

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL****FRIDAY, 20th DECEMBER, 1946**

The Council met at 1.30 p.m., His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government, Mr. W. L. Heape, C.M.G., President, in the Chair.

**PRESENT :**

The President, His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government, Mr. W. L. Heape, C.M.G.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Mr. D. J. Parkinson (acting).

The Hon. the Attorney-General, Mr. E. M. Duke (acting).

The Hon. the Colonial Treasurer, Mr. W. O. Fraser (acting).

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

The Hon. C. V. Wight (Western Essequibo).  
The Hon. J. I. de Aguiar (Central Demerara).

The Hon. H. N. Critchlow (Nominated).

The Hon. J. B. Singh, O.B.E. (Demerara-Essequibo).

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

The Hon. Peer Bacchus (Western Berbice).

The Hon. H. C. Humphrys, K.C. (Eastern Demerara).

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

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

The Hon. T. Lee (Essequibo River).

The Hon. V. Roth (Nominated).

The Hon. C. P. Ferreira (Berbice River).

The Hon. T. T. Thompson (Nominated).

\* The Hon. W. J. Raatgever (Nominated).

The Hon. G. A. C. Farnum (Nominated).

The Hon. J. A. Veerasawmy (Nominated).

Is The Clerk read prayers.

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Thursday, the 19th December, 1946, as printed and circulated, were taken as read and confirmed.

**ANNOUNCEMENT****ORDER OF BUSINESS**

The PRESIDENT : I do not know if Members will agree, but Government would like to take item No. 5 on the Order Paper first. It deals with the Warehousing Charges Regulations, 1946, and is not controversial. I would like the hon. the Colonial Treasurer to explain and then, if Members agree, we would take it first on the Order of the Day.

**ORDER OF THE DAY****WAREHOUSING CHARGES REGULATIONS, 1946**

The PRESIDENT : Will Members agree to take Item No. 5 first ?

Mr. ROTH : It is not before us.

The CLERK OF COUNCIL (in reply to H.E.) : It was circulated since last Thursday.

The PRESIDENT : The Treasurer will explain. I want to take it first as the result of a report of a Committee of the Executive Council to the effect that it will bring in revenue. I do not believe it is controversial.

The COLONIAL TREASURER (Mr. Fraser, acting) : The charges show very small increases.

The PRESIDENT : Let the Colonial Treasurer explain and then Members can decide whether they will approve of them this afternoon.

The COLONIAL TREASURER : Hon. Members of Council, may I explain that the draft Regulations were made under the Customs Ordinance, Chapter 33, in respect of the rates and charges for warehousing. As a result of the report of a Committee which was appointed, comprising the Comptroller of Customs, Mr. de Aguiar, Mr. Raatgever and the Colonial Treasurer, to revise the rates and charges for merchandise sent to the Colonial Bonded

Warehouse, these Regulations have been submitted. The storage rates in the Tax Ordinance were introduced in 1892 and not revised since. The warehousing charges were introduced in 1911 and, but for one slight amendment, were not revised since. The result of that is, they are very much out of date. In going into the matter the Committee has endeavoured to put up a schedule of rates which will cover all the expenses of warehousing, including a small amount to cover capital and depreciation charges, maintenance, taxes and rates, so that these charges will fully meet the cost of operating the Colonial Bonded Warehouse. If all the recommendations in respect of rum sold for exportation—and such rum pay a preference of only one-half the storage rates—are accepted that rum would pay the full storage rates. The other feature of the recommendations is that the warehousing charges which are now levied as a percentage of the duty payable on goods and which vary, should be substituted by fixed rates.

The actual increase suggested here is on high duty articles like tobacco, rum and spirits. Those charges are rather small. The other charges bear a fair increase in warehousing of merchandise goods other than those high duty goods. The Committee recommends that importers should provide storage space for those kinds of goods and if they expect them to go into the Colonial Bonded Warehouse they should pay the full storage rate, and that is about all the Regulations pretend to do. I do not think the actual amount involved in the increased duties will exceed or be more than \$8,000 to \$10,000 per annum.

Mr. KING : The rates mentioned against each package are for how long a period ?

Mr. de AGUIAR : Per month.

Mr. KING : It is not so stated in these Regulations. I have just glanced through them.

Mr. de AGUIAR : They should say so.

Mr. HUMPHRYS : I think that if "per month" is mentioned against each of these figures it would do.

**THE COLONIAL TREASURER :** I think what is required is that after the word "Rates" the words "per month" be inserted.

Mr. KING : I suggest that it should read "Rates per month or any portion of a month".

Mr. de AGUIAR : "Or part thereof".

Mr. LEE : May I enquire in respect of Regulation 4 if that means the appointment of a new Clerk in the Government Service ?

**THE COLONIAL TREASURER :** The answer is "No".

With the Council's consent the **COLONIAL TREASURER** moved the following motion :—

"That this Council approves of the Warehousing Charges Regulations, 1946".

Mr. de AGUIAR seconded.

Motion unanimously adopted with the following amendment :—

"The insertion in Regulation 2 — Schedule — after the word "Rates" of the words "per month or part thereof".

#### ESTIMATES, 1947

#### COUNCIL IN COMMITTEE

The Council resolved itself into Committee and resumed consideration of the Estimates of Expenditure for 1947.

#### COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE — PUBLICITY BUREAU

**THE CHAIRMAN :** I said that with your permission I would like the Publicity Officer to explain how he would be able to carry on with the reduction of \$4,000 you have put up. If any Members would like to speak before he does they can do so.

Mr. WOOLFORD : I am, as hon. Members are aware, the Chairman of the Advisory Committee of this Department—one of the new Committees which have been constituted to supervise the internal

policy and administration of Government Departments. We have had one meeting and the members of that Committee are the hon. Member for Western Berbice (Mr. Peer Bacchus) the hon. Member for Central Demerara (Mr. de Aguiar), the hon. Member for Essequibo River (Mr. Lee), the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Thompson, and myself. I wish to crave the indulgence of hon. Members whilst I explain, personally, the idea of the creation of this Department, how far it has served the public as distinct from the Government and whether the Department as an institution of Government should continue. I am an old citizen of Georgetown. In my daily life I have had complaints, as you have had complaints, that it was difficult from time to time to secure information from various Government Departments, and it has also been made quite a feature in the debates in this Council from time to time. When I say "Council" I refer also to past Legislatures. The policy of Government is unknown until we meet in this Council and there has never been, except within recent years, either in this Colony or elsewhere, such opportunities given to members of the public, including ourselves, to know what Government's policy is and upon what reasons that policy is based and to be informed generally. The Members of this Council, after all, meet here to make decisions and we expect from Government's expenditure the results of the policy adopted. I hope Members will not think I am lecturing them.

I am in very great sympathy with the idea of reducing expenditure. I have attended 90 per cent. of the meetings of this Council and I would like Members to determine what is the policy in relation to this Department. It is very easy to say reduce expenditure by \$4,000, but in doing so you have to consider how the application of the pruning knife to that part of the body to which you are going to apply the cut will affect the body as a whole. If you look at your Estimates you would find there are in this Department three Officers who are all members of the Civil Service. I am speaking quite candidly in the hope of convincing Members to allow this institution to remain in a permanent way at least for the next year and not to destroy its activities by reducing the vote, as that

will mean that at least the two Assistant Publicity Officers will not be allowed to remain on the personnel of that Department. All over the British world you will find Departments similar to this one. You may call the officer concerned Public Relations Officer or any other name you like. I rather fancy that much of the prejudice against this Department has been due to the name or title given to the Head of the Office. The word "Publicity" is capable of having a double meaning and a sinister meaning if you like, but really and truly that is the object of the Department. Although called the B.P.I. or Bureau of Public Information, it is generally known as the Publicity Office. I cannot help feeling from the many statements made to me by different persons in the community, that they feel this is a Government Department whose chief object is to educate the people to agree with Government in its policy. In other words, they feel that it is the nucleus of a Government Department which will try and coax the public into accepting Government's policy. The whole idea is wrong.

The idea of the Department is that instead of someone going to the Secretariat, or the Treasury, or any other Department for information, all he has to do is to ring up this Department if, for instance he has any doubt as to an announcement made by Government as to what its policy would be, and he will get the facts on which that policy is based without any expression of opinion, any dictation and any meaning that he must accept it. If Members do not think that is a convenient channel for the dissemination of public information, it is your duty to say "We require no such establishment in this Colony." Let me give a concrete instance of how this Department serves the Colony; it occurred only recently. I suppose Members listening on the radio heard the broadcast to the qualified voters generally, as to how they should apply for their voters' registration forms and how they should fill them up. I heard a member of this Council say that should have been done by the Registering Officer. See how objectionable that is! The Registering Officer has to determine that the claim is properly made and whether the person should be on the Voters' List. Is he then to be the person to in-

struct the claimant? The Registering Officer may say "Do it in such a way" and when it is rejected what a howl there will be. In a purely impersonal way the B.P.I. did that and saved the Registering Department a great deal of trouble. This is a community that requires education along those lines. I give you that as an instance where the community is being slowly taught and encouraged not only to take an interest in public affairs which we discuss in this Council, but to do so through an impersonal Department. I mention that as one of the instances along which this Department may be useful, as I see it.

I appeal to Members. I am not making an appeal as an hon. Member myself, but you must all feel that whatever attitude you adopt towards the Estimates you are practically legislating for a future Council. Our decision may appear to us to be right today, but we are being succeeded within the next few months by a totally different Council and I suggest to Members and to you, sir, as Head of the Council, that whatever may be the result of the vote—I give every credit for honesty of purpose and sincerity of purpose on both sides—if the vote on the Estimates appears to you to be one that should be retained—that you do not idly and without thought reduce the amount. Whether the amount is reduced by \$1,000 or one cent it does not affect the principle. You are assuming responsibility in doing so now, but you will not be responsible when the vote requires supplementing as you may not be here to say whether it is necessary. I say, look at this vote again. I have had submitted to me—and I believe Members have it in their possession—a revised estimate of expenditure by which, if Members wish to persist in their attitude of reduction, they can be met. You will see that it means the termination of the duties of two of the principal officers and, I tell you frankly, the work of the Department cannot be done without the assistance of those officers. So there is something very illogical in trying to reduce the vote and forcing the two Assistant Publicity Officers to leave the Department. Either you wish the Department by reducing the vote to \$10,000 or you do not, and the logical thing to do

if you do not wish the Department, is to strike out the entire vote.

I invite Members to think along these lines and to give the Department a trial for another year. That is what I suggest. You must remember that the Department has never had any assistance whatever. I have lived long enough to know; I have heard many choruses of voices say "No" until when Government submits a supplementary estimate, and then they say "Yes." I have given you some idea of the status of the Department, the *raison d'être* for its coming into being. I wish to remove the idea that it is something to distribute what Government wishes to force down the community's throat. It is no use hon. Members saying that. I am not suggesting to members to give the Department a trial for another year for any other reason than the one I have given and beyond what Mr. Harewood is prepared to give; but, as I say, give the matter some consideration. It is not an ordinary Department. It is one which serves the public; it comes into contact with the public in a measure that no other department does. Someone suggested that we should put the officer in the Colonial Secretariat. The moment that is done, someone is going to suggest that any information published by him has been released from the Secretariat with some object. We know that may be said. Just think of what is being done elsewhere in the world. This Department exists for the purpose of exchanging information. Why wish for the sake of a few thousand dollars to prevent the continuance of a policy which will in the long run keep us as Members of this Council better informed and, what is more, prevent dangerous propaganda being printed or circulated when the supplements prepared by this Department are also circulated containing information and facts with no deduction and no untruths. You have to make a decision in this matter because it affects every ground of Government policy. I do ask Members to submit for another year to what may be described as an additional \$3,000 on that vote.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: We have had our reason appealed to on the ground of logic. We have passed through the child stage

and got to the adolescent stage. The logic put forward is that this Department should continue for one year, yet it seems to me that we are preparing, if my information is correct, for a permanent establishment and one which will extend further after that year. We are informed that the two Assistant Publicity Officers have been abroad on study leave in order to equip themselves for the very purpose of this Department. The proposal was that possibly the Department might be transferred to some other Department, but we hear "No, we are too large a Department and cannot be transferred." At the present moment we also have in the Estimates under the Head "Colonial Secretary's Office," the Publicity Bureau. It is a part of that Department, and yet when some hon. Members suggest that it should be put in the Colonial Secretary's Office and certain charges eliminated, we are told there is no logic in that.

Mr. WOOLFORD: I must rise to a point of correction! I have said that we had one meeting. I do not mind saying that the title of the Department and what its duties are going to be are still under consideration. I know that it is a part of the Secretariat, but it is not housed there. It is housed in Main Street.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: I appreciate fully well the explanation by the hon. the Deputy President. Apparently we are being asked to vote the \$18 increase for Clerical Assistance as the result of the one Committee meeting. If we proceed at that rate I do not know what is going to happen. Then you have a Duty Allowance and other charges under which increases are being put up. The fear of hon. Members is that the cost of this Department would increase and that we might be told next year—all of us might not be here—that the duties of the Publicity Officer would entail the services of another clerical assistant. It seems to me that if we are going to curtail our news he should be put in another Department, whether it is the Colonial Secretariat or elsewhere, where the service could be run without the necessity of having to employ another clerical assistant. A clerical assistant might go there below the line but might not conform to the general requirements for entry into the Service. In some of these Departments people get

into the Service that way—people are put in who cannot ordinarily get into the Government Service.

I am quite aware of the fact that, as the Deputy President has said, this is a publicity and propaganda Department and that is why we have expenses of that kind. We have travelling expenses—and this amount is increasing—as well as other expenses. By all means house them in some other Department and, if necessary release the officer for some other use. It is said that this B.P.I. is a bureau of information only for one Department. Are we to understand from Government that the B.P.I. can give information on its own—or is it subject to superior direction? However, what is the good of an information Department which is a liaison between the public and the Government if that Department is not expected to give the public or anyone information or an idea as to Government's policy, because sometimes we are in a quandary to know exactly what Government's policy is, especially when we are being directed from the other side in these changing times and difficult world conditions.

I would just give an example. Here we sit while the policy is being directed from the other side, and in this Colony those in charge of the Administration—particularly the unofficial advisers of Government—are often not aware of a particular policy until they see a leading article or something else in the Press attempting to show what is happening. I would not say that this Department has not given good service during the War; it was a necessity during the War, but are we saying that the War is going to continue and that the information it gives to Government cannot be given otherwise? I admit that perhaps communications from Government are sometimes belated and that replies on questions of policy do not reach the public until months or even years after they are requested, but—

The CHAIRMAN: Is the hon. Member saying that that is the general practice?

Mr. WIGHT: I would be generous and say that communications are received from certain Departments in time and that I

get replies from Your Excellency within 12 or 24 hours. But, sir, I and other Members can point to months of delay in replying to letters and enquiries we have made. Your Excellency will hear about some of them which were directed to certain Departments. I am afraid the officers in this Publicity Department will develop into Private Secretaries to the Heads of certain Departments. In other words, it will be quite easy when an enquiry is made or when information is required, for these Departmental Heads to say to them "you supply that information or answer that enquiry." If we are being asked to give the Publicity Bureau a trial for another year, why not have it with a reduced staff? It seems to me that there is as good argument for the one side as for the other.

Mr. JACOB : I supported this Department, I think, when there was a very vigorous campaign launched against it by the hon. Member for Eastern Demerara and one or two other Members of this Council, and I am still satisfied that the Department is of some use. The majority of Members felt in Finance Committee that the Department should be scrapped altogether, but there was a promise that it should continue on a reduced scale. In 1944 the expenditure on the Department was \$8,895; in 1945 it was \$9,556; in 1946 it jumped to \$12,865, and in 1947 it is proposed to spend \$14,000. If Government was honest in the first instance in putting forward the proposals relating to the establishment of the B.P.I., Members would have taken a different view now. It is unfortunate that the moment we begin a new Department it wants to grow. We now have in this Department a Publicity Officer, an Assistant Publicity Officer and so on, so that the whole thing is beginning to multiply. The Deputy President has said that the Department must not be untimely scrapped, but the hon. Member for Western Essequibo has replied to him. I would like to know why this Department could not be housed at the Education Department where the whole of the bottom floor is practically vacant. Some of these items here should be removed and I think if Government insists in carrying on in this elaborate way Members might decide to cut the whole thing out and I would support that view. The Publicity Officer

could be housed here; he is surely subject to direction from the Secretariat.

The CHAIRMAN : There is actually no room here.

Mr. JACOB : I should think he is subject to directions, however.

The CHAIRMAN : Of course he is subject to directions. He frequently consults me and the Colonial Secretary. As far as I know all Heads of Departments are subject to directions, but I do not know that the Publicity Officer is subject to more directions than any other Head of Department.

Mr. JACOB : Yes, but we want economy. If Government had erected a building possibly two or three departments could have been housed there, but Government is buying property and things of the kind and then renting premises for offices. The Deputy President referred to the fact that this Department does much publicity and that the public is being educated, but I would like to refer him to the report of the Franchise Commission on this point. I do not think the public is being educated. Par. 40 on page 10 of the report of the Franchise Commission which was laid as a Legislative Council Paper, reads :—

"40. We are ready and willing to concede that this very large section have in their midst a considerable number of persons of both sexes who, though handicapped by lack of education of any kind, are possessed of more than an average amount of intelligence . . ."

Therefore, the reports we have had that this Colony cannot make progress until these people have been educated is all nonsense. We are now being asked to spend \$10,000 for this method of educating the public—a particular section of the public—and that is why some of us feel that this whole thing is irregular. You have got nothing here to attract a large section of the community—you have no means. If Government is willing to provide the means and let it cost \$100,000 and this Council is prepared to vote that amount, it would be a different matter but with this machinery and equipment \$10,000 is more than liberal. I would be quite willing to reduce the amount to \$9,000 which would be practically

the same as the expenditure in 1944. Why should Government want to increase that amount now to almost double? You should educate people first through the Education Department and then begin this elaborate Publicity Department which you want today.

Reference was made to the education of voters, but the people do not worry with this in several parts of the country. However, for the benefit of interested parties—particularly candidates at the forthcoming elections — that is what I would like the Deputy President to do if he has the strength and the inclination to do it. Possibly he has the strength but not the inclination to do it. Let me look at the lists of voters for the various districts beginning with Georgetown and enquire how they have reached their present proportions, and it would be seen that personal and individual contacts have brought them to that stage I am not here to disguise any fact; all I want to know is the extent to which the Colony would get involved in this matter. I do not think the country would get value for this \$10,000.

The CHAIRMAN: I know that hon. Members have reason to be busy and that they are anxious to get on. I do not think this is a question for only the Deputy President and the hon. Member for North Western District. What I would like to suggest is that I, as Officer Administering the Government, should discuss this matter along with the Colonial Secretary, the Colonial Treasurer and the Attorney-General, although I have not yet discussed it with Mr. Duke (Acting Attorney-General). Personally, I am in favour of continuing this Department; we do not want it abolished. I think it is right, however, that expenditure on the Department should be limited, and it is up to Members to decide what they think it should be. We want to go on with this Department and if that is possible I shall be quite prepared to meet hon. Members as regards a reduction of the vote. If you are prepared to reduce it I will have nothing more to say; I am prepared to have it reduced, not abolished. That is quite clear.

If we do reduce the vote we would certainly have to place the Assistant Publicity Officers in some other Department. They are on the Fixed Establishment and if we reduce the vote we would put them under another Head. If hon. Members want that done I am prepared to meet you. I have no other option if you decide to reduce the vote and I do not want you to think I want that done. In these matters the final responsibility for decisions made around this table should be placed where it belongs. In other words, it is up to hon. Members to make a decision, but the President or the Officer Administering the Government would tell you what are his personal wishes. He can do no more. I have already stated that if it is the wish of hon. Members to reduce this vote I am quite prepared to meet you. It is not my desire to prolong this debate and I am prepared to agree to a reduction of \$4,000 if it is the view of hon. Members that this vote should be reduced.

Mr. LEE: I desire to state that an Advisory Committee for this Department has only recently been appointed and the members who have listened carefully to the Publicity Officer feel that this is a useful Department. On the last occasion I criticized this Department and desired to have it abolished, but after having heard the Publicity Officer on the aims and objects of the Department, I think we should leave it. It is the duty of the Publicity Officer to collect not only local information received from the Imperial Government and it is obvious that the Department is of great assistance to those interested in the development of the Colony. Secondly, it is likely that there will be coming down books and booklets which would be accepted for sale and, perhaps, as time goes on, would be loaned to the public for information as to the policies of the Imperial Government towards the British Colonial Empire. These things are necessary for the advance of political ideas, especially if we in British Guiana are to keep abreast of the other British Colonies in these parts.

Lastly, I would ask hon. Members to look at the revenue side of the matter and they would see that in 1945 the revenue

from radio licences was \$4,369 while in 1946 the approved estimates showed \$4,800 and the revised Estimates \$7,800. The estimated revenue for 1947 is \$9,000 yet Government has withdrawn the quota that should be given to this Department for the purpose of broadcasting Government policies and other information. If this Colony is to progress the country districts should have radios and it would be necessary for certain officers of this Department to have a longer period on the broadcasting station for the purpose of communicating information that would benefit the people in the country districts. I would ask hon. Members to consider the matter in that light and allow this Department to continue its good work. I would also ask Government to consider giving this Department some of the revenue received from radio licences and not give all to the broadcasting station.

Mr. HUMPHRYS: I did not intend to speak on this head, because there has already been considerable discussion on it in Committee by Unofficial Members of this Council. It was said by the hon. Member for North Western District that the hon. Member for Eastern Demerara bitterly attacked this Department. I did not attack it bitterly; what I did I did as Chairman of the Committee. I said I was expressing the consensus of opinion of Members of this Council, and as a result we had to come to the conclusion that this Department should be abolished altogether. That decision was reached after a full discussion of the proposal to reduce the vote by \$4,000 and the Members of the Council who came to that conclusion were not only urged by their own opinions but by the opinions of other people outside this Council who endorsed the view that it would be a waste of money to continue this Department. I think the Department was fully discussed and it was decided that we must reduce the cost. We felt that in deducting \$4,000 and allowing it to continue with a reduced vote the Council would be doing all it possibly could.

As regards the usefulness of the Department, I have heard a great deal from the Deputy President in Committee and also here. It may be that the Department has done a great deal of good, but I am say-

ing that as far as the public is concerned they do not wish it. The Deputy President with his knowledge of and interest in the affairs of the Department might know of the good it has done, but it is not known to the public generally. We have just heard that this Department has done nothing but grow and grow all the time. It was conceived in someone's brain as a War measure but the War is over and yet it continues to grow and flourish.

Your Excellency said you desire hon. Members to realize that these officers are on the Fixed Establishment and that their services cannot be dispensed with, but it was not the desire of anybody—when the matter was discussed in Committee—that their services should be dispensed with. I did remind Your Excellency that in the past Government had a delightful way of saying that an officer's services could not be dispensed with because he was on the Fixed Establishment.

The CHAIRMAN: That is perfectly true, but if you abolish the post of a young officer you lose his services and you have to pay him a pension.

Mr. HUMPHRYS: I disagree because the pension which an officer of such young age would get would not be much. It is far from my wish, however, that these officers should be deprived of their posts. We felt that the Department should be carried on with the reduced amount we have allocated.

Mr. FARNUM: In view of the fact that the Unofficial Members have decided to reduce this vote by \$4,000 and to allow it to stand at \$10,000 provided the Publicity Officer can show how it is allocated—and the Publicity Officer has now submitted a statement of details—I am asking whether hon. Members are in favour of hearing the Publicity Officer on that statement.

Mr. RAATGEVER: Members are not in favour of hearing the Publicity Officer; they have heard him already. They are quite willing to stand by their recommendation, if not the whole Department would go.

The CHAIRMAN: I say quite frankly that I would rather have the reduced vote

than to have the whole thing knocked out. I do not wish to waste any more time on the matter and I would go on, having explained the position of the Government. The responsibility for reducing the vote lies on the head of the Unofficial Members.

Mr. LEE: I move that the amended head be accepted.

Mr. WOOLFORD: The original amount is in the printed list. A suggestion has been made that it would be amended if Government chooses to accept, but it seems to me that it is the duty of the Colonial Treasurer to move that the amendment be approved. I object to the hon. Member moving it. I am Chairman of the Advisory Committee to this Department and I do not propose to resign. I say again that hon. Members have not had an opportunity of examining the functions of this Department and whilst I am prepared to accept the decision of the Council I say that if I am a Member of the new Council I shall approach the Governor in Council very early in the year with a view to getting this vote restored.

The CHAIRMAN: We have not gone very far with the Estimates and, as Chairman, I move that head VI. A be carried as amended—at \$10,021 (allocated as per list attached).

Mr. WOOLFORD: My objection is against the hon. Member (Mr. Lee) moving it.

Amendment put, the Committee dividing and voting as follows:—

For: Messrs. Veerasawmy, Farnum, Raatgever, Thompson, Ferreira, Jacob, Humphrys, Peer Bacchus, Gonsalves, Dr. Singh and C. V. Wight—12.

Against: Messrs. Roth, Critchlow and Woolford—3.

Did not Vote: Messrs. Lee, de Aguiar, the Colonial Treasurer, the Attorney-General and the Colonial Secretary—5.

Amendment carried.

#### EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

*Item 1b—Chief Inspector of Schools and Assistant Director of Education, \$1,320.*

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: I do not know whether hon. Members have noticed it and also whether it was discussed in Committee, but it had slipped me and I do not know if it slipped other hon. Members. I see here a note on page 13 that the Director of Education is getting £200 per annum on account of his increased duties through the secondment of Mr. Ogle. I also observed on looking at the Estimates for last year that the amount was also passed then and we allowed the salary to be increased from \$3,840 to the present sum of \$4,320. This seems to be a case that I really cannot understand—a man being paid a salary for increased duty when he only has a certain period of time to work at it. I can understand a man being paid an increased salary for increased responsibility, but it seems to me the responsibility here has not increased because you have Mr. Pollard seconded for that purpose. How long is the secondment of Mr. Ogle to continue? Is it to continue until the Colonial Development and Welfare policy is carried out? It seems that this is to be carried out for a number of years, and I do not anticipate Mr. Ogle's return to his substantive duties. As Assistant Director of Education Mr. Ogle's salary was also increased from \$3,840 to \$4,320 which is his permanent salary, and after the increase he was seconded for duty as Education Development Officer. What he gets now is of no concern. Here you have an instance where within a period of two years the substantive pay of the Head of a Department has jumped by a sum of £200 per annum. I would like to hear how long this secondment will be, and whether these increased duties are becoming more onerous or less so.

The CHAIRMAN: I think the answer is that if I had expected the question I would have been in a better position to reply. I will give a complete reply at the next meeting of the Council.

Mr. PEER BACCHUS: Defer the Head!

The CHAIRMAN: I will defer the Head.

Mr. RAATGEVER: I would like to state that the Unofficial Members did not notice the item, and since we have noticed it we are against it and would like it removed altogether.

The CHAIRMAN: I would rather you allow me to give an explanation.

Mr. PEER BACCHUS: Would you permit me to move its deletion?

The CHAIRMAN: I hope you will not, as it will place considerable embarrassment on the Government. This money has been received by the Director of Education and was passed last year. I hope you will not move the reduction this year. I am perfectly prepared to give a very full explanation as soon as I have had an opportunity of discussing it.

Mr. PEER BACCHUS: In addition to the information asked for by the hon. Member for Western Essequibo (Mr. C. V. Wight) there seems to be a difference in the figures left from Mr. Ogle's salary. Mr. Pollard is being paid \$2,400 and Mr. Crease \$960 and together from \$4,320 there still appears a difference of \$960. I would like to know to whom that amount goes or whether it would lapse this year and next year. I happen to know that there is an Inspector of Schools under (c) who has been seconded to act for Mr. Ogle. Whether that Inspector of Schools is getting any allowance for acting, I would like to know. That is additional information we may require.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: It is not being paid out under the Head. It lapses.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: If it lapses, let us save it. It may be suggested that the Colonial Development and Welfare Scheme is paying Mr. Ogle. Let them continue to do so and let us make a saving under this item.

Mr. THOMPSON: May I suggest that these items stand down until we get all the information? There seems to be some redistribution of the amounts.

The CHAIRMAN: Which items?

Mr. THOMPSON: Redistribution of the salaries on page 13—(b), (c), (d) and (e).

The CHAIRMAN: I would rather pass the Head if I can. I do not think there has been any change since last year. I am prepared to give the explanation asked for, as to why the money is paid. I would rather pass the vote.

Mr. RAATGEVER: No, sir; we would like the Head deferred.

The CHAIRMAN: I understood Members had agreed on the salaries generally. There is nothing new.

Mr. RAATGEVER: This is a personal allowance and not salary—a personal allowance of \$960 per annum in addition to the increased figure of \$400 per month.

The CHAIRMAN: It was there last year.

Mr. RAATGEVER: Yes, sir; but I was not here last year; I am here now.

Mr. FERREIRA: It would be wise to defer it.

The CHAIRMAN: Until we get what information Members want me to prepare we will leave the whole Head—"Education — Education Department" — suspended.

Agreed to.

Head suspended.

#### SCHOOLS, INSTITUTIONS AND MISCELLANEOUS

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: Here again I raised the question in Committee about travelling, and it was decided that we should deal with the matter as a whole and that my suggestion about the pooling of cars be also considered. I may point out that this is one of the Departments about which there was great criticism of the travelling expense. I have actually seen Officers of this Department travelling by car from the Education Department to the Colonial Secretariat. It was admitted, and

the Director of Education has given an undertaking that the vote will be tightened.

*Item—Salaries of Teachers—Aided Schools, \$836,242.*

Mr. JACOB : I understand that this amount includes certain amounts to be paid to certain institutions to the extent of \$3,850—Hindoo Sanatanists, \$2,750; Muslims, \$700; Arya Samajists, \$400. I think this matter was considered by the Education Committee and certain recommendations were made, and I believe some of these institutions or organizations approved of the recommendations. Whether they have approved of the method that will be adopted for them to receive these payments I do not know, but I have information that the Arya Samajists are not prepared to accept the \$400 under the terms proposed by the Department. My own opinion is that this money will be wasted completely if the system that has been recommended is adopted. I am not fully conversant with what has been done, and it is unfortunate that as a member of the Advisory Committee I do not know it

I raise the point here because I am all in favour of the Indian languages being taught. I suggest that the Indian languages be taught and the vote controlled in the same way as other votes are controlled under separate denominations. You have your Anglican, Methodist, Roman Catholic and other Christian denominations controlling the votes for the several schools under their charge, and these religious groups have a say as to how the money is to be spent on the schools controlled by them. A block vote or amount given to these institutions is not satisfactory, and I have definite information that the Arya Samajists are not accepting the \$400. I think the matter should be reconsidered and the Department advised not to pay any money out until the item is gone into. Up to a year ago \$1,600 odd was given to these schools. That money, was wasted. While I am in favour of spending some money on these schools I would like the money to be properly spent and administered.

Dr. SINGH: I am very much surprised at the hon. Member bringing this up. He should have told us that in the Committee, and I would have given him an explanation. I think he is here playing to the gallery and supporting the Arya Samajists

Mr. JACOB: To a point of order ! I object very strongly to the hon. Member suggesting that I am playing to the gallery and supporting some organization. I have the correspondence—the letter sent to and the reply from the Director of Education. The Director had proposed to put it up. Paragraph 2 of the letter, dated 8th November, says:

"As requested, copies of this letter will be circulated to Members of the Legislative Council. Copies will also be circulated to members of the Education Committee as the Committee considered the teaching of East Indian languages and approved of the proposals which were put up to Government."

If the Chairman, the hon. Member for Demerara-Essequibo (Dr. Singh), is not aware of this, he is not keeping in close touch with the Department or with the Director as the Head of that Department.

Dr. SINGH : As I said before, had the hon. Member told us that in Committee he would have had a full explanation, but he comes here with an incorrect statement. I am quite frank in saying that he is playing to the gallery. This matter was under discussion for two or three years and finally some understanding was reached, but the Arya Samajists stated that they have 37,000 followers in the Colony. I denied that statement. We have the record of Hindus and Muslims in this Colony but there is nothing to show there are so many Aryans. We made the allocations and I quite agreed to allocate 20,000 to them but they said they wanted 50,000 It so happened that the protagonist returned to India and at a meeting there declared that in the three Colonies of Trinidad, British Guiana and Dutch Guiana, there are only 10,000 Aryans. That was sufficiently good proof for me. That was a statement made by Professor Bhaskaranand. I took that to a meeting with Mr. Laing and I told him that that could not be wrong .There is a

booklet printed by the same Professor in which he stated that in this Colony there are not more than 5,000. Their allocation worked out at \$400 which is far more than the amount which should have been given —\$200.

The CHAIRMAN : You can leave that for discussion in the Education Committee.

Dr. SINGH : No sir; it was all settled. We went into it thoroughly. I can assure you that there are not more than 10,000 or 12,000 Aryans in all and the allocation is far more than they deserve.

Mr. JACOB : I have no objection to the payment of any money. I would like more money paid, and that is what the hon. Member cannot understand, but I want it properly paid.

*Item 17 — Children's Breakfast Centres, \$40,000.*

The CHAIRMAN : I am sorry to see this reduction by \$5,000 (as recommended by the Committee of Unofficial Members.) If it is the unanimous or the majority wish of Members I have no alternative than to accept it.

Item reduced to \$35,000 and passed.

#### QUEEN'S COLLEGE

Mr. C. V. WIGHT : I think you would find that quite a number of Members are in favour of the fees for both Queen's College and the Bishops' High School being increased. I do not know if the question is going to be raised now and we make the recommendation to Government, or whether hon. Members would raise it under the general question of revenue. In case it is not raised under the general question of revenue, I would like to get an expression of opinion from Members after the necessary vote is given, as to whether we are going to fight for an increase of these fees.

The CHAIRMAN : I do not know what the increase is.

Mr. JACOB : My hon. friend, the Member for Western Essequibo (Mr. C. V. Wight), is a little premature these days. There is an Education Committee, and it is true the Unofficial Party is working very

vigorously, but I think that any matter of this kind should be referred back to that Committee. I do not think we should take any precipitate action. I do not think the matter has been discussed at all so far as I am aware, and I think I have attended every meeting of the Committee. We arrived at no decision. It is a matter affecting a large number of people in the Colony, and I want time to consider it very carefully before arriving at any decision.

Mr. HUMPHRYS : I ask that this Head be postponed until our Committee meets again. There is quite a considerable opinion that the fees of both institutions should be considerably increased, and we propose to discuss the matter when we come to the question of Revenue under Ways and Means. That is why it has been left over; there is very strong feeling about it. The payment for a pupil is \$20 a term which is ridiculously low. For this class of education not less than \$60 or \$80 a term is paid in England.

The CHAIRMAN : I would suggest there is no question about that being considered. It is unnecessary to hold up the Estimates.

Mr. RAATGEVER : The Head can be taken.

Mr. HUMPHRYS : It does not affect these Estimates, but we want to make recommendations in regard to these two institutions.

Dr. SINGH : The question of fees was gone into very thoroughly by the Board of Governors of Queen's College. It is true that the fees are below the fees obtaining in some of the Islands, but they compare with those in Trinidad. For that reason we said we will review the whole subject of fees again.

Mr. JACOB : I would like to correct the hon. Member for Eastern Demerara (Mr. Humphrys) about \$60 to \$80 per term being the fees in England. In the best Polytechnic schools in England they are not as much as that.

Mr. HUMPHRYS : The education provided by these schools is equal to that of any ordinary public school in England,

where the fees paid are \$60 to \$80 per term. I have that on the best authority. That is only educational fees and does not include boarding fees.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT : I am glad the hon. Member has said that, as I was surprised to hear no mention made of that. Under the new system in England now the public schools have increased their fees, and I doubt whether there is any recognised public school in England where the terminal fees for board and education are under £300 a year.

Mr. HUMPHRYS : I did not include board; I only spoke of educational fees.

Head passed as printed at \$72,497.

#### LABOUR DEPARTMENT

The Committee of the Unofficial Members reported on this Head as follows:

"Members expressed the view that the Department had developed beyond what had originally been contemplated and that for the purpose it served the cost was too high. It was agreed that the Head should be passed as printed, but with the recommendation that Government be requested to consider the question of absorbing some of the Senior Officers of the Department in the Local Government Department as and when vacancies occur."

Mr. LEE : I feel, sir, that at the present moment the Labour Department is not carrying out its duties satisfactorily for such a heavy vote. We ask Government to consider carefully this matter. There are Officers in other Departments who have been re-employed and I feel that Officers from this Department can be transferred in their places, especially to the Local Government and District Administration Departments.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT : I may mention here that Government is fully aware of it. At the present moment the Public Works Department Advisory Committee has before it the question of employing a Labour Officer for the purpose of receiving complaints and dealing with them. Both Mr. Boyce, the previous Director, and Mr. Smythe, the present Director, have expressed the opinion that it is practically impossible for the Head of the Public Works Department to give satisfactory engineer-

ing advice and supervise the engineering part of the Department because of the constant inundation of labour questions—complaints as regards increased wages, contracts, etc.—all of which the Public Works Advisory Committee considered and suggested that there should be appointed an officer from this Labour Department to be attached to the Department, as this would save a considerable amount of time in the Public Works Department. We would have two groups of workers—A and B — working according to rates and similarly with the Contractors. We may well be able to eliminate quite a lot of expenditure under the Head. I think Government has under consideration the question as to whether there is sufficient personnel.

The CHAIRMAN : I have gone into this matter very carefully with the Director of Public Works and the Commissioner of Labour and I think the suggestion was that some officer might be seconded from another Department, but I would like to consult the Commissioner of Labour. The difficulty in appointing a member of the Labour Department to the Public Works Department to act as Staff Officer and Adviser on labour matters, appears to be that he would not be able to do grading unless he is also an engineer. We are trying to get on with grading too apart from the appointment of a Staff Officer; we are trying to get an engineer to do it but I do not know how far that has gone. The Commissioner of Labour has neglected to send an officer to the Public Works Department for various reasons, but I will go into the matter again. Hon. Members must not forget, however, that if the vote for the Police Department is larger than you expect, it is because we are passing an increasing amount of labour legislation,—by-laws and other legislation.

I do not want to enter into a controversy on the matter, but I do want hon. Members to realize that every time a new law is passed for bakeries, rumshops or else, some Department has to carry that law out and the two Departments of Government that have the burden of administering labour legislation are the Labour Department and the Police Department. Therefore, it is really not so easy to reduce

the staff of the Labour Department. Mention has been made of the Deputy Commissioner of Labour, Mr. Burrowes, but he is going back to his old job as District Commissioner. Mr. Bissell has come back and Mr. Burrowes has gone on leave. I am just telling hon. Members that it might not be so easy to reduce the number of officers in the Labour Department as it would appear at first sight.

Mr. JACOB : I think there is far too much legislation in these books.

The CHAIRMAN : I know there is one person who would agree with you and that is the Attorney-General.

Mr. JACOB : I think that, like the B.P.I., this Department has overstepped its bounds. I should like to remind you, sir, that the Combined Court pointed out years ago that as soon as a new Department was established the head wanted a Deputy Head. It is no use making comparisons, but one never thought that these labour officers would have been appointed at such exorbitant salaries. If Government does not think of reducing the Department as in the case of the B.P.I. then the whole Department might be knocked out altogether, but Government cannot afford to allow that. Then you have in the books all kinds of elaborate legislation, some of which is not applicable to this Colony.

#### LANDS AND MINES DEPARTMENT

Mr. JACOB : I just want to make a general observation. I am sorry I have not got a certain letter here which I received from this Department about land policy in this Colony. I think Sir Gordon Lethem recently issued instructions that no more leases should be issued except for a period of 21 years. When I was in Trinidad recently I saw, accidentally, that certain leases had been issued there for a period of 999 years. In British Guiana, however, we are accustomed to 99 years. This is a very important matter, and it is causing serious trouble in certain parts of the Colonial Empire. If it is the intention of the Imperial Government to control the lands here for Imperial interests who would come out here and occupy them and work them for us I would agree but, if on the other

hand it is the intention to give the people here an opportunity to own these lands and work them, then you must make the leases for 99 or 999 years or give title freehold. I have already expressed the opinion here that Government's land policy does not encourage the ordinary man to erect his house with any security, and I urge upon Government to consider this matter urgently and carefully.

The CHAIRMAN : I have not got the proper Officer to advise me now. Normally, we should soon be dealing with the details of the Lands and Mines Department and I should have the Commissioner of Lands and Mines here to give us information. I have made a note of the hon. Member's remarks.

Mr. JACOB : It is absolutely clear that the policy has been changed. We are now having leases for 21 years and the whole thing to my mind is wrong. I do not know if I am wrong in saying that the policy has been changed.

The CHAIRMAN : I think you are right.

Mr. JACOB : The whole thing is wrong. There was a policy in the past to sell lands freehold, but that policy has been completely reversed. The present conditions are very stringent.

The CHAIRMAN : I say again that I am at a disadvantage because I have not got the Head of the Department here to reply.

Mr. ROTH : I am in a position to endorse a great deal of what the hon. Member who has just taken his seat has said. Twenty-five years ago there were very different methods; absolute purchase of land was possible and then you had a freehold licence of occupancy. About 15 or 20 years ago a system was brought in of not selling lands outright but giving leases for 99 years. Now it has been changed to 21 years.

#### LAW OFFICERS

Mr. C. V. WIGHT : I think there are too few officers in this Department. I tried to get the Attorney-General to in-

sert provision for another officer because it seems to me that he should be able to get further assistance if he wants it. I do not know what is Government's attitude in the matter.

The CHAIRMAN : We are not making any new appointments. I suppose the answer is that if you bring a practising Barrister into the Attorney's-General Chambers his practice would suffer.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Mr. Duke) : If a new officer is to be brought into the Department, speaking entirely for myself, I should prefer that officer to be a young man who is willing to work and willing to learn from others who are more experienced than he is. I should not be willing to accept anybody as a temporary help who would be rather a burden. Government would expect him to give real help but, as a matter of fact, he would not be able to.

The CHAIRMAN : That is a fact. I have discussed the matter with Sir Gordon Lethem and the Attorney-General also told me that there is no good in bringing in a man for a year or two who would not be able to help. Of course, if you bring in a young man, as Mr. Duke has stated, it would be better.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT : I do not quite agree. I think there are quite a few experienced men who could help; perhaps one or two of the Senior Magistrates. They could prosecute at the Criminal Assizes and lend other assistance to the Department. I myself went into the Department and I think the report given by the Attorney-General showed that I was of some use.

Mr. HUMPHRYS : I think some explanation should be given by the Attorney-General as to the amount of assistance he gets under item 1, g. — Additional Assistance, \$4.000. This item was also here in 1946 and I would like to know what it covers.

The COLONIAL TREASURER : I think this vote is for paying counsel who prosecute at the Assizes.

Mr. WIGHT : I think this item is to cover exactly what I have been suggesting all along.

The CHAIRMAN: I am sorry Mr. Holder (Attorney-General) is not here. Mr. Duke cannot give the answer required by the hon. Member for Eastern Demerara. I see now that the item was down for last year as "Provision for substitutes while substantive holders of posts are on leave".

Mr. de AGUIAR : I think that item 3 (Fee to Counsel for prosecuting at Criminal Sessions, \$150) and item 1.g. really go together. Knowing the number of legal gentlemen who prosecute at the Criminal Sessions, I do not think all they would expect to get is \$150.

The CHAIRMAN : We will pass on to another Head and come back to this later in the day.

Head deferred.

#### LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Mr. LEE : I think it is the intention of Government to convert the local authorities into village districts, but it has been the policy of certain District Administration officers to create fear of a rise in taxation, and so hold up the elections that are necessary for the conversion into village districts. On the East Bank, Demerara, I know that a district officer stated in public that it would cost the village over \$200 to hold the elections while there were only 130 voters in it. Therefore, I asked certain questions in this Council and it was found that the cost of printing with respect to the elections would be only \$15 or \$30 plus expenses for the election officer. I feel that if Government desires to assist these people Government could insert an item to meet the election expenses for a certain period in order to give the village areas an opportunity to improve. Government would be satisfied if there are people in the villages capable of carrying on the affairs of a village council. Many of these people are afraid that there will be increased taxation, however, and that is why they are not asking Government to raise the status of their villages from local authorities to village districts.

Mr. THOMPSON : I think every opportunity has been given to country districts to have their status raised. The case referred to by the hon. Member is not

accurate. Application was made by the district for elevation to a country district, but when it got before the Board the suggestion was made that it would be better for the smaller villages to amalgamate and form one village district. It was not a case where fear was created in the minds of the villagers that they would have to pay \$200 expenses. They were told it would be better for Peter's Hall and Bagotstown to come under one authority, but the authorities of the two villages would not agree. Owing to the small amount of revenue which some villages receive it would not be quite wise to let the people undertake expenditure which they cannot cope with, but in the case of Peter's Hall and Bagotstown there was no fear created by the District Commissioner, that the expenses relating to the elections would be too great.

Mr. LEE : I desire to tell the hon. Member that if he got his information from the Local Government Board it is not correct. The people at Bagotstown asked that the authority be elevated to a village district but their application was not granted. Why should the Board tell them that if they do not amalgamate with Peter's Hall their application would not be granted ? It was stated publicly that the cost of the elevation would be \$200 and a similar thing was done in the case of Leguan. I therefore ask Government to introduce a vote to meet election expenses in those villages which desire elevation and to give them a probationary period in the conduct of their affairs.

Mr. THOMPSON : I never said what the hon. Member is alleging as regards Bagotstown and Peter's Hall. The suggestion was put to them that if they amalgamated it would be better for them.

Mr. FARNUM : As regards the charge being made by the hon. Member for Essequibo River against the District Commissioner for Georgetown and the East Bank, I happened to be at a meeting when the District Commissioner told the people clearly what the probable cost would be to convert them from a country district to a village district. He placed all the facts before them so that they could understand what it would cost, because very often

people in the rural areas asked for something without knowing what it would cost. As regards the suggested amalgamation of Bagotstown with Peter's Hall, I would ask the hon. Member for Essequibo River to get hold of the Hector Joseph report on Village Administration and he would find a recommendation therein that an effort should be made to combine small villages which are contiguous into one district with the object of reducing overhead expenses. That is the reason why the suggestion was made that Bagotstown and Peter's Hall should amalgamate and form one district — the population of those villages being very small.

Mr. JACOB : I suggest that a small Committee be appointed to look into local government generally. I do not know whether the Local Government Board is going to resist that. I have listened to all that was said by the hon. Nominated Member (Mr. Farnum) and the hon. Member for Essequibo River (Mr. Lee), and I would like to remind hon. Members that the West India Royal Commission recommended definitely that this Government must take the initiative and elevate all these places into some kind of district giving the people an opportunity to manage their own affairs. I say definitely that the Local Government Board which boasts of Elected and Nominated Members, Government officials and others has deliberately done nothing of the kind and I ask this Government to go into the matter immediately. I have a list here and it is nothing short of a scandal and disgrace that in this Colony there should be 70 country districts and 25 village districts.

Hon. Members should know that country districts are comprised of nominated councillors entirely, while in the village districts the councillors are partly nominated and partly elected. The time is ripe when all village districts should have wholly elected representatives and when all country districts should be converted into village districts. In Ceylon all the representatives are wholly elected and similar steps should be taken here without any delay whatever. I will read an extract from the "Empire" (issued by the Fabian Society) on this question to show that in the report of the British Guiana

Franchise Commission the Deputy President of this Council who was the Chairman, made some very erroneous statements concerning Ceylon. I believe that was done deliberately, because when I attempted to discuss the matter with him he said "I did not know." Here we have it that Ceylon has been elevated to Dominion status with the right to secede from the Empire.

Mr. WOOLFORD : If I was the sole author of the report of the Franchise Commission I would have been rather proud of it, but it was produced in collaboration with other Members. I was interested to hear that the findings of the Franchise Commission have been reflected in the very satisfactory and happy position that exists in Ceylon where there is the worst form of Constitutional discontent in the entire British Commonwealth.

The CHAIRMAN : I suggest that we go back to the Estimates !

Mr. JACOB : I was making the point that the people in these village districts should not be encouraged to go and get other people to join them before they could get the authority of the Local Government Board to manage their own affairs. The Local Government Board ought to confer it on them. If they do not, then it is the duty of the Central Government to do so. Local Government embraces Municipalities too under the Head "Miscellaneous". I would like to make the point here that Your Excellency promised to refer the question of the franchise of the Municipality of Georgetown to the Town Council, and I think Your Excellency went as far as to say that a Committee or Commission may be appointed to go into the matter.

The CHAIRMAN : I said I would look into it. I did not promise to appoint a Committee.

*Item 17—Purchase of Launch, \$9,000.*

Mr. JACOB : It was promised that a Commission would be appointed to go into Local Government Reform. I ask, if it is not the intention to do it for Georgetown alone that it should be done for the villages and for New Amsterdam. I see that

the New Amsterdam Municipality has only 910 voters and 63 names were added to the list recently. I think New Amsterdam has over 7,000 people, possibly 10,000, and all it has is just 900 odd voters. This matter is going to cause this Government a lot of concern if it delays to act. The people are not at all satisfied. They want the opportunity to manage their own affairs in the villages, in the towns and in the entire Colony, and I cannot repeat it too often that the Government must give them that opportunity. My principal object here now is to move the reduction of a particular item under this Head—item 17—"Purchase of Launch, \$9,000", and I beg to move that it be carried out at \$5,000.

Mr. THOMPSON : With reference to the matter of the villages, it is not fair to say the Board has done nothing. During 1944—1946 all the villages were circularised asking them if they desired to be elevated, and only one Country District replied favourably. There is no provision in the Ordinance for compulsory elevation.

Mr. LEE : I cannot allow that to go on record without being corrected. The circulars went to the Councillors of the villages who are all nominated by Government, and what did you expect them to say? You should have had public meetings and got the people to express their views. How can it be said that there was an expression of opinion of the people when that was not done ?

Mr. THOMPSON : In many places public meetings were called and the people openly refused elevation. The people in the Country Districts believe that they have more privileges than they would have under Village status. It is not that the Councillors did it.

Mr. LEE : In my constituency it was not done.

Item 17 reduced to \$5,000.

*Item 16 A — Temporary Interpreter-Clerks, \$1,440.*

The COLONIAL TREASURER : I beg to move that a new item be moved in — "16 A — Temporary Interpreter-Clerks, \$1,440."

Mr. de AGUIAR: I do not understand what that item is for. That was something done in Committee and I would like to get some explanation.

Mr. JACOB : I would like to ask the hon. Member if he reads the papers presented before him. This is something presented by the Government and we accepted it.

The COLONIAL TREASURER : It is intended to meet the cost of temporary Interpreter-Clerks who are required to issue marriage certificates to East Indians. They are necessary until an Ordinance is introduced in this Council regulating the marriages of Muslims and Hindoos.

The CHAIRMAN : Is that satisfactory to Members ?

Question put, and agreed to.

Item inserted.

#### LAW OFFICERS

*Item 1 (g) — Additional Assistance, \$4,000.*

*Sub-Head 3—Fee to Counsel for prosecuting at Criminal Sessions, \$150.*

The COLONIAL TREASURER : This vote is intended to pay Crown Prosecutors and also to meet the cost of substitutes employed in the place of Officers on leave.

Mr. HUMPHRYS : Let us have it all under Crown Prosecution. If one officer goes on leave another will act for him. You do not have this item in other Departments—Temporary Assistance.

The CHAIRMAN : I think you are right. Mr. Colonial Treasurer, do you think we can do that ?

Mr. WOOLFORD : I did not wish to say anything about this matter. That vote is not intended to cover only prosecutions in the Supreme Court, but to cover the use of the services of professional men in the Department. An instance is the case of the employment of Mr. Stafford the other day as Rent Assessor. So if you limit the item to prosecuting, such additional professional assistance as I have instanced

cannot be paid for from it. It is another matter whether assistance should be rendered in the form it is given.

Mr. HUMPHRYS : There is no Rent Assessor being paid now except it is to the Magistrate. I see the hon. the Deputy President is making signs. I would like to have this thing straightened out.

The CHAIRMAN: The answer is that the vote is used for two purposes—paying Crown Prosecutors and, if the Law Officers are in a "jam" and want assistance they use that vote to obtain it. If hon. Members do not want it in the Estimates I would cut it out.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: It was used at one time when Mr. Stafford acted in the Department. I think you should have two more men in the Department.

Mr. de AGUIAR: I agree with the hon. Member for Eastern Demerara (Mr. Humphrys) that we should cut it out.

Mr. WOOLFORD: As my learned and hon. friend, the Attorney-General, is only acting and I know he is not familiar with it, let me direct the Council's attention to sub-head 3—"Fee to Counsel for prosecuting at Criminal Sessions, \$150." Look at the size of the vote. It is only \$150. I know I am right in saying it is only a token vote, and that this additional vote is used in supplementing that vote. Give it a name if you like, but you have to retain it. If you do not retain it what are you going to do? You must provide the vote because it covers something wanted on the spur of the moment.

Mr. HUMPHRYS: Perhaps the hon. Member does not understand the point I am making. You have two sub-heads—"Crown Prosecution, \$150" and "Additional Assistance, \$4,000"—in the Estimates and under Supplementary Estimates more money is voted for Crown prosecution. So I say cut out "Additional Assistance" and put the amount under Crown prosecution. If you want assistance can you not employ persons under Crown prosecution and then come with a Supplementary Estimate at any time for the vote?

The CHAIRMAN: The emergency may be great but I do not want to employ people without the prior approval of this Council.

Mr. HUMPHRYS: That is being done all the time.

The CHAIRMAN: But we do not want to. I suggest we call it "Additional Assistance and Crown Prosecution" and let the vote stand at \$4,000. Will that meet you?

Mr. HUMPHRYS: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: We will amend item 1g to read "Additional Assistance and Crown Prosecution, \$4,000" and delete sub-head 3. Is that agreeable to Members?

VOICES: Yes.

Item 1g amended accordingly and sub-head 3 deleted.

Head passed with a reduction of \$150.

#### MAGISTRATES

Mr. VEERASAWMY: I would like to move in the sum of \$5,940 as shown in the Committee's recommendations—increasing the commencing salary of Magistrates to \$260 per month and providing for an additional Magistrate in Georgetown and House Allowance to the Georgetown Magistrates. I have much to say and I can take a long time in saying it, but what I would say in the first instance is that I believe it is the unanimous wish of Members of this Council that Government should give this matter its most favourable consideration. For me to go into the whole history of the matter would take a long time. At one time there were 16 Magistrates, but in the 1931—2 Blue Book there appeared only nine—3 at £575 to £675 and 6 at £675 to £775. In Georgetown there were two men who received an extra £100 per annum. The Financial Commissioners came to this Colony around 1930 or 1931 and made certain recommendations as a result of which the number was reduced from 9 to 5—one Senior man at £650 to £750 and four others intended to be natives at £500 to £650 per annum. Government tried that experiment which meant that the men

had to do two districts at the same time in order to allow it to be carried out. After a time it was found not to be convenient and Government started to increase the number from 5 to 6, then to 7 and to 8 as at present. At that time the Police Force had been considerably reduced and the amount of cases was not half as much as now. In those days the practitioners were far fewer than today. We have today a bright lot of young men at the Bar of our Colony of whom we can be proud. In Georgetown the work has increased with considerable inconvenience not only to the mercantile community but to litigants and lawyers as well. But I would say that the Magistrates in these very trying circumstances are doing a remarkable bit of work in trying to keep the work up to date as far as possible.

I am going to skip a period as it would be most embarrassing to Government if I say what happened then. I am asking you, sir, to insert this amount in the Estimates, and I may say that this is the first time this Body has been so unanimous in asking for your assistance. You will find that the vote for the whole Department is more, but the hon. the Colonial Treasurer can say whether the Revenue exceeds Expenditure under this Head. If that is so, I ask Government not to grudge these small increases. It is my personal opinion that within a short time there is going to be an outbreak of crime which is going to make not only Government but Legislators ashamed at what is taking place. The Police will be inadequate to deal with the situation. Unless the Magistrates have time to be able to sit back, so that when the wave of crime comes they can cope with it in punishing the offenders, you are not going to have a check put on what is going to take place. It will embarrass Government for me to say all that is going to take place. I have come from the people, I am one of the people, I live among the people, and I am asking Government to listen to those who come from the bottom of the ladder and are still living among the people when they express an opinion.

I am asking you to say, sir, whether it is not within reason that the commencing salary of Magistrates should be \$260 per

month. The hon. Member for North Western District was very strong in feeling that it should be £750 per annum, but most of us, not desiring to embarrass Government in the slightest, think \$260 per month plus house allowance would be a reasonable beginning. I am pleading to prevent a mental breakdown of these men. I know some of them are on the verge and might soon break down. The work is too much. The records will show that no previous Magistrates in the Service have been so near a mental breakdown in trying to be conscientious in the performance of their duties. For men with wives and children \$200 per month does not allow for the purchase of fit clothing and for the proper furnishing of their homes as well as medicine when ill, and leaves them very worried. You cannot have men administering justice in the Colony who are worried and in want, and expect them to perform their duties fearlessly.

I come to the question of house allowance. Government has been very considerate and reasonable in extending the privilege to Magistrates in the country districts to obtain a free house. I think those men ought to be very grateful because their predecessors suffered great hardship in the past and to such an extent that good men left the Service—young bright men who would have adorned the Bench. Government has now tried to do something for those in the country. If you need a good man in the City and you bring one of the men from the country districts, straightway he has to pay his own house rent. No Magistrate can be expected to keep up the dignity of his office and live in a house costing under \$40 or \$50 per month. They may be natives, and that is the burning question. That was how it was previously felt, but times have changed and native Magistrates appointed must receive less salary because much goes in rent. When it comes to the exercise of judicial thought, we are all proud to see natives filling the highest posts in the Judiciary in the West Indies. Their intelligence, knowledge and judgment are supposed to be equal to that of any Englishman or English Judge or Magistrate or King's Counsel. They are expected to judge correctly and to have a high standard of thought. Why then

should they be paid a lower salary than those who come from abroad and owing to climatic conditions are not able to perform the amount of work the local men do? I do not want to embarrass Government, but I do think that if there is the likelihood of a lot of trouble, when we can remedy it we should do so.

Your Excellency has appealed to us that during your period of acting we should give you every assistance so that when the new Governor comes he will meet everything running smoothly. If Government does not see its way to give heed to what we say, things would not be running smoothly when the new Governor comes. There is going to be a breakdown, and no responsibility for it should be placed on the new Governor if he comes here and meets that and is disappointed. My appeal to you is one in which I am imploring Government to do something. I am speaking from experience and I am speaking with a deep feeling through what has happened to others who have been in the Service and left on the verge of mental breakdown. Government is lucky today that in this country there is hardly a breath of suspicion against any Judicial Officer. The Supreme Court stands in an enviable position, and no one can complain against the Magistrates of this Colony. I think consideration should be given to that.

There is one last thing. If it pleases Government to accept the three items, there is this which our Committee did agree to but which was afterwards withdrawn and left for Government to decide. If young men have the good fortune to start at a minimum salary of \$260 per month, the Senior men of today who have laboured for years and had started with a salary of \$200 per month should be given some consideration. We leave that entirely to Government and hope that in its judgment some consideration will be extended to them. It is very embarrassing for me to speak. I am asking your indulgence sir, merely because at one time it was my great privilege and honour to occupy a position like that. I know what has taken place and the inconvenience that is going on. The people are afraid to complain and the lawyers are afraid also. I

know the inconvenience the people are suffering and I am asking that something be done before there is a real showdown. Using the words of one hon. Member, "I am tired writing; I am tired putting it before Government and until there is a showdown nothing will be done by Government". Those are the words of one of the most respected gentlemen who have crossed the threshold of this Legislative Chamber. The showdown should be here and not outside.

I am asking you, sir, please to insert these items today. It will give the utmost satisfaction. I do not speak as a rule because some hon. Members get up here and talk for a long time, and out of consideration for Government I remain quiet. At the present time with all the developments which are taking place in the Colony, there is bound to be more litigation and you cannot suppress these people. I can be very embarrassing in proving that crime is increasing. I am taking my seat confident in the hope that after such a unanimous wish of the Members of this Council it would please Government to do what we ask. It entails a very small increase.

Mr. HUMPHRYS : I do not think it is necessary, sir, to make a more impassioned speech on behalf of the Magistrates than the one you have just heard. Theirs is important work; they have to work very hard, and as professionally qualified men the present position is grossly unfair to them. I ask Government to consider favourably the recommendation made and to give the increases asked for. We have put it forward because we all feel that something should be done in the matter.

The CHAIRMAN : If you all feel so, I see no objection to provision being made for one additional Magistrate and that the minimum salary of appointment be \$260, but I have great difficulty in respect of the House Allowance. I think the request is a very reasonable one, but it has a lot of implications. Actually, I think House Allowance is given mainly in the country districts because Officers cannot find houses there when they are removed out of Georgetown. We have had a Committee sitting in this matter. I was the Chairman and Mr. Austin, Dr. Singh, Mr.

Woolford and Mr. Jackson were on it. We sat and talked, and then I went on leave and I put on record that nothing happened until the Governor said we would do this—that an Officer be given a house allowance or free quarters, whichever amount is less—and we carried it out. It does seem reasonable that where a Magistrate is removed into Georgetown he should not suffer financially. I will agree, now, to put in the Additional Magistrate and the minimum salary, but I cannot promise to put in House Allowance until I have gone into the whole matter again.

Mr. VEERASAWMY : Sir, I would ask if it is possible, to consider in addition to House Allowance the granting to Magistrates in Georgetown of an additional increment or two. I know it is a difficult matter—the hon. the Colonial Secretary has pointed that out to me—but we would leave it to your good graces.

The CHAIRMAN : I will go into it. I am prepared to put in the Additional Magistrate, but I am not sure whether it would receive the approval of the Secretary of State.

The COLONIAL TREASURER : I beg to move then, sir, that the item "8 Magistrates" be made to read "9 Magistrates" and that the provision in the Civil List be increased from \$25,548 to \$26,828.

The CHAIRMAN : The Acting Attorney-General has pointed out that we cannot put "9 Magistrates" on the Civil List, but we can put "1 Magistrate" on the Fixed Establishment.

The COLONIAL TREASURER : I therefore beg to move, sir, the insertion of a new item, 1 (b), to read "1 Additional Magistrate", at \$3,120. The provision in the Civil List would then be increased by \$1,280 so as to bring the salary of Magistrates to \$260. The total provision would then be \$26,828.

The CHAIRMAN : I have a point to put to hon. Members. Having given way to what I might describe as very lovely speeches and having acceded to practically everything for which you have asked, I would ask you to give way and not cut out

the Personal Allowance for the Director of Education.

Mr. HUMPHRYS : I think I agree. We would pass it.

The CHAIRMAN : Therefore we would go back to the Head Education and pass it.

Head Education recommitted and passed as printed.

#### MEDICAL

Mr. LEE : Now that Government has admitted that Advisory Committees are giving great help to Government and also to this Council, I would ask Government once again to consider the question of appointing an Advisory Committee for the Medical Department. I feel sure that such a Committee would relieve the Director of Medical Services of the necessity to explain many things which could be explained by Members of this Council, and its appointment would also be in keeping with the idea of assisting this Council in its deliberations.

The CHAIRMAN : I have been giving this question some careful thought and the only objection is that when Sir Gordon Lethem was here he felt that the appointment of an Advisory Committee to the Medical Department might cut across and override the authority of the Central Board of Health. I do not know what are the views of other hon. Members now, but in answer to the hon. Member for Essequibo River I can say that a Legislative Council Advisory Committee to the Medical Department would have been appointed two years ago if there had not been a Health Board. I know that Sir Gordon discussed the matter with the Director of Medical Services and he did not see any reason for appointing the Committee. It might be said that there are different views on the matter at present and so I will discuss it with the Executive Council.

Mr. KING : I desire to take this opportunity to point out that the house occupied by the Government Medical Officer on the West Bank, Demerara, has no electric light. I understand that on one occasion the Officer had to perform an

emergency operation with a gas lamp and on another occasion with a lantern. I think it is quite dangerous to play with people's lives like that, and now that the War is over I appeal to Government to purchase a small electric lighting plant for this Officer.

The CHAIRMAN : Where is the money to come from ?

Mr. KING : It would only cost about £100.

The CHAIRMAN : Perhaps we could enter into a deal; I will give you an electric lighting plant for the Medical Officer of the West Bank District if hon. Members give me a lorry for the Prisons.

Mr. KING : I am appealing to Government to consider the matter and see whether it would not be possible to install an electric lighting system in the Medical Officer's house, because its absence is causing a great deal of dissatisfaction on the West Bank.

Mr. LEE : I desire to support the appeal because I know that the population of the Canals area is increasing and that the Medical Officer in question has to perform several minor operations sometimes at night.

Mr. PEER BACCHUS : I think similar consideration should be given to the other Government Medical Officers in the outlying districts. Further, I think that in the building programme of the Public Works Department provision should be made for the installation of proper lighting when new buildings are to be erected. So far as the doctors are concerned their buildings were erected very many years ago, but I think lighting plants should be provided for them in the outlying districts. There is one in the doctor's house at Fort Wellington, but I think it was put there at the doctor's own expense.

The CHAIRMAN : The only thing I can say is that I will go into the matter and let hon. Members have a complete list of what would be required. I know there are two Magistrates who want electric lights and I am afraid you have started something which would be a kind of snowball. Perhaps it would be better for us

to come back in January with a supplementary estimate; I have no objection to that.

Mr. JACOB : I think Government should begin with one house.

The CHAIRMAN : Does the hon. Member think there is any difference between giving the doctor and giving the two Magistrates ? What about the two Magistrates ?

Mr. JACOB : The doctor should be given priority because he is attending to life.

The CHAIRMAN : I do not see why it should not be given to all three.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT : I think the Public Works Department should be asked to give an estimate for supplying wind-chargers in the districts for these officers.

The CHAIRMAN : I think that is a good suggestion. We will bring the list to the Council.

*Item 1 (33) — Station Allowances, \$180.*

Dr. SINGH: I ask for the deletion of this item because the Mackenzie Airport with which it is related is not active now.

The CHAIRMAN : Yes; I will agree to that.

Item deleted.

#### MEDICAL—BACTERIOLOGICAL DEPT.

*Item 3—Instruments, Supplies, etc., \$4,000.*

Mr. C. V. WIGHT : Some information was to be supplied with respect to this item. I do not know whether these things are obtainable. I do not wish it to be thought that this officer — the Government Bacteriologist—has approached anybody as to whether his equipment is sufficient or not. I happened to be defending a certain case in Court and the doctor stated, when asked about certain things, that they had not got those instruments. In addition to that, outside doctors have told me that they do not consider this Department to be properly equipped. A similar department at St.

Joseph's Mercy Hospital which is not subsidized is better equipped.

The CHAIRMAN : Here again I must emphasize that I am at a disadvantage because I have not got the Head of the Department here. My own recollection is that this question was before Government—it was before the Executive Council—and an assurance was given by the Director of Medical Services that the estimate was sufficient to provide the Bacteriologist with all the necessary equipment.

The COLONIAL TREASURER : He promised to go further into the matter. He said that as far as he knew all that was asked for had been provided by Government.

Item passed.

#### MEDICAL—X-RAY DEPARTMENT

The CHAIRMAN : I would like to ask the Treasurer whether we do not have to get some new equipment under this head ?

The COLONIAL TREASURER : Yes, sir. It would cost about \$16,000.

#### MISCELLANEOUS.

*Item 30—Temporary Clerical Assistance, \$5,000.*

Mr. C. V. WIGHT : I beg to move the reduction of this item from \$5,000 to \$2,000. The reason is that I raised a point before the Finance Committee and the members of the Committee having felt that it was of some substance decided to reduce this item to \$2,000. Under the Regulations there are certain conditions for entry into the Colonial Service, but there are cases under this Head where persons are being employed who do not have the necessary qualification for entering the Service. The Colonial Secretary has promised to let me have a list of the persons employed under this Head and I hope I will get it. I think it is wrong to employ persons without the necessary qualification. At one particular period the practice was apparently stopped, but I see it has started again. I do not want to call any names, but it is well known that certain persons are being employed under this Head who cannot be employed otherwise, either

because of age or because they have not got Senior Cambridge certificates. I have pointed that out to the Colonial Secretary, and I know that in one of the Departments which were referred to in Finance Committee one of the ladies got in under this Head and is now in another Department.

If Government needs Temporary Clerical Assistants I think it should employ young people with the necessary qualification and who will be in a position to continue in the Service if required later. It is no good saying "We want experienced persons", when those persons and their experience would be only temporary. Some of them have been so employed for a year or two, or even three years, perhaps. We have been told that their employment was a war measure, but I think it should cease. Government, I repeat, should employ persons who have just left school for these temporary posts and if there are vacancies later on then they could be appointed to fill them. I think the Colonial Secretary should produce a list with the names of these Temporary Clerical Assistants and let us discuss them. We need not discuss them from the "house top", however. What would happen to Government if other officers in the Service do what these officers can do? I addressed a letter to the Colonial Secretary on the subject and it is well known that while officers in the Government Service are not allowed to engage themselves in political activities, some of these persons do engage themselves that way.

Mr. VEERASAWMY : I desire to support in principle everything that the hon. Member for Western Essequibo has said, but perhaps not for the same reason. There is a ruling in the Colonial Secretary's Office where a waiting list is kept, that the name of every applicant who reaches a certain age should be removed from it. Thousands of parents are educating their children in the hope that one day they would catch the eyes of Government and secure employment. There is an age limit, and the principle I am concerned with is whether Government is going to remove from the Waiting List the names of all those applicants who have become over-age, and not employ some of them because they were recommended by particular persons.

If any such discrimination is practised, it is going to be a serious blow to the poor people who are giving secondary education to their children. I agree that the situation should be examined as early as possible.

The CHAIRMAN : I would just like to say that the principle is all right. Government expects its officers to hold certain qualifications and is sticking to that principle, but there may be a few exceptional cases especially where it does not suit Government to do otherwise. I can give an example of what I mean. We had a post for a Clerical Assistant in some small village and we could not get anyone to take it. There was somebody on the spot who was particularly suitable except that she did not have the special qualification, so it was a case where we said that Government should not be particularly hide-bound and should appoint her.

Mr. VEERASAWMY : I agree with Government's action in such a case, but there are cases in Georgetown where persons with the necessary qualification have been overlooked and others employed.

The COLONIAL TREASURER : The hon. Member for Western Essequibo is quite wrong and I have told him so several times. There are Temporary Clerks employed in the Temporary Service, and that is a totally different thing from Typist-Clerical Assistants.

Mr. RAATGEVER : We cannot hear the Colonial Treasurer at all.

The COLONIAL TREASURER : I am saying that if hon. Members would look at Appendix K they would notice that there is a number of Typist-Clerical Assistants, and every one of them has the necessary qualification. The case to which Your Excellency has referred was a case in Essequibo, the vacancy being one for a Clerical Assistant, while the Clerk to whom the hon. Member for Western Essequibo has referred is a temporary lady typist employed in the Magistrates' Department. She was employed for a particular purpose and her employment is purely temporary. She is an experienced typist and, as I have already said, she is there only temporarily. She does not form part of the general Clerical

Service. That is the only instance in the Service where there is a Typist-Clerk or an officer not having the necessary qualification.

The CHAIRMAN: That is the answer. Such employment has been given in cases where Magistrates wanted a good deal of typing done quickly and it was not desirable to employ a permanent officer.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: The Colonial Treasurer cannot get away with that. Let me have a list of the typists employed by Government since 1941, and let me know whether any are married and whether they are being paid by this Government or by the Imperial Government.

The CHAIRMAN: May I interrupt to state that Government has just received instructions from the Colonial Office advising that in England married women are no longer required to leave the Service. Government will come into this Council with a suggestion that where women, on marriage, were asked to go they be now allowed to continue in the Service.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: Be that as it may, I would like to know about those on the waiting list. Are we going to allow women to be married and still be employed when you have a number of young girls, coming from poor families to whom \$30 or \$40 per month will be of great assistance, on the waiting list? Some go into offices and are trained and it is difficult to get jobs for them. You should employ all the single ones that you have available on the waiting list. Do not allow any discriminating or special circumstances to weigh in the matter.

Mr. LEE: I am glad that you have made the announcement, sir, that we will be consulted in respect of the employment of married women. I would ask you to consider that also in the low wage-earning group of the Civil Service. Quite recently a cook at the Hospital, Miss Millington, got married and was made to resign. She had been there for a number of years. I sent a petition to the Secretary of State for the Colonies in the matter and recently received a reply from the hon. the Colonial Secretary stating that she will not be considered for re-

employment because her past services cannot be considered at all.

The CHAIRMAN: I remember the case. It was not disclosed that she was married.

Mr. LEE: Immediately it was disclosed she was called upon by the Matron to resign. She was enceinte and had to resign.

Mr. JACOB: I think the case of the employment of someone not fully qualified in one of the outlying districts can surely be the exception. Without exception there can be no rule. But the point made by the hon. Member for Western Essequibo (Mr. C. V. Wight) and the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Veerasawmy, is very sound. That is in connection with women, but there are men too who are affected, and I have risen to support the case of the men. Immediately a woman is over twenty-one she is not eligible for employment in the Service, but if she has acted between her school-leaving age and twenty-one it entitles her to a further period. That tends to show that if the rule is not strictly adhered to great hardship is created. There are cases of that at the Commodity Control offices. Whatever rule for employment exists in the Secretariat should apply in all these new Departments. There is an idea that these new Departments can do as they like. With the exception of the Rice Marketing Board, in all these new Departments—the Transport and Harbours, Commodity Control and where Colonial Development and Welfare money is being spent—there should be strict enforcement of the rule whereby eligible people, men and women, only should be employed. I know of hard cases where young people had to leave the Colony because they could not obtain employment.

The CHAIRMAN: There is the case of men discharged from the Army or the Air Force, who are over the age and have the qualification, being given employment.

Mr. JACOB: Everyone will agree to that. But there is this other point.

The CHAIRMAN: The point is, we cannot be too rigid. We accept the prin-

ciple which Members have asked us to follow. But I have quoted you two examples which happened quite recently—one where, in an outlying and remote district, a suitable person without the necessary qualification was employed; and the other where demobilised men who were over the age but had the qualification were employed. You cannot be too rigid in all cases.

Mr. JACOB: As regards the point raised about what is being done in England, there you have a shortage of manpower, but that is not the case here. Here you have a large number of people fully qualified but cannot get work. The principle is correct and every Member of the Legislature will continue to support it—that we should not employ married women if single women are available, and we should not employ pensioners if others are available. We have several cases of husbands and wives working in the Service. In a few years' time they will go off, but probably they send away the bulk of the money they earn here.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not think many people send money away; they spend it in the merchants' shops.

Mr. JACOB: I think many are sending money away. The Appointments Board should be given instructions not to permit the employment of anyone in any position except by seniority on the waiting list. Friends employ the children of friends; that is happening all the time. I do not think the hon. the Colonial Treasurer was quite correct when he stated that the point made by the hon. Member for Essequibo River was wrong.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I rise to a point of order. I spoke about the Clerical Service.

Mr. JACOB: The item we are discussing is "Temporary Clerical Assistants". Wherever money is spent, so long as that money passes through the Estimates, I think the rule of employment should be applied.

The CHAIRMAN: I agree in principle with that and I will tell the Colonial Secretary to circulate all Departments

which are not permanent Government Departments stating what the principle is and telling them to stick to it, and that if they want to depart from it they must ask the permission of the Colonial Secretary. I do not want to tell Members, however, that X can be employed because he is an ex-Serviceman and Y because there is no one else to do the work.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: I thoroughly agree with that.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not want to go turning people out of employment.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: So far as the employment of Clerical Assistants is concerned that is done through my office. We have a list which the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Veerasawmy, referred to, and we do take the people at the top for temporary employment. If there is a vacancy in the Permanent Establishment we take the senior of those in temporary employment. That is the procedure. All is done through the Colonial Secretary's Office and it is easy to find out the position.

Mr. VEERASAWMY: I am grateful for the explanation, but I do not accept it. The Colonial Secretary himself does not do it. I can say how it is done, but I will not. I do not want to embarrass him. I will go into the Colonial Secretary's Office and when I am finished speaking to him he will be able to remedy it.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I shall be very grateful for any information the hon. Member can give me. I would be happy if he gives me now.

Mr. VEERASAWMY: There is nothing wrong. It is the method adopted that is questioned.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: One Attorney-General said it is wrong to call names. I am inclined to ask Government something, but I do not want to embarrass anyone and so I will write a letter to Government tomorrow giving the names, where employed, and perhaps the family history—whether married and how much they are working for.

The CHAIRMAN: All that information will be very valuable.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: I move the reduction—that the item be carried out at \$2,000.

Question put, and agreed to.

*Item 38—Secondary and Minor Industries, \$2,500.*

*Item 39—Fishing Industry Development, \$2,500.*

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I move the insertion of these two new items.

Question put, and agreed to.

*Item 21—Tourist Bureau and advertisement of the Colony in Canada and elsewhere, \$3,000.*

Mr. RAATGEVER: I do not know whether it is a mistake on the part of Government that this item is put down at \$3,000 instead of \$10,000 as provided for this year. As you are aware, sir, it was with Government's approval that the Tourist Committee joined Trinidad and Barbados in establishing a Bureau in the U.S.A., and our contribution to the expenses of the joint Bureau is something like \$5,000 annually. The Bureau is still in existence and we simply cannot withdraw from the arrangement without giving about six months' notice. The sum of \$3,000 is inadequate to pay the Committee's office expenses locally and contribute to the cost of the Bureau. I would like to know whether it is through a mistake that this amount has been put down at \$3,000.

The CHAIRMAN: It was done on purpose.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: The majority of us agreed that it should remain at \$3,000. I supported that amount, and I think one of the protagonists was Dr. Singh who had a lot to say about it and wanted it wiped out entirely, but I did not agree with that.

Mr. JACOB: I have no strong views on the matter, but I do not think it would be wise to embarrass the Tourist Committee. Here you have a Bureau working and they have made commitments.

What are they to do? It is unfortunate. I do not like it myself, but we can ask Government that this figure be increased. The Deputy Chairman of the Tourist Committee has put up the case that this Committee would be greatly embarrassed if Government were to withdraw the contribution, and he suggested that Government should make provision for a half year and then the thing could be closed down. I do not think it is fair to reduce the amount. I think hon. Members ought to support the retention of the item at the 1946 figure and give six months to close the whole thing down. That is the most reasonable thing to do. While we ask for the reduction of certain expenditure we do not want to put people out of employment or to go back on our word. I think hon. Members should request that the vote be carried out at \$10,000.

The CHAIRMAN: It is a matter entirely for Members of the Council.

Dr. SINGH: In Committee this item was debated and we all agreed that it should stand at \$3,000.

Mr. ROTH: Hon. Members do not seem to realize the possibility of the Tourist industry here. Trinidad is spending \$80,000 a year for the next three years; and Jamaica, very much more in this direction. As a matter of fact, the Bureau asked the Government for \$8,000 last year when we just managed to get through our commitments. It is true, tourists are not coming down here now; but, as Your Excellency is aware, there has been started quite a powerful movement towards the tourist trade and through this Tourist Bureau we are taking part in it. Your Excellency is also aware that the Tourist Bureau has put up several other recommendations in the interest of the tourist trade, some requiring a certain amount of legislation. Certainly \$10,000 will not cover the cost of working of the Bureau this year as we visualize. Unless Government is prepared to support the Bureau and see it worked in a way as to make it be of use to the Colony, then the sooner it is scrapped the better.

Mr. HUMPHRYS: I would be very grateful for the information as to Govern-

ment's reason for wishing to reduce this vote from \$10,000 to \$3,000; I would be glad to know why. I am not entirely happy about it. Perhaps some of the Members who are opposed to the vote may on reflection vote for it. I am not entirely satisfied with it.

The COLONIAL TREASURER : I am not quite conversant with the history of it, but my impression is that \$7,000 additional was granted last year as a special vote and only for that year.

Mr. HUMPHRYS : Can you make certain about that? Failing that I ask that this one item be allowed to stand over for further enquiry to be made during the week-end.

The CHAIRMAN : I will meet you and I will ask for something in return later on.

Mr. HUMPHRYS : I have no objection to bargaining.

Mr. PEER BACCHUS : I do not think it is necessary for this matter to stand down. The Committee decided one thing and I would rather like to see the item put now.

Mr. VEERASAWMY : If the Committee Members sat and decided something they should not come back here and try to do any fishing about with the item in the hope that Government would pull it through. If Government wants I would vote for it, but Committee Members should not come here and play fast and loose.

Mr. THOMPSON : I have voted one way in the Committee, and I think that what was decided there should be carried through here. My feeling is that such action is doing the Colony more harm than good. We have nothing to offer tourists. I had moved that the item be taken off the Estimates, but as a compromise I accepted the \$3,000 and I am not going from that.

The CHAIRMAN : What I suggest to solve the problem is that we take a division now, with the Officials not voting, as to whether this item is to be carried at \$3,000 or whether we should defer it for further consideration. I am quite prepared to do that.

Mr. RAATGEVER : I do not want it deferred. The Tourist Committee was created by Government to foster the Tourist industry. It is in the Colony's interest that it should continue functioning, but if Government feels the Committee is not serving any useful purpose and should be dissolved let Government say so. I want the reason for reducing the amount to be stated publicly here. I am not trying to go back on anything done in Committee as the amount was reduced in Committee; Members felt it should be carried at \$3,000 as printed. I accept the decision of the Committee, but I want an explanation from you, sir, as to the reason why the amount was reduced from \$10,000 to \$3,000 when Government is under an obligation to support this Bureau in New York, as it was established with the consent of Government. In fairness to our representative in New York notice of any intention to withdraw should be given. I hope that the Press will ventilate the matter.

The CHAIRMAN : I cannot make a statement. I, personally, have no knowledge of this item.

Mr. LEE : I would like to draw Members' attention to the fact that the item was decided by a majority. Such a decision goes, but Members reserved the right to come into this Council and express their views and that is what they are doing. If Your Excellency calls for a division I would then see who would violate what has been decided in Committee.

Mr. HUMPHRYS : There is no question of violation. Those who opposed will not vote. The hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Raatgever, is worried about this matter. If there is any explanation, let us have it. If the item goes to the vote I would not vote.

The CHAIRMAN : The vote of \$10,000 was given to cover the cost of setting up, in conjunction with Trinidad, an Information and Advertising Bureau in New York in connection with the Tourist Trade.

Mr. HUMPHRYS : Why it is \$3,000 this year, I cannot say.

The CHAIRMAN : This Government has an obligation to pay the money. It is Government funds that the Bureau is operating on. To solve this knotty problem, I am perfectly prepared to put it to the vote now if Members want it.

Mr. RAATGEVER : I am standing by the decision of the Committee.

The CHAIRMAN : You are saying that the Chair is responsible for carrying it out at \$3,000 and I say I am perfectly prepared to put it to the vote and to abide by the decision of this Council. I cannot do anything else. We must reach a decision either to defer the item or put it to the vote now. I do not mind what hon. Members do.

Mr. PEER BACCHUS : I move that the item be put.

The CHAIRMAN : In other words, that the vote be carried at \$3,000 ?

Mr. PEER BACCHUS : Yes.

Item put, and the Committee divided and voted as follows :—

For : Messrs. Veerasawmy, Farnum, Thompson, Peer Bacchus, Gonsalves and Dr. Singh—6.

Against : Mr. Roth—1.

Did not vote : Messrs. Raatgever, Lee, King, Jacob, Humphrys, C. V. Wight, the Colonial Treasurer, the Attorney-General and the Colonial Secretary—9

Motion carried.

Head passed at \$798,536.

Head XXIV—Miscellaneous—(b) Subventions, etc. other than Municipal—deferred.

#### OFFICIAL RECEIVER

Mr. C. V. WIGHT : Members desire to point out that the present holder of this post, Mr. Percy King, we are informed, is leaving the Service. He is under an agreement and it has always been understood that Government does not intend to appoint another Officer on the same agreement. It is suggested that a Committee of legal

Members of this Council should be appointed to go into the question of the Official Receiver's Office generally. We think there should be an amalgamation of the Office with the Registry Department, especially in view of the fact that it was discussed some time ago when the Commissioner of Income Tax, Mr. Howie, was here. His proposal was to remove the Estate Duty Department in the Registrar's Office to the Income Tax Office, and it was thought by the Members here that no appointment should be made to the substantive post until such Committee functions and reports to Government. It has been stressed by all Unofficial Members that no appointment like the present one should be made. The question of revenue coming to the Government from the Department should be considered with the emoluments drawn by the Officers of the Department and the general question of amalgamation which Members feel—those of us who have contact with the Department—would bring considerable saving to Government. I do not think it is necessary to go into all the criticism levelled at the present set up. I think something can be done. If Government accepts the advice of hon. Members as submitted here it might result in considerable benefit, not only in efficient working but also in increased revenue for the Department.

Mr. JACOB : I think it was felt that all Government officers, except certain Specialist officers, when they receive fees should pay them into revenue. I think this is the only Department which has the practice that when fees are received by this officer—the Official Receiver—he is not bound to pay them into revenue. I think this is the only case and I would like to make the point that this Council was almost unanimous in its decision that all fees must go to Government. I trust that when the new appointment is made that term will be included.

The CHAIRMAN : That is the intention.

Mr. VEERASAWMY : The views of the hon. Member for Essequibo River were known to me before today. My opinion is, however, that desirable as it might be, it would not be practical to combine the two

Departments. I do not think the amalgamation would be an easy thing to carry out, although I would like to see it done.

Mr. LEE: I feel, as a result of my personal experience with them, that the two offices can be amalgamated. Estate duty papers are dealt with by the officers and a certain part of the work could be done by the Registrar. I feel that the amalgamation would result in a big saving to Government.

The CHAIRMAN: It is a legal matter and I should like to refer it to a legal committee of this Council for advice.

Mr. PEER BACCHUS: As regards the question of advice I think that not only in this Department but in no other should fees be paid to an officer so long as he is a Government officer. They should be paid into general revenue. We cannot make fish of one and fowl of the other.

The CHAIRMAN: I know nothing whatever about the subject, and I would like to hold it over until the Attorney-General comes back. I will discuss it with him before appointing a Committee of legal Members of this Council. It is now 5 o'clock, and if hon. Members so desire we can go on or adjourn until tonight.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: I think we should go on until 5.30 o'clock.

The CHAIRMAN: I have been asked by the Colonial Treasurer why Head XXIV.—(Miscellaneous — (b) Subventions, etc., other than Municipal)—has not been taken. I understand hon. Members do not wish to take it now.

Mr. RAATGEVER: I thought we should consider it later—when we go into Ways and Means.

#### POLICE

Mr. VEERASAWMY: I desire to say again—so that the Press should make a note of it—that the Members of this Council never interfered with the Police vote at all. It is being rumoured that the Legislative Council has reduced the Police vote by several thousand dollars.

The CHAIRMAN: The Government has done that.

Mr. VEERASAWMY: It is being stated that the Legislative Council has done it.

The CHAIRMAN: It is quite clear that the Police vote was passed without reduction.

*Item 28—Maintenance, Portable Wireless Sets, \$400.*

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I would suggest that this amount be transferred to the Post Office Telecommunications Department.

Agreed.

#### POST OFFICE

*Item 5 — Conveyance of Mails, \$112,000.*

Mr. JACOB: The statement was made some time ago that the Essequibo mail contract would not be renewed; I would like to know what is the position

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: It is all right; leave it alone.

Mr. JACOB: I just wanted to remind Government that no contract should be signed unless an item for the amount is passed here.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not know if it has been signed as yet.

Item passed.

#### POST OFFICE — TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND ELECTRICAL INSPECTOR'S BRANCH

*Item 4—Maintenance—Telecommunications, \$23,360.*

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I beg to move that this item be increased by \$400 following the transfer of the provision (\$400) under head XXVII., Police, sub-head 28—Maintenance of Portable Wireless Sets,

Agreed to.

## PRISONS

The CHAIRMAN: There are some reductions here, but I would like hon. Members to reconsider some of these items. I want to ask you not to cut out the item (20) providing for the purchase of a launch and to give the Prisons a lorry. They need it very badly.

Mr. RAATGEVER: Several Members who voted against both of these items in Finance Committee have gone home because they say they are not prepared to work after 5 o'clock.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Humphrys said he would bargain with me.

Mr. RAATGEVER: We cannot give in; we have given in already in the matter of the Director of Education and the \$960. We have to stick to our decisions.

The CHAIRMAN: If you would not give in then I would not wait.

*Item 14—Dental plates, etc. and spectacles for prisoners, \$1,000—reduced to \$300.*

*Item 18—Purchase of lorry, \$3,500—deleted.*

*Item 20—Purchase of launch, \$3,000—deleted.*

PUBLIC WORKS—ANNUALLY  
RECURRENT

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: Under this Head hon. Members are asking Government to supply them with a priority list relating to the materials which would have to be purchased out of this \$500,000.

The CHAIRMAN: Of course, hon. Members would realize that our needs far exceed this \$500,000 so that it is exceedingly difficult to give a list of priority. We will have to give you a list, however.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I desire to move in a new item, 6, to read as follows:—Maintenance, River defences Craig Village, East Bank, Demerara, \$150. This vote is to assist in protecting the new river defences recently put down in that area.

Motion put and agreed to.

REGISTRATION OF BIRTHS, DEATHS  
AND MARRIAGES

*Item 7—Purchase of 40 steel-filing cabinets, \$1,956.*

Mr. PEER BACCHUS: I am moving the deletion of this item.

Mr. RAATGEVER: These steel cabinets are not fire-proof. We had half a dozen of them and they were destroyed in the last big fire with all the records in them.

The CHAIRMAN: It is necessary to have something, however, and I think hon. Members should agree to our building a fire-proof vault

Mr. RAATGEVER: We will agree to that.

Item deleted.

## SUPREME COURT

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: There is the question of instituting a Court of Criminal Appeal and appointing an Official Reporter. It is still under consideration but I do not know what has happened to it. The last time the matter was raised Government said they had it under consideration. I think it went to the Chief Justice and the last thing I remember is that the hon. the Attorney-General (Mr. Pretheroe) and the Chief Justice (Sir John Verity) were considering the matter, but I do not know what has happened since then.

Mr. VEERASAWMY: I would like to support the hon. Member for Western Essequibo in this matter. As far as the appointment of an Official Reporter is concerned, his services should be available at the Criminal Sessions in every murder case. I agree that we must have a proficient man and he would be very useful in murder cases especially.

The CHAIRMAN: We cannot use an Official Reporter from this office; they have much work to do.

Mr. VEERASAWMY: I am not pressing for that, but from January at least I think there should be an Official Reporter for the murder cases at the Criminal Sessions. As regards the establishment of a

Court of Criminal Appeal, I think the time is long overdue for it.

The CHAIRMAN : As far as I remember the view taken on the question of appointing an Official Reporter for murder cases was that unless the report of the trial is of an exceedingly high standard it would be dangerous for the notes of evidence to be taken from the shorthand notes of the reporter. I think that is what Mr. Pretheroe was doubtful about, and he always quoted a case where a conviction was quashed because of an error in the notes of evidence in a trial which took place in Nigeria. My own experience is that in Nassau we used to employ shorthand reporters for murder cases only, and I think we have a sufficiently high standard of reporters in British Guiana for work of that nature. I would be prepared to supply one reporter if hon. Members put up the money.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT : The question was raised that we have not got suitable reporters but I know that in a few cases in which I was engaged in the Supreme Court I got reporters to supply the notes and everybody was satisfied. The question of not having competent men was also raised with respect to the Official Reporters here. I think Mr. Pretheroe always had it in his head that the standard of reporting in British Guiana was not very good, but we are perfectly prepared to vote the money for a Reporter for the Supreme Court because it is something absolutely necessary. If Government agrees we can insert an item for the vote now.

Mr. RAATGEVER : No; not now. We will have to discuss it with other Members; not so quickly Mr. Wight.

The CHAIRMAN : We will have to know what is wanted and then you will vote the money.

#### TRANSPORT AND HARBOURS

Mr. C. V. WIGHT : The new General Manager of this Department has been showing very creditable results since he took over and I think it is only fair that hon. Members here should place on record our appreciation of his work.

The CHAIRMAN : Thank you. I heartily agree.

Mr. RAATGEVER : The hon. Member for Western Essequibo has stolen my thunder.

#### TREASURY

Mr. RAATGEVER : Here I would like to express my appreciation of the Colonial Treasurer as being the Head of the only Government Department which has shown a reduction this year. It is something which I think the Heads of other Departments should copy.

The COLONIAL TREASURER : I thank the hon. Member for his complimentary remarks.

Mr. RAATGEVER : I am reminded that I should also pay a tribute to Your Excellency for the good work you did when we were in Finance Committee discussing the various matters.

The CHAIRMAN : Thank you very much.

#### TREASURY—INCOME TAX OFFICE

Mr. JACOB : I would like to refer to the question of irregularity as regards Administration and Departmental reports. I asked two questions in this Council recently about this matter but I do not think Government's reply was satisfactory. I am not going to labour the point, but I say it is rather unsatisfactory that the Income Tax Commissioners should submit a report for 1944 dated February 28, 1946, and it was not laid in this Council or submitted to hon. Members until some time in April, 1946. I have not got a copy of the report here and I speak subject to correction as to the date on which it was submitted, but I think it shows a very bad example to other Government Departments. As a matter of fact, the officer concerned should have begun to prepare his statistics for this year by now, since he must begin early in order to get all his statistics.

There could be no excuse for leaving a Departmental report of this nature behind and publishing it some 14 months overdue. I ask this Government to get its

officers to work on time and to do their work expeditiously. In every properly organized business reports and statistics must be submitted in time. In my own business I close my accounts a month in advance all the time and I see no reason why this Department could not do likewise. It has been relieved of many duties and responsibilities, and whether the reports are printed or not they should be available in the Secretariat at the proper time so that hon. Members may go and inspect them if they so desire.

The CHAIRMAN: You are quite reasonable; I do not know why the report was so long delayed. Perhaps it was due to the arrival of Mr. Howie (Income Tax Adviser), but I admit that the report was much too late

Mr. JACOB: It is a delicate matter, but reports on income tax ought to be available as early as possible.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: They were waiting for details in some cases.

#### COLONIAL EMERGENCY MEASURES

##### *Item 1—Miscellaneous, \$300,000.*

Mr. RAATGEVER: I do not think the detailed list relating to this item is correct, sir. If you add it up it comes to \$335,366 while the amount being carried out here is \$300,000.

The CHAIRMAN: I think we can leave it until later, in that case. After all we are going to meet again.

Mr. RAATGEVER: We have decided to pass the item at \$280,000—taking off \$20,000. Government has decided that Commodity Control should be reduced by \$25,000 and we are in agreement with that.

The CHAIRMAN: That is under Legislative Council Food Production Committee.

Mr. RAATGEVER: Apparently Government has cut off \$35,366 from this list, but we do not know how that was done.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I think under Legislative Council Food Production Committee there are several people

employed and Government would have to give them notice.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not think you understand the answer. Members would not object to passing this item providing it does not exceed a total of \$280,000.

Mr. RAATGEVER: That is the point; we are meeting you there.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I do hope that during the course of the year some of these items would fall out and that the total would come down to \$300,000. I am only asking hon. Members to consider the terms which exist between the Legislative Council Food Production Committee and the people employed on the New Amsterdam Food Production Scheme. The Director of Agriculture has reported that he would require the sum of \$3,950 in order to give them notice.

Mr. RAATGEVER: We are giving you \$280,000 to allocate as you like. We are not concerned as to how you allocate it. I think Government should accept that and put it to whatever use they can.

The CHAIRMAN: I am not quite clear why we are putting in \$300,000 when we want \$335,000.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Because there are economies which must be effected during the course of the year in such things as wages for employees.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: Government is saying "we can save \$35,000", but the hon. Nominated Member (Mr. Raatgever) is saying "you must save \$49,000." That is the position.

The CHAIRMAN: I suggest that we adjourn *sine die*, in which case hon. Members would be able to consider this item—Miscellaneous—and the following item—Subsidization—later.

Mr. RAATGEVER: I think we should pass this item now.

Item 1—Miscellaneous—carried at \$280,000.

Item 2—Subsidization, \$1,000,000—deferred.

Council resumed.

Mr. C. V. WIGHT: I do not know whether we would meet again before Christmas and, therefore, before we adjourn, I desire to take this opportunity on behalf of all the Members present to convey to Your Excellency and family our very best wishes for a happy Christmas and a bright New Year.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Wight. I would like to offer to

all the Members of this Council my grateful thanks for the co-operation and assistance they have rendered to me in the business of the Council. I desire also, on behalf of myself and family, to extend the best of the Season's greetings to all of you—those who are here now and those who attended Council before. I do not intend to meet again before Christmas, and so I think the best thing to do is to adjourn the Council *sine die* and meet as soon as it is possible.