nothing for his labour. That was the experience of a woman in Berbice for whom I pleaded without success. I think the Regulations should be amended so as to provide that where

logs are brought down without a permit the person involved should be made to pay double the cost of the permit or something of that kind. When the Regulations were made in 1905 possibly conditions were very different and people were in the habit of going on Crown lands and cutting wood without paying royalty. I hardly think a man would bring down logs valued about \$50, and to avoid paying royalty to the extent of a few dollars would run the risk of losing everything. If a man is found bringing logs down without a permit some opportunity should be given him to put himself in order. He should not be deprived of the fruits of his labour entirely.

Mr. PEER BACCHUS: In the light of experience gained I do not think the Regulations are serving any useful purpose. The cattle and rice industries are going hand-in-hand, and in the discretion of the Commissioner of Lands and Mines "A" is given permission to plant rice on one lot of land, "B" to graze cattle on the adjoining lot and "C" to cultivate agricultural products on the next lot of land. The result is that there is endless litigation between the parties. It is almost impossible to obtain barbed wire at this time and cultivators are suffering a distinct hardship. The areas should be divided, and it should be decided whether the second depth should be used for agricultural purposes and the third depth for cattle grazing, or *vice versa*.

Applications for permission to occupy Crown lands are unduly delayed because of the duplication of duties. I happen to know in some cases it takes months to grant applications because files have to be sent by the District Commissioners to Georgetown and back again. I think the present system can be improved, but the first step is to amend the Regulations. I hope that early consideration will be

given to this matter because it is hampering the campaign to increase production of food.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am very much concerned about what I have seen. We want a considerable shaking up of our Regulations. Personally I have not the time to go into it but I have in mind the introduction of measures to expedite the granting of applications. I will now call upon the Commissioner of Lands and Mines to reply to the points raised by hon. Members.

Mr. F. R. H. GREEN (Commissioner of Lands and Mines): With reference to the remarks of the hon. Member for North-Western District (Mr. Jacob) I think he must realize that my Department must depend on the advice and policy which is dictated by other Departments. For instance, if an application comes in for a piece of land in the backdam which is in the neighbourhood of a drainage area I must be guided by the advice of the Drainage Board, therefore the granting or refusing of that application does not rest with me. Sometimes the decision rests with the Drainage Board, sometimes with the Director of Agriculture, the District Commissioner, and sometimes the Conservator of Forests. In cases where hardship is created, if the applicants would come and see me or the District Commissioner I am sure they would always be looked into.

The hon. Member quoted one such case which I happen to remember, and that is the case of the land at the back of New Hope. What happened in that case was that when the original application was made the policy of Government at that time was not to issue any titles for land in areas where it was believed that agriculture would not be profitable, and at the same time the Drainage and Irrigation Board who were in control of the drainage of Craig did not want anybody behind there, for what reason I do not know. Since the

Grow More Food Campaign was inaugurated it was decided that in cases such as those it would be better to allow people to go to those places if the conditions were not too bad, with the result that the individual in question was granted permission.

The question of balata was raised by the hon. Member for Berbice River (Mr. Eleazar). That is a matter in which I am entirely dependent on the advice of the Conservator of Forests, and I think it would be better if he replied to the points raised on that subject.

The hon. Member also referred to the question of illegal occupation of land. In cases where a person might shy some rice on land illegally we always treat them leniently. Since I have been here I do not know of a single case in which we have actually seized a person's crop or anything of that kind. We legalize the occupation and order the person to leave the land. In the case of illegal timber cutting the position is quite different. We have a great deal of trouble in such cases. It is exceedingly difficult to keep a check on the royalty, and we found at one time that the amount of evasion was actually more than the amount of royalty collected. The Conservator of Forests went around the sawmills and made enquiries as to the amount of wood they were handling, and the result was really quite alarming. We have tightened up considerably on the timber cutting and it may be that in certain cases hardships are created, but in those cases if the persons would apply to me or to the District Commissioners they would receive a sympathetic hearing.

The question of cattle grazing and rice planting has been receiving the attention of the Department of Agriculture for some time, and I have to submit all applications to the Director of Agriculture for his approval before I submit them to Government

for approval. I therefore think it would be better if the Director of Agriculture would address the Council on this matter, because I am entirely dependent on the advice I get from him and the District Commissioners.

As regards the point made about files being sent from one Department to another I can say that an effort is being made to cut it down, but it is very difficult to do anything about it because, if we get an application for a piece of land at the backdam for agricultural purposes and it is in the neighbourhood of a drainage area, we must first have the opinion of the District Commissioner and then forward it to the Director of Agriculture, and as it is within a drainage area I must send it to the Drainage Board. All that takes time. The Drainage Board only meets once a month and the Director of Agriculture is often out of town.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: Does the Attorney-General ever go into these matters at all?

Mr. GREEN: Usually I do not take these matters to the Attorney-General for legal advice, because I have the Crown Solicitor conveniently next door to my office and I drop in and see him and he helps me out. I think it might be possible to get over the difficulty by trying to establish a definite policy for certain areas and also to get authority to issue certain titles without reference to so many Departments.

Hon. Members have suggested that it is necessary to amend the Regulations. I agree with them, but at the present moment I am very chary of amending any laws at all unless it is absolutely necessary, because the Law Officers are so hard pressed with work that they are unable to give the amount of time necessary for a lengthy discussion of the points involved. Therefore, if there is any legal matter.

that I feel can be left over for the time being I leave it over, but I would certainly go into the question of amending the Regulations if Members think the amendments are absolutely necessary. I think I have covered the points raised by hon. Members.

THE PRESIDENT: I am much obliged to the Commissioner. I am sure what he has said has ventilated many of the points raised.

The Council resumed and adjourned until the following day at noon.