

Index To TCT's Speeches Made In The Legislative Councils, 1948-1955

Council/ Date	Topic
<p>1. LegCo, Singapore, Thurs, 1.4.1948</p>	<p>a) TCT took the Oath of Allegiance and assumed his seat as an Elected Unofficial Member of the Council.</p> <p>b) TCT seconded a Resolution proposed by EMF Fergusson that a certain address be presented to His Majesty.</p> <p><u>Motion by Mr. EMF Fergusson:</u> Your Excellency, I beg to move that a humble Address be presented to His Majesty as followeth:-</p> <p>We Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects the members of the Legislative Council for the Colony of Singapore assembled in Council on this 1st day of April, 1948, the first meeting of the Council beg leave to offer our humble duty and loyal greetings to Your Majesty.</p> <p><u>TCT:</u> Sir, I rise to second the motion.</p> <p>The motion is agreed to.</p> <p><u>The Governor:</u> The Council now adjourns until 10 a.m. on April the 7th.</p> <p>Council adjourns. (B10)</p>
<p>2. LegCo, Wed, 7.4.1948</p>	<p>a) TCT was nominated to the Select Committee on the draft Debtor and Creditor (Occupation Period) Bill. The other members were N.A. Mallal, S.C. Goho and E.R. Koek.</p> <p><u>The Governor:</u> As it is now necessary, Gentlemen, to appoint a Committee, the establishment of which you have approved, I understand that it will be agreeable to Honourable Members that in addition to the Financial Secretary and the Attorney-General, who will be the two Official Members, the following be nominated:-</p> <p align="center">Mr. Tan Chin Tuan Mr. NA Mallal</p>

	<p style="text-align: center;">Mr. SC Goho Mr. ER Koek</p> <p>I nominate them accordingly.</p> <p>I appoint the Financial Secretary to be the Chairman and fix the quorum at four. (B13)</p> <p>b) TCT was also selected to sit on the Finance Committee of the Council. The other members were J. Laycock and Che Sardon bin Haji Jubir.</p> <p><u>The Governor:</u> There is just one other matter I should like to mention before the adjournment arises, and that is the composition of the Finance Committee.</p> <p>I understand that the Honourable Members have already been consulted on this subject and that it is agreeable to them that a Finance Committee of this Council should be established under draft Standing Order 34 and will consist of:</p> <p>The Financial Secretary, as the Chairman, and for the present the following Unofficial members:-</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Mr. Tan Chin Tuan Mr. J. Laycock Che Sardon bin Haji Jubir</p> <p>A very heavy burden will fall on the Finance Committee, but composed as it is and with the previous experience possessed by its members, I am confident that it will carry out its responsibilities to the entire satisfaction of this Council. When the members of the Finance Committee will commence their labours, they will do so, I am sure, with the best wishes of this Council. (Applause). (B15)</p>
3. LegCo, Tues, 18.5.1948	-
4. LegCo, Mon, 31.5.1948	-
5. LegCo, Tues, 15.6.1948	<p><u>The Singapore Legislative Council Elections (Amendment Bill)- 2nd reading</u> J Laycock moved the second reading of the Bill 'An Ordinance to amend the S'pore LegCo Elections Ordinance, 1947' and</p>

	<p>commented on selected issues such as the right of British protected persons to vote and why constituencies should be single-member constituencies. TCT supported the motion as most of the proposed amendments appeared desirable to the present Ordinance and added that further consideration of the amendments was best done in the committee stage.</p> <p><u>TCT:</u> Your Excellency, I rise to support the motion. I do so because most of the proposed amendments appear to be desirable amendments to the present Ordinance. If some of the proposed amendments require further consideration, that I think can best be done in the committee stage. (B106)</p>
6. LegCo, Tues, 13.7.1948	<p>a) The Singapore LegCo Elections (Amendment) Bill was referred to a Select Committee, which consisted of W.L. Blythe, TCT, R. Jumabhoy, M.J. Namazie, E.R. Koek and Lim Yew Hock.</p> <p><u>The Governor:</u> The motion before the House is that the Singapore Legislative Council Elections (Amendment) Bill be referred to a Select Committee. Those in favour of the proposition will say "Aye". Those against it will say "No".</p> <p>The "Ayes" have it.</p> <p>The Bill will now be referred to a Select Committee, consisting of:-</p> <p>The Attorney-General as Chairman; Mr. WL Blythe (Deputy President, Municipal Commissioners); The Member for Chinese Chamber of Commerce (Mr. Tan Chin Tuan); The Member for Indian Chamber of Commerce (Mr. R. Jumabhoy); The First Member for Municipality North-East (Mr. MJ Namazie); Mr. ER Koek; Mr. Lim Yew Hock.</p> <p>The quorum is fixed at four. I understand that the names which I have mentioned as</p>

being appointed to this Committee have the full approval of this House. (B184)

**b) Motion by the Attorney-General:
Continuation of operation of control of
Rent Ordinance, 1947**

TCT commented that as the Government had discontinued subsidising the price of rice and sugar, it would not be fair for it to continue controlling rent and called for early consideration to the progressive relaxation of this control.

TCT: Your Excellency, I have no wish to object to this motion as it stands; but I do feel it my duty to submit that since Government has thought fit to discontinue subsidising the price of rice and sugar it seems not quite fair to continue to control rent, because such control has the effect of continuing to saddle a section of the community with a subsidy towards the costs of living of the whole community.

Moreover, Government has and is re-entering uncompromisingly into possession of all its properties as soon as the leases thereof expire and thus it has been able to relet some of the premises, such as the Alhambra and Marlborough Theatres, at comparatively higher rents than at the beginning of the control. In other instances, it now gets the full house rent instead of the quit rent only, the difference between the two rents being several thousand per cent.

The Crown is, of course, unhampered by the Control of Rent Ordinance; but will it not be only reasonable to expect that the ordinary property owner should not be deprived of at least the privileges that Government has considered proper to assume for itself?

Early consideration must therefore be given to the progressive relaxation of this control as has been done with other temporary controls. (Applause).

The motion is agreed to. (B200)

7. LegCo, Tues, 14.9.1948	-
8. LegCo, Tues, 19.10.1948	<p data-bbox="719 230 1401 338"><u>a) Motion by the Financial Secretary on application to spend a sum of \$5,000 for the 'rehabilitation of Cocos Island airstrip'</u></p> <p data-bbox="719 338 1401 521">TCT expressed his support for J Laycock's request for a debate on the above subject. He joined Laycock in opposing the motion, on grounds of the reasons enumerated by the latter.</p> <p data-bbox="719 562 1401 707"><u>TCT:</u> Your Excellency, I rise to support the request of the Second Member for Municipality North-East (Mr. JOHN LAYCOCK). (B296)</p> <p data-bbox="719 757 751 779">...</p> <p data-bbox="719 819 1401 1514"><u>TCT:</u> Your Excellency, I rise in support of the Second Member for Municipality North-East (Mr. JOHN LAYCOCK) in opposing this motion. He has enumerated very fully the reasons for the opposition, so that I will only stress that though the amount involved is not considerable, the principle concerned is nevertheless not unimportant. At the same time I think I should point out in fairness to Your Excellency that although I am a Member of the Executive Council it has not prevented me from voting against this application in the Finance Committee when the financial aspect of the question seems to dictate that I should vote against it. The Executive Council is concerned purely with policy, and I must say again in fairness to Your Excellency that it has always kept itself purely to policy. (Applause). (B300)</p> <p data-bbox="719 1554 1262 1588"><u>b) Weekly Holidays Bill- 2nd reading</u></p> <p data-bbox="719 1588 1401 1989">TCT expressed the sentiments of the general committee of the CCC that the Bill would unduly interfere with how the shopkeepers conduct their business. He also suggested that a separate classification be formed to ensure that those employers in the category make arrangements to give their employees their weekly holiday. He added that no one would oppose the legislation if its rationale is correctly communicated and understood.</p>

TCT: Your Excellency, the General Committee of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce considered this Bill at their last monthly meeting, and I have to state that the majority opinion of that meeting is that the Bill would unduly interfere with the freedom of shopkeepers to go about their business in their own way. It is claimed that many of the small shops are staffed by the proprietor and his family who generally live on the premises, and when such shops are forced to close they have to shut themselves in and often be at a loss as to what to do for the day. It is also pointed out that most of the big shops, such as those in North Bridge Road and South Bridge Road, wholesalers in Circular Road and imports and exports houses in Telok Ayer Street, are already observing Sunday as a holiday, and so this legislation would be unnecessary.

In short, Sir, the feeling of that meeting is that since most firms are already closing for one day a week and most employers in Singapore are giving the employees a day off weekly, it would be better if the remaining firms and employers are left to fall in line with this modern trend in due course. It is also contended that as foodstuffs go bad very quickly in the tropics and as most people are still unable to afford refrigerators, they have to make purchase of their foodstuffs daily.

While all these objections are worthy of consideration, I feel, Sir, that the last-mentioned merits special consideration and should, I suggest, be met by classifying grocers, fruiterers, fishmongers and other dealers in perishable stuffs in the category of restaurants and theatres who are not compelled to close but must make their own arrangements to give their employees their weekly holiday.

I should, however, add, Sir, that my personal opinion, after balancing the pros and cons, is that provided this legislation is correctly regarded as laying down the principle that in these modern days

	<p>everyone must have a right to rest on at least a day a week, it is a measure which no thinking man should oppose. (Applause).</p> <p>The motion is agreed to and the Bill is read a second time. (B327)</p>
<p>9. LegCo, Tues, 9.11.1948</p>	<p><u>a) Motion that the Debtor and Creditor Bill be referred to a Select Committee.</u></p> <p>TCT was nominated to the Select Committee to examine the Debtor and Creditor (Occupation Period) Bill. The other members were N.A. Mallal, Lim Yew Hock and Thio Chan Bee.</p> <p><u>The Governor:</u> I understand that it is agreeable to Honourable Members that the Committee should consist of the remaining members of the original Select Committee which examined this legislation, namely, the Financial Secretary as Chairman and the following as members:-</p> <p style="text-align: center;"> The Attorney-General Mr. Tan Chin Tuan Mr. NA Mallal Mr. Lim Yew Hock </p> <p>with the addition of Mr. Thio Chan Bee.</p> <p>I nominate them accordingly and fix the quorum at four. (B374)</p> <p>b) TCT called for the government to come clean on the decision to keep the thumbprint on registration card or withdraw the requirement.</p> <p><u>TCT:</u> Your Excellency, I would like to draw your attention to what appears to me to be an inexplicable weakness on the part of this Government in the matter of thumb prints on identity cards. I was astounded, and so must have been many others, to see this Government capitulating with almost humiliating eagerness to the insistence of the Federation Government that Singapore registration cards to be used in the Federation must bear the thumb print of the holder after this Government has itself decided to waive this requirement.</p>

As the general misconception is that this Government had yielded to the clamour of the Chinese community, I would crave your indulgence to dispel this illusion by analysing the usefulness of thumb printing identity cards under our present system of registration.

In view of the present emergency, no one can reasonably object to this registration and the issuance of identity cards to facilitate the checking of the identity of all of 12 years of age or more. The question therefore is simply whether it is necessary for identity cards to bear the thumb print as well as the signature of the holder, and the immediate security position of any territory which may change overnight should never have been imported to confuse the issue. In support of the desirability of thumb printing all identity cards, our experts have been repeating the platitude that signatures can be forged but thumb prints cannot be forged. This platitude is, however, misleading when applied to this case because:-

Firstly, there would be two signatures on each identity card, those of the issuing officer and the holder. Anyone who is capable of forging a signature would, I submit, find it easier and more advantageous to forge the signature of the issuing officer: yet identity cards are issued without the thumb print of the issuing officer.

Secondly, verification of thumb prints can only be made by trained eyes with the aid of magnifying glasses and special equipment to take the required fresh prints for the necessary comparison; and as there are comparatively few in the Police Force who are capable of making such verifications, in practice therefore such verifications will have to be made at Police Headquarters, which means of course that suspects will have to be brought back to the Headquarters in any case. In that event, if he should be desired, not only the thumb print

	<p>but even all the finger prints of a suspect can be taken and sent to be checked at the criminal registry. Furthermore, if the suspect has already be detained, would it not be more conclusive and convenient to check any identity card believed to have been forged or tampered with in any way with the duplicated which is kept in the Registry?</p> <p>Government must, of course, ignore the whimsical likes and dislikes of sections of the people when the safety of the State is involved; but I respectfully submit that undue advantage must not be taken of the emergency to foist on the people any requirement which is not really necessary. It is reported that, notwithstanding their objections, 99% of all those who have so far received their registration cards have opted to affix their thumb prints. This shows how acquiescent the law-abiding Chinese community is in spite of their prejudices. It is now for both the Singapore and Federation Governments to come out of hiding behind platitudes and tell us frankly why thumb prints are necessary or else withdraw this requirement. (Applause). (B376-377)</p>
10. LegCo, Tues, 15.2.1949	<p><u>Motion on the second reading of the Bill 'An Ordinance to amend the Municipal Ordinance'</u></p> <p>TCT agreed with J Laycock's view that while it was reasonable to increase the sewage charge, it was also proper that the Government restricts the powers of the Commissioners over the levy.</p> <p><u>TCT:</u> Your Excellency, I would like to support the Honourable the Second Member for Municipality North-East (Mr. LAYCOCK). I feel that though this is a levy for providing an essential service, it is necessary that Government should have some control over such levy. It is a form of taxation and Government, which is the taxing authority, should not entirely relinquish its right to exercise some restriction over such taxation. (B24)</p>
11. LegCo, Tues, 15.3.1949	a) Motion by Lim Yew Hock to introduce

legislation for social security

TCT suggested that it was neither necessary nor advisable to introduce legislation for social security, as compulsion in any form should be left as a last resort. He went on to move an amendment to the motion before the House, suggesting that the word 'promote' be substituted for the words 'introduce legislation for'. He also added that the question of whether legislation is to be introduced should be left to the Committee investigating the question.

TCT: Your Excellency, while I believe I share a common aim with the mover of this motion in that I am all in favour of ensuring that the average citizen of this Colony all enjoy social security, I would suggest that it is neither necessary nor advisable to specify the means of bringing about that object by legislation. Compulsion in any form, even by way of legislation, is objectionable and should be left as a last resort. I would therefore like to move an amendment to the motion before the House and I hope the Honourable Mr. Lim Yew Hock will be able to accept it. I suggest that the word "promote" be substituted for the words "introduce legislation for". (B80)

...

TCT: Your Excellency, may I be permitted to say a few words in reply to the comments on my proposed amendment? (B82)

...

TCT: Your Excellency, I should just like to make it quite clear that it is not the object of my amendment to preclude legislation being introduced if and when it should be considered necessary. All that my amendment seeks to effect is that the question of whether legislation is to be introduced or not should be left to the Committee which will be investigating this question, and it is for that Committee to recommend in suitable cases the introduction of legislation to enforce any measures it may recommend. (B82)

b) TCT took issue with the relative high price of rationed rice in Malaya compared to Ceylon and Hong Kong and called for the Government to concentrate on bringing down the high cost of living in Malaya. He also suggested on behalf of the Singapore rice retailers that different prices be fixed for different grades of white rice, limed rice and broken rice.

TCT: Your Excellency, may I refer again to the question of the price of rationed rice? According to the written answers to my questions tabled at the February meeting of this Council, the price of rationed rice in Hongkong is 51 cents (Hong Kong) per kati and that in Ceylon is 36 cents (Ceylon) per 2 lbs. The Ceylon price, reduced to a kati, is 24 cents (Ceylon) per kati. Converted on current rates of exchange the Governments of Hong Kong and Ceylon are apparently able to retail rice to the population at about 27 cents and 16 cents (Malayan currency) respectively, as against the 30 cents per kati which the unfortunate people of Singapore have to pay for their rice, whole grain or broken.

Seeing that world supplies of rice are regulated by the International Emergency Food Committee, and that Ceylon and Hong Kong, no less than Malaya, obtain their supplies from practically the same sources, I must confess that it is not easy to understand why rice in Malaya should cost so much more, especially as compared to Ceylon, the price here being almost twice that of Ceylon.

I am also informed that in the producing countries the padi planter receives only a pittance for his padi and that much of the high price the consumer countries have been paying has gone to enrich the rice millers and the middleman. If that be so, Sir, it is quite obvious that we are paying too much for our rice.

Everyone knows that cheaper rice, more than any other factor, will lower the cost of

living in this part of the world, and ever since the Liberation our chief ailment has been the high cost of living. We all also know that in spite of the high rates of wages and generous increases in salary, and a substantial grant of cost of living allowance, most of those who depend on such fixed incomes have been and are still unable to make ends meet. Sir, the need for depressing the cost of living brooks no more dallying and Government must therefore concentrate all its determination on solving this all important problem. If Government is unable to reduce the price of rice by direct procurement, I suggest it restores this business to the normal trade channels. I feel sure much of the wastage and unaccountable losses which contribute towards swelling up the landed costs will disappear, and to that extent at least the people of Malaya will be benefited.

Before I resume my seat, Sir, I would like to commend for the sympathetic consideration of Government a suggestion I have received from the Singapore Sundry Goods and Dried Fruit Retailers Association. Most of the members of this Association retail rice as a side-line. Extracts from Chinese letter from them to the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, translated, read:

“The rice distributed by Government to the retailers are of three varieties, namely, white rice, limed rice and broken rice. But the price is the same for all three varieties. Retailers pay Government 29.4 cents per kati and have to resell the rice at 30 cents per kati, from which it will be seen that their profit is indeed very small. And yet for this they have to bear the brunt of the complaints from the public. Consumers are invariably unwilling to accept a proportion of low quality or unpopular variety of rice with their ration, since they have to pay a flat rate for the whole ration. We therefore venture to suggest that different prices be fixed for the various grades of white rice, limed rice and broken rice. This was done when the trade was in the hands of private

	enterprise, and Government ought to be able to do likewise. If this is done will eliminate much of the squabbling that is going on daily.” (Applause). (B99-100)
12. Emergency Meeting, Tues, 29.3.1949	-
13. LegCo, Tues, 12.4.1949	-
14. LegCo, Tues, 17.5.1949	<p>TCT related the case of the boy who was detained for a torn identity card to illustrate the point that officers could use more sense in carrying out justice. He also suggested that homes for the aged and the destitute be set up as a way of taking care of those who had contributed to the development of the country.</p> <p><u>TCT</u>: Sir, may I, with your permission, refer to a report in the Straits Times of 14th May, in which it is stated that a Chinese student, 14 years of age, was charged in the First District Court? He told the Court that he left his identity card in a pocket when he sent his trousers to the wash. The card was torn in the washing. The boy took the torn card to the Registration Centre for renewal and was arrested. He spent the night under detention in the police station because his parents did not know of his arrest. He showed a trace of a smile when the Judge pronounced the sentence of a fine of one cent.</p> <p>If this report is correct, Sir, and I now speak subject to the accuracy of that report, I suggest that the “big stick” acquired by the authorities under the Emergency Regulations has been unnecessarily wielded in this case to frighten a poor schoolboy for nothing. I submit, Sir, that though the prosecution of this boy was legally justified and the Court, by imposing a nominal fine, has vindicated the fair name of British Justice, nevertheless a mountain has been made out of a mole-hill. May I therefore suggest that instructions be issued to the officers concerned to use a little more of their good sense in future?</p> <p>May I also refer to one other matter, which may be a matter of life and death to certain</p>

	<p>people who are unfortunate enough to be destitute and so are held in remand in prison as vagrants. I understand, Sir, that a good number of these unfortunates, including an old woman of over 60 years of age, is to be deported or repatriated. Sir, it needs little imagination to assess the slender chance of survival these penniless people will have under the existing unsettled conditions in China and the rigours of a merciless climate if they are repatriated.</p> <p>It may be necessary in the interests of public health to prevent these people from spreading disease in the city, but I submit, Sir, that on humanitarian grounds some solution should be found other than the simple expedient of pushing them out of the Colony when they become useless. These people have contributed indirectly to the development and prosperity of this country, as by their labours in the days when they were fit they must have pulled their weight in their own small way. They deserve better of us even if they are merely comparable to beasts of burden, which after all we would not permit to be slaughtered when they grow old. I would like to suggest therefore we establish without delay homes for the aged and the destitute. Let us make destitution less hideous to the aged and the decrepit. (Applause). (B186-187)</p>
<p>15. LegCo, Tues, 21.6.1949</p>	<p>TCT brought the Council's attention to the issues arising from the renewals of Certificates of Admission and called for an enquiry to locate the culprit(s) responsible for the mistakes.</p> <p><u>TCT:</u> Your Excellency, may I invite your attention to the shocking revelations in the replies given to my questions on renewals of Certificates of Admission? They indicate, in my view, that a blatant breach of the law has been committed by the very Department which is charged to administer such law. One must ask: "Why and on what authority was the form of Certificate of Admission revised so that is no longer contained the</p>

	<p>space for renewals?” “Why did the Department use such forms for over two years and who was responsible for the erroneous information given to the applicants when they were illegally refused renewal of their Certificates?”</p> <p>Sir, I submit that this is NO trivial matter. It is certainly no trivial matter to those who have suffered because of the mistake. Those who do not register for identity cards are being prosecuted and fined notwithstanding any reasonable excuse they may offer even though they may be new arrivals and have contravened a new and uncommon Emergency Regulation. In a democratic state there can only be one law for those who governed and those who are governed. It is therefore my duty to urge that here should be an enquiry to locate the culprit or culprits.</p> <p>As regards those who have been misled into paying for new certificates instead of renewing their old ones, I suggest, Sir, that such fees, which have been illegally collected, should be returned forthwith.</p> <p>In conclusion, I would ask that all Government Departments be circularised to remind them that in a British Administration the enactment and revision of the law is the prerogative of the Legislature and it is the duty of the Executive to administer the law as it stands and not as they, rightly or wrongly, would have it. (Applause). (B246-247)</p>
16. LegCo, Thurs, 28.7.1949	<p><u>a) Motion by the Financial Secretary- Grant to the Government of the Federation of Malaya</u></p> <p>TCT supported the motion, on grounds that it is only right that Singapore should extend a helping hand, despite her less than ideal state of finance, to her neighbourly sister in her prevailing financial plight.</p> <p><u>TCT:</u> Your Excellency, I rise to second the motion before the Council with pleasure though fully conscious of its implications - which is to give away an amount of money</p>

which is by no means small for a Colony with a population of less than a million and in its present not too strong state of finance.

Though I cannot claim to hail from that part of the United Kingdom where men are born with the virtue of being thrifty and frugal, making them brilliant financial secretaries and bankers, I think those who know me well will give me the credit of not being too free with money in my care or even with ratepayers' money; nor is our Finance Committee, loaded as it is with men born or trained to count the cents and pennies, accustomed to be generous, if we may judge by the groushings of those who have had anything to do with it. Nevertheless, let me declare forthwith that I support this motion whole-heartedly because I am convinced that it is not only desirable but also right and proper that Singapore should extend a sincere helping hand to her neighbourly sister in her present financial plight. Otherwise I would not hesitate to oppose this motion instead of supporting it.

Contrary to the expectations of my good friend, the Honourable the Financial Secretary, I do not propose to dwell at length on all the good reasons justifying this proposal.

It is desirable, however, for us to remember that the surplus funds of the Straits Settlements Government which stood at the 1st January, 1942, at nearly \$150 million, and of which Singapore's share would be approximately \$96 million, have been almost depleted. We must also realise that for the first two or three years after the liberation, the Colony has had to budget for a deficit, this in spite of the \$50 million loan to meet rehabilitation expenditure. It is only for the year 1949 that Singapore managed to budget for a surplus - and that not without some pinches.

However, I feel sure Honourable Members will agree with me that we must not allow these considerations to eclipse the fact, that

though constitutionally distinct, Singapore and the Federation for practical purposes as well as geographically and economically are almost inseparable. We should also bear in mind that we are in the Marshall Aid era and though we may not be able to emulate that wealthy and generous American nation in generosity, we should learn by her example and in our small way endeavour to follow her lead. As a result of this grant, we will no doubt have to practise stricter economies and perhaps also defer some of our schemes; but by making this sacrifice we shall be able to console ourselves with the fact that we have done unto our neighbour what we would wish our neighbour to do unto us. We shall also have shown, that our declarations of goodwill and sympathy to the Federation are not mere empty gestures, but that we are prepared to back our words with deeds.

In conclusion, Sir, let us hope that this gesture of ours will further consolidate the friendly relationship between the Federation and Singapore as well as promote a lasting partnership based on equality, mutual respect, understanding and the spirit of give and take. Let us also hope that ere long prosperity and peace will return to the Federation. (Applause). (B266-267)

b) TCT supported the amendment moved by J Laycock that five per cent commission on income and two per cent on capital be charged by the Custodian of Property, adding that two per cent on capital is about the rate generally charged. He formally seconded the amendment.

TCT: Your Excellency, I should like to support the amendment moved by Mr. LAYCOCK. As one who has been in this line of business, I can confirm that two per cents on capital is about the rate generally charged.

...

TCT: Sir, I formally second that amendment.

	(B280)
17. LegCo, Tues, 23.8.1949	-
18. Emergency Meeting, Wed, 7.9.1949	<p><u>a) Motion by Financial Secretary- War Damage Compensation Proposals</u></p> <p>TCT moved that the motion be amended and proposed the amendments. He also expressed his appreciation on behalf of the Council and the people of Malaya for the financial assistance from Britain, and congratulated the Select Committee for the success in handling this complex problem.</p> <p><u>TCT:</u> Your Excellency, I rise to move that the motion before the Council be amended by the deletion of sub-paragraphs (a) and (b) and the addition of the words “ the rejections of paragraphs 9,10 and 11 thereof” after the clause “be adopted subject to”. If my amendment is adopted, the motion will then read:-</p> <p>“That the Report of the Select Committee appointed to consider His Majesty’s Government’s new proposals on War Damage Compensation with a view to recommending a revised comprehensive scheme in the light of these proposals, which was laid on the Table of this Council on the 28th July, 1949, as Council Paper No. 133 of 1949, be adopted subject to the rejection of paragraphs 9,10 and 11 thereof.”</p> <p>The object of my amendment is, I think, Sir, quite obvious. It is to do away with the excess profits set-off proposal. Sir, I advocate this jettisoning of what I regard as a useful and fair proposal with considerable regret. However, most of my unofficial colleagues and I consider that its retention can no longer justified if we are to concede to the insistence of the Secretary of State on the exclusion of seizure claims which are expected to form a preponderant portion of the claims that are likely to be affected by such profits set-off test. Moreover, I submit that this modification will resolve all outstanding differences between all the parties concerned so that this much discussed scheme can be implemented</p>

without further ado.

On this occasion I think it is appropriate for me to express the appreciation of this Council and, if I may, also that of the people of Malaya for this most valuable and practical assistance from His Majesty's Government. (Applause). We are indeed grateful.

At the same time, Sir, lest some should be inclined to regard this assistance as an outright act of charity towards Malaya, let me point out that the balance of trade between this country and the United States of America for the year 1948 is almost \$250 million, and for the six months ended June, 1949, it is about \$130 million in Malaya's favour. Malaya has therefore contributed about United States \$180 million to the sterling pool. This Malaya has, of course, done ungrudgingly. Nevertheless, it will be of interest to know that if she had been able to sell this earning of United States dollars in the free market to-day, the country would have profited to the extent of 190 million Straits dollars.

I would also take this opportunity to congratulate the members of the Select Committee on the success of their endeavours. (Applause). As a result of their well-reasoned first report, His Majesty's Government has been induced to increase its gift to this fund by a hundred per cent from £10 million to £20 million. That has, of course, made this scheme possible. To be more personal, Members of this Council are also indebted to members of the Select Committee for sacrificing their valuable time to examine this highly complex problem so that we left this morning with a comparatively simple issue to consider.

Sir, I commend my amendment to the Council as a tangible move from the realm of words into the realm of deeds. (Applause). (B337-338)

b) TCT commented on the treatment of

seizure claims and the adoption of the profits set-off proposal.

TCT: Your Excellency, I do not know if the explanation given by my learned friend the First Member for Municipality South-west (Mr. C.C.TAN) has satisfied the Attorney-General, but as I see it, Sir, this question of treating seizure claims not less advantageously than any claims falling within the category of essential restoration has only arisen because of the profits set-off proposal put up by the Select Committee in their last report. Reading the comment of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, it seems to me that his fear was that seizure claims would be treated less advantageously than other kinds of claims in case the profits set-off proposal should be adopted, but if we now decide to drop this profits set-off proposal, we will revert to the position recommended by the Select Committee in paragraph 17 of their report, tabled as Council Paper No. 24 of 1949, in which they stated:

“We devoted special attention to the question of claims in respect of goods insured under the War Risks (Goods) Insurance legislation in cases where, on the ground that loss occurred through seizure or looting, the Board of Management has denied liability. It has been urged that such cases should receive specially favourable treatment in any scheme of War Damage Compensation. We do not accept this view. We recommend that such claims should rank *pari passu* with all other claims under the War Damage Compensation Scheme, but without prejudice to any right of recourse to litigation which the claimants may be advised that they possess.”

Sir, this is a unanimous recommendation of our Select Committee and as the Secretary of State has not, so far I am aware, criticised it, I think we may assume that he has accepted such recommendation, and in that event the deletion of sub-paragraph (a) will bring us back to the position stated in the

	<p>above paragraph. (B341-342)</p> <p>...</p> <p>TCT: Sir, I would prefer to leave my amendment as it stands as I consider that, if the position is as stated by the Honourable the FINANCIAL SECRETARY, this sub-clause (a) is really not necessary. I feel, Sir, that our Select Committee has gone into this matter very fully, and if the position is, as stated by the HONOURABLE the FINANCIAL SECRETARY, that in paragraph 4 of their Report the Select Committee has accepted the condition laid down by the Secretary of State, we should be guided by its acceptance. To my mind, the Secretary of State's views on this point are not very clear. His comments were:-</p> <p>“The scheme must be based directly on restoration, and in particular the Sub-divisions proposed in the original memorandum of proposals,”—well, we are abiding by the second part—“as well as the balance between those sub-divisions, must be maintained. These sub-divisions were in no way designed as has sometimes been alleged, to favour some sections of the community unduly at the expense of others, but merely to establish priority for payment of claims based on the needs of the country as a whole” and so on and so on.</p> <p>Sir, it has not been specifically stated that seizure claims should be treated not less advantageously than any other claims until in the latest despatch from the Secretary of State, and so I believe my unofficial colleagues will prefer to go by what has already been placed on record in these various reports and despatches. (Applause). (B343)</p> <p>...</p> <p>TCT: It will be on an equal footing, Sir, ranking <i>pari passu</i> with other claims. (B344)</p>
19. LegCo, Tues, 20.9.1949	-
20. LegCo, Wed, 19.10.1949	a) TCT spoke on the need to reduce the budget deficit of Singapore and to cut down on unnecessary expenses in welfare

services.

TCT: Your Excellency, we have just heard, I think, one of the longest speeches ever made in this Council, and at the same time, in spite of the natural dryness of the subject, one which was not uninteresting. That shows the skill with which the Honourable the Financial Secretary has been guiding us through his maze of Estimates for which he deserves our warmest congratulations. So much has been said in explanation as well as in justification that one is left little to comment, especially since the Estimates are to be referred to a Select Committee.

However, there are two or three salient points worth noting at this stage.

The first is that for the first time since 1948 we are faced with a huge deficit in our Budget—and that a substantial one of about \$6½ million. All will agree that we must try to reduce, if not eliminate, this difference. That task as well as the need of raising taxation, or perhaps even reducing some of the indirect taxes, can I suggest best be left to the Select Committee.

Our financial position to-day, thanks to the tender nursing of our gifted Financial Secretary, is far healthier than ever since the Liberation. One of the most significant pointers is the transformation of our overdraft of \$31 million on the Joint Colonial Fund into a credit balance now. Nevertheless, let us not forget that the economy of this country has always been, and still is, highly vulnerable. We are largely dependent on our entrepot trade, and post-war indications are that we shall have to compete more keenly than ever to prevent such trade from being diverted elsewhere. However, provided she is not hampered by unnecessary controls, or over-burdened with taxation, Singapore can face with equanimity any clean competition, because she not only enjoys geographical and economical advantages, but also the most

stable government in South-East Asia.

Referring to the heavy list of revotes, I think it shows that this Council has erred, if at all, in being too lenient with the estimates for welfare services such as the Educational and Medical Departments. The revotes of the Educational Department alone total over \$1,600,000. Nevertheless I believe Honourable members of this Council remain unanimous in their resolve to accelerate the expansion of the welfare services and to continue to give them every encouragement (Applause), though this must not be interpreted as willingness to tolerate extravagance. (An Honourable Member: Hear ! Hear !).

On the whole I consider the Estimates soundly conceived, well balanced, and well presented. Budgeting on the expectation of a revenue of \$100 million denotes our confidence in 1950, and the scales of our budgetary provisions for Police, Education, and Medical indicate our determination to maintain law and order as well as keep our pace on social progress. (Applause). (B420-421)

b) Rubber Packing and Shipping Control Bill- 2nd Reading

TCT questioned the reasons in support of the second reading of the Bill. He described the concerns of the Singapore Chinese Rubber Dealers Association towards the enactment of the Bill and commented on the unusual composition of the new proposed Board formed to look into the packing and shipping of rubber for export.

TCT: Your Excellency, I do not propose the second reading of this Bill, since it is intended to refer it to a Select Committee. However, I feel I cannot allow this occasion to pass without commenting on it.

It has just been suggested that representatives from all sections of the industry are agreed that this legislative action is desirable. May I ask who are those

representatives, and do they include a representative of the Singapore Chinese Rubber Dealers Association, an association which is by no means unimportant, and which has circulated copies of a memorandum to Honourable Members opposing the introduction of a bill such as this? That Association has expressed the opinion that the enactment of a bill such as this will be fraught with the gravest risk of commercial blackmail.

We have also been told that an endeavour has been made to maintain a reasonable balance on the Board between the various interests in the industry, but let us see what the memo of the Singapore Chinese Rubber Dealers Association has to say on this point. Paragraph 11 of that memo reads:

“Another matter cause concern to the Association. Considering that the Singapore Chamber of Commerce Rubber Association has never admitted any Chinese firm, person or Chinese-controlled company to membership of this governing body, the Singapore Chinese Rubber Dealers Association can hardly be expected to anticipate that the new proposed Board, which is to contain two representatives of the Singapore Chamber of Commerce Rubber Association, will be unduly favourably inclined to the Chinese section of the trade. The two nominees are likely to be leading and powerful figures from the European section of the trade whose attitude can be expected to have great influence with the Board. The Singapore Chinese Rubber Dealers Association has never felt that the European-controlled Singapore Chamber of Commerce Rubber Association has ever intended deliberately to slight or be unfair in any way to the Chinese section of the trade, but nothing can get over the facts mentioned in the first sentence of this paragraph and all that those facts imply.”

Another unusual feature of the composition of this Board is that it is to be comprised of

only three members representing Singapore interest, as against eight representing Federation of Malaya interest, with the quorum-mind you- fixed at five. The way representation of the Federation has been loaded against that of Singapore seems unjustifiable.

It is true that for some considerable time after the Liberation much of the rubber packed and shipped was old rubber. The explanation of this is again clearly given in the Singapore Chinese Rubber Dealers Association's memorandum, which I will quote:

“For a considerable time after the reoccupation of Singapore, due to the conditions then prevailing much of the rubber packed and shipped was old rubber. Naturally, this led to unusual complaints and claims. In the beginning it was a Government body, namely, the Rubber Buying Unit, who packed and shipped rubber to other countries. It was during that time that the first major complaints arose. When the Rubber Buying Unit ceased to function and the trade turned into its normal channels, many of the dealers in the trade who had been buying for the Rubber Buying Unit had stocks of old rubber and, indeed, although new production was progressing, considerable quantities of old rubber continued to be bought and sold. Although when such rubber was packed and graded here it seemed to those responsible to be of the grade stated by them, on more leisurely examination by the country of destination it sometimes turned out, although of perhaps quite a good appearance, to be wanting for example, in tensile strength. It follows that it was not unnatural that for some time after the Rubber Buying Unit ceased to operate the complaints continued.”

It would therefore seem that this Bill is rather out-of-date and not really necessary. In fact, Sir, I am informed that until quite recently, just before the Sterling was

	<p>devalued, the tendency was for the dishonest to ship higher grade rubber and declare it as of lower grade. The reason is obvious to those who are in the know. It is to evade the exchange control by selling the rubber in America for more than need be accounted for officially so that the difference in U.S. Dollars realised may be concealed to the advantage of the exporter. (Laughter). I can give other reasons against this Bill, but I will not prolong this session since I think I have said enough to dispel any impression that this is a non-controversial piece of legislation. (Applause). (B433)</p>
<p>21. LegCo, Tues, 15.11.1949</p>	<p>a) TCT spoke on the reduced deficit and called for consideration to be given to the question of leave and allowances for expatriate officers.</p> <p><u>TCT</u>: Your Excellency, the Report of the Estimates Committee being so comprehensive, one is left with little useful comments, especially since the Honourable the Financial Secretary has amplified on it.</p> <p>Referring to the reduction of the deficit from \$6½ million to the comparatively negligible sum of \$1.6 million, I would like to emphasise that such reduction has been effected not only without seriously curtailing any essential service, but also after making provision for launching the Supplementary Educational Plan next year. It is remarkable that the estimated reduction in expenditure almost equals the estimated increase in revenue, which together help to offset about \$5million of the original deficit. This is, of course, a mere coincidence.</p> <p>The most expensive departments are the Police, Medical, Education, and Public Works. Broadcasting and Civil Aviation are costly services and are likely to become even more expensive unless carefully watched.</p> <p>An astounding feature in these Estimates is to mind the colossal provision required for</p>

housing, cost of living and Singapore allowances, which together amount to nearly \$12 million. It is to be hoped that this item, if it should reappear in the 1951 Estimates, will be substantially reduced.

One other startling revelation is that the Contribution to M.E.O. to cover leave pay and passages for expatriate officers is based on forty per cent of the total emoluments of such officers. This revelation immediately reminds one of paragraph 30 (c) of the Report of the Finance and Revenue Committee of 1947, which recommended that, in so far as is compatible with the maintenance of health and efficiency of Government servants, the period in between leave should be increased by at least six months all round.

I submit, Sir, that this recommendation, together with the question of whether full cost living and Singapore allowances should be paid when officers are on leave, deserves early consideration.

In conclusion, on behalf of the Unofficials, I should like to congratulate the Honourable the Financial Secretary on the able manner in which he guided the examination of the Estimates as Chairman of the Estimates Committee. (Applause). He has been at all times remarkably patient, courteous and helpful. One wishes that all heads of Departments were equally cool and level-headed. (Applause). His staff has also worked hard and overtime during the last two weeks, and to them I would also extend our warm appreciation. (B457-458)

b) TCT pointed out the seriousness of the hawker problem and called for a committee to be set up to look into the matter.

TCT: Your Excellency, I wonder how many Honourable Members in this hall are aware of the magnitude and seriousness of the hawker problem as revealed by the answers to my question tabled to-day. It is obvious that the present method of dealing with this

problem is far from satisfactory. It cannot be satisfactory to subject such a large number of people, whose only crime is to try to make a living in the way they know best, to the constant fear of being arrested. Besides those who have been unlucky enough to fall into the hands of the Police, there must be many more whose evasive have been more successful.

It also reflects no credit on this Colony to have extracted the sum of \$131,086 in fines from these poor people. It is also painful to learn that 206 persons had had to go to prison because they were too poor to pay even fines averaging \$11 per head.

Sir, this problem cannot be properly solved by the game of hide-and-peek at present played by the Police and the hawkers. The problem calls for an exhaustive analysis and examination of the causes and effects.

Why do we have so many hawkers in this town? Why do they persist in plying as hawkers in spite of the harassing by the Police? Is it not because they are unable to find other more profitable occupations? Why is hawking so profitable? It is not because the people of this Colony, who are mostly Chinese, are accustomed to hot meals, and hawkers are best able to supply them with such meals most cheaply?

The answers to these as well as to other similar questions will, I submit, Sir, provide the key to this age-old problem. I therefore urge that Government, in consultation with the Municipal Commissioners, should set up a committee to go into this matter.

Sir, I will now turn to a more pleasant topic. I believe Your Excellency will be proceeding on a well-earned long leave in a few days. May I therefore, on behalf of the Unofficials, offer you our warmest wishes that you will have a safe and pleasant voyage, and an enjoyable and beneficial holiday. (Applause).

	<p>As we confidently expect you to come back to us in a few months, I will not recount all your achievements during this term, I will just say that we have grown to like you the more as we got to know you the better, and that we have enjoyed working with you and shall look forward with eagerness to your return, refreshed in mind and in body to resume your able stewardship of this Colony. (Applause).</p> <p>Before resuming my seat, Sir, I would also like to wish Mr. Blythe who will be going on leave shortly, bon voyage and a good holiday, and I am sure my fellow a Members wish to join me in this. (Applause). (B477-478)</p>
22. LegCo, Tues, 20.12.1949	<p><u>a) Municipal (Amendment No. 2) Bill- 2nd Reading</u></p> <p>TCT urged that the law be eventually amended to enable the increase in rates on annual value of property be passed on to the tenants.</p> <p><u>TCT:</u> Your Excellency, I am not going to oppose this Bill because I realise that the additional assessment is needed by the Municipal Commission to maintain their increasingly expensive essential services.</p> <p>However, I feel it my duty to point out that it will be most unfair to allow this extra burden to fall on property owners when they alone, and as a class, are already subsidising our high cost of living in having their rents pegged down. Justice must have only one meaning for all, and I therefore urge that the law be eventually amended to enable this increase in rates to be passed on to the tenants.</p> <p>Sir, I would also point out that although this amendment merely raises the ceiling of the percentage rate up to which assessment may be increased, in the past this ceiling or maximum has always been treated as if it were the minimum, and for 1950 we also know that the Commission intend to fix the assessment at the maximum permitted.</p>

Will it be too optimistic to express the hope that if and when the Municipal Commission should manage to reduce their extraordinary expenditure, such as the payment of high cost of living allowances to their staff, or when Rent Control is abolished, they will also reduce proportionately such rates? I suggest this, Sir, because as compared to other countries the increased rate amounting to twenty-nine per cent on gross rental and representing about forty-one per cent on net rental is obviously too high as a permanent levy on the house owner. (Applause). (B501-502)

b) TCT commented on the issuance of Certificates of Residence under the Aliens Ordinance and suggested that action against the illegal hawkers be stepped down.

TCT: Your Excellency, since the Liberation, Singapore can truly claim to have made good progress in all respects and particularly in the field of politics. The local people have now more say in the government of this Colony than ever before. However, one section of the community feels that it has been sadly neglected though it has contributed as much as any other to the prosperity of this Colony. I refer to the older generation of Chinese who have been here for more than ten years, perhaps twenty, thirty or even fifty years, and who have long made up their minds to remain in this country for good. They have no share in our politics because they are not British subjects and they are unable to become naturalised British subjects either because of lack of the necessary language qualification or for some other good reason. Their issues are mostly local born and no doubt will one day participate in the work of keeping this Colony in step with the world; but they themselves have no way of identifying themselves with the Colony, however much they may want to.

Sir, I suggest that it is the duty of the

Government to give encouragement to these people to make them feel that they are not unwanted in this Colony if they have the interests of this Colony at heart. Have we been doing this? I fear not. Under the Aliens Ordinance, Certificates of Residence may be issued to those who have resided in this Colony for more than eight years. We have been told this morning that only 114 certificates have been issued during the four years ended 1939, and 38 since liberation. One wonders why so few of such certificates have been applied for and granted. I am informed that this was due to a general impression that it was most difficult, if not almost impossible, to obtain these certificates. It is alleged that after the liberation those who enquired have even been informed that such certificates were no longer issued. Anyway, I would disregard the past and urge the Government to indicate whether it intends to continue issuing such certificates and, if so, where and how applications for them should be made. I also hope that Government will simplify the procedure of issuing such certificates as well as make it possible for the average applicant who is eligible, to obtain one.

Sir, before resuming my seat, I would like with your permission to refer once more to the hawker problem. Since addressing this Council at its last meeting on this subject, I have been informed that the Municipal Commissioners have agreed to the appointment of a joint committee to investigate this question, and that accordingly steps are being taken to constitute such a committee. I congratulate Government for acting so promptly in this matter. However, it will be some time before that committee will be able to get to work, and it will many months before it can submit its report.

In the meantime, many of these poor, innocent hawkers are suffering untold hardship and distress. Only the other day it was reported in the newspapers that one of

	<p>these unfortunates resorted to suicide as he could not bear the daily persecution any longer. There are, of course, many other cases of hardship which have not been reported in the papers. For instance, about two weeks ago one of my friends witnessed at Tiong Bharu the heart-breaking sight of an old man of about 70 years of age knocking his head on the pavement until he bled. His reason was that he had just lost his all in a raid which had just taken place. One can well imagine how desperate he was.</p> <p>In these days, however hard-pressed, these unfortunates are unable to find alternative employment by dispersing to the Federation, nor will they be able to go back to China even if they want to.</p> <p>Sir, I therefore suggest that if it is necessary to continue the Police action against these poor hawkers in the meantime, the pace should be stepped down and action directed only against those who are endangering the health of the town or causing serious obstruction. Intensifying the raids without assisting these helpless people to obtain alternative means of earning their livelihood not only will not solve this problem, but also will be rather inhuman. (Applause). (B509-510)</p>
<p>23. LegCo, Tues/Wed, 21/22.2.1950</p>	<p>a) TCT, on behalf of the Unofficial Members of the Council, congratulated His Excellency P.A.B. McKerron on being bestowed 'Knight Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire' by His Majesty.</p> <p><u>TCT</u>: Your Excellency, before proceeding with the Orders of the Day, may I be allowed, on behalf of the Unofficial Members of this Council, to offer Your Excellency our heartiest congratulations on the well-deserved New Year Honour conferred on you by His Majesty the King.</p> <p>Joining the Malayan Civil Service in March, 1920, you have during the last 30 years built up a record of faithful and meritorious</p>

service in Malaya of which anyone may well be proud. During the last four and a half years you have shouldered, first as Deputy Chief Civil affairs Officer, and subsequently as Colonial Secretary, the brunt and responsibility of rehabilitating this Colony and maintaining law and order. The admirable progress which Singapore has made since its liberation and the fact that, as contrasted with her neighbours, Singapore is to-day still a haven for the law-abiding are eloquent testimonies to your good work. Therefore we, Unofficial Members of this Council, rejoice that His Majesty has graciously seen fit to bestow the Knight Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire on you as a tangible recognition of what you have done for the Colony and also for Malaya as a whole. (Applause). (B9)

b) Motion by Mr. J. Laycock- Abolition of Petrol Rationing

TCT seconded J. Laycock's motion to abolish petrol rationing.

TCT: Your Excellency, I rise to second Mr LAYCOCK's motion. It is not necessary for me to emphasise that petrol rationing has become a farce and a waste of public funds. The Petrol Rationing Policy Committee, of which I was a member, unanimously recommended as long ago as May last that petrol rationing should be discontinued. If there were any doubts as to the wisdom of that recommendation, the fact that much less petrol has been consumed than coupons issued during the last two quarters of last year should dispel all such doubts.

As I see it, the issue before us is now more than whether petrol rationing should be continued or not; it is whether Singapore should not sometimes be allowed to have its own way. (An Honourable Member: Hear! Hear!). As the Honourable the Second Member for Municipality North-East (Mr. LAYCOCK) has stated, three other parts of the sterling area have discontinued petrol rationing. The people of Singapore therefore

	<p>do not understand why they should continue to endure this farce, and I therefore appeal to my Unofficial colleagues to vote with one voice for the motion so that due regard will be paid to this wish of ours. (Applause). (B28)</p> <p>c) TCT, on behalf of the Unofficials, wished the Attorney General E. J. Davies and his wife a pleasant holiday.</p> <p><u>TCT</u>: Your Excellency, as our learned Attorney-General (Mr. E.J. DAVIES) will be proceeding on his well-earned long leave in a few days' time, with your permission I would like on behalf of the Unofficials to extend to him and Mrs. Davies our warm and sincere wishes that they will have a pleasant voyage and a truly restful holiday. (Applause).</p> <p>The services he has rendered to the Colony during the last few years are of the highest order, and we feel that in him we have a sincere and impartial adviser who is ever ready to help and co-operate with us, overworked though he may be.</p> <p>However, I will not embarrass him with a detailed recital of all his achievements today, since that should be conserved for a more appropriate occasion. (Applause). (B43)</p>
24. LegCo, Tues, 21.3.1950	-
25. LegCo, Tues, 25.4.1950	-
26. LegCo, Tues, 23.5.1950	-
27. LegCo, Tues, 20.6.1950	<p>TCT, on behalf of the Unofficials, paid tribute to the Honourable the Acting Colonial Secretary J.D.M. Smith who was retiring soon.</p> <p><u>TCT</u>: Your Excellency, since this may be the last meeting which the Honourable the Acting Colonial Secretary, Mr. J.D.M. Smith, will attend before going on leave and retirement, may I on behalf of my Unofficial colleagues take this opportunity to put on record our deep appreciation of the great service he has rendered to Malaya, and in particular to this Colony. (Applause).</p>

My honourable friend will have completed almost 30 years of distinguished service in Malaya when he leaves on the 2nd of July for the United Kingdom. Arriving in Malaya as a Cadet on the 9th July, 1920, he has seen service in practically every part of Malaya and had already distinguished himself when he came down to Singapore in 1941 as Deputy Financial Secretary of the Straits Settlements, holding concurrently the office of Chairman, War Risks Insurance Board. During the war he was unfortunately interned; but indicative of his calibre he emerged from that horrible ordeal to put in nearly five years of hard work that would have cracked any ordinary man; and yet to-day he looks as fit as ever. (Applause).

Those of us who have been privileged to associate closely with him these last few years have nothing but admiration for him. We have seen how with diligence and perseverance he has reorganised the Financial Secretariat. Furthermore, it is due to him and his Aberdonian sagacity that our finances are to-day in such a healthy state as to make us the envy of our neighbours. As a member of the Finance Committee ever since the Liberation, I have found him one of the most pleasant officers to work with; an exceptionally capable leader, and above all a gentleman. (Applause). All those who have served under him respect and love him. Though at times they may grumble and call him a hard taskmaster, they slog willingly for him because they know that he spares himself even less. (Applause).

An event such as this brings home to us most forcibly the iniquitousness of the inflexible rule which requires our officers to retire on reaching the age of 55. To-day at 55 Mr. Smith is as active and efficient as any younger man, and with the wealth of experience behind him he would have been invaluable to this Colony if his services could have been extended for a few more years.

	<p>Sir, may I conclude by congratulating Mr. J.D.M. Smith on a most successful career and a job well done. My colleagues and I also wish him a pleasant voyage home and very many happy years of retirement. (Applause). (B216)</p>
<p>28. LegCo, Tues, 18.7.1950</p>	<p>a) Motion by Mr. E.M.F. Fergusson <u>Committee to examine and report on retiring age and conditions of retirement for the public services of Singapore</u> TCT supported Fergusson's motion to set up a committee for the above purpose.</p> <p>TCT: Sir, I rise to second the Honourable Mr. FERGUSSON's motion. If anyone needs to be convinced that some change of this nature is desirable and justifiable, I would remind him that two of the leading members of the Bar are men of over seventy years, and one of the most energetic and valuable Members of this Council is its oldest Member, my honourable friend the Second Member for Municipality North-East (Mr. LAYCOCK). (Applause). (B241)</p> <p>b) TCT illustrated with examples the abuse of Emergency powers which inflicted unnecessary hardship on the common people.</p> <p>TCT: Your Excellency, at a meeting of this Council in November, 1948, speaking on the Emergency Registration, I urged that undue advantage must not be taken of the Emergency to foist on the people any requirement which is really not necessary. I am sorry to say, Sir, that that plea appears to have fallen on deaf ears.</p> <p>In fact, it seems to be the aim of the Emergency Registration Department to evolve and devise all sorts of unnecessary requirements for anyone who is so unfortunate as to have to pay that department an extra visit. In the early days those who returned to have their cards thumb-printed were required to make a statutory declaration to explain why they had not done so in the first instance. This was, of course, quite unnecessary, and on</p>

my protesting to the Colonial Secretary, this irksome practice was abolished.

In February this year it was admitted, in the answers to questions I tabled, that certificates of birth had to be produced by those who, having attained the age of 12, were applying for registration. I questioned the legality of this requirement, and my honourable friend Mr. LAYCOCK also addressed this Council on this matter while I was away in Europe. I understand that this requirement is no longer enforced. Why was it enforced at all in the beginning?

Again, in the matter of applying for replacement of lost cards, at one time one was required to report the loss at a police station and make a statutory declaration detailing how it occurred before consideration would be given to any application for a duplicate. I understand that a report to the Police is now not required.

Speaking generally, it is no exaggeration to say that one has often to wait hours, and at times a whole day, at the Registration Centre to get registered, or to apply for replacement of an old or lost card. Seeing the many complaints in the papers recently, I paid a visit to the Centre last Wednesday. It was raining hard, and yet there must have been more than a hundred people milling about in the crammed waiting-room of the Centre. The department is obviously short of staff, and extra hands should be transferred to it without a moment's delay.

Before resuming my seat, I would refer to prosecutions for infringement of this troublesome, though necessary, Regulation. I do well realise that Police Officers have recently been instructed to take a more reasonable view of defacement of identity cards, but have they also been authorised to use more discretion in dealing with other minor infringements of this Regulation? For instance, was it necessary for the two European ladies, who were a day late in applying for their identity cards, to be

	<p>brought to court the other day? According to the "Straits Times" report of the case, they were a day late because the previous day was a Sunday, and yet they were hauled up before the court, only to waste the time of all concerned. The comment of the learned judge was significant. He was reported to have said, "These cases seem to be so unnecessary, but they still keep coming up."</p> <p>Sir, the people of Singapore appreciate that inconveniences must be accepted readily in an emergency, but let me urge once more that Government should see to it that no more hardships than are absolutely necessary are inflicted on the men in the street or on those who happen to be non-English-speaking. (Applause). (B247-248)</p>
29. LegCo, Tues, 15.8.1950	-
30. LegCo, Tues, 5.9.1950	-
31. LegCo, Tues, 19.9.1950	-
32. LegCo, Tues, 13.10.1950	<p><u>a) Motion by the Acting Financial Secretary- Draft estimates of revenue and expenditure for the year 1951</u></p> <p>TCT commented on the above subject; basically he felt that there had been an underestimation of the revenue and an over-estimation of the expenditure, adding that, in spite of general increases in expenditure, Singapore had been able to strengthen its general reserve balance.</p> <p><u>TCT</u>: Your Excellency, confronted with the Estimates revealing such a substantial deficit, and after listening to the learned Financial Secretary who, in his very interesting speech, has reminded us of the many additional financial commitments which we shall have to meet in addition to what is shown in the Estimate, I suppose, as a representative of the trading community, I ought to be quite alarmed. However, I am not.</p> <p>Rightly or wrongly, I feel the revenue has been under-estimated and the expenditure over-estimated. This is of course, neither new nor surprising. (Laughter). I would recall that for the current year, in place of an</p>

estimated deficit of \$1.6 million, we have now discovered that there will be a surplus of \$11.7 million. The Honourable the Financial Secretary has promised that we would be able to investigate in Select Committee the surprisingly low estimate of the yield from income tax. With all due respect, I would suggest that with a boom in tin and rubber and general trade more brisk than it has ever been, one would be extremely surprised if income tax, even without any increase in rates, does not yield more than it has ever done.

Then there is the huge vote of \$11.6 million for Public Works Extra-ordinary. Out of last year's vote of \$12.5 million under this heading, nearly half is to be revoted, and yet we are to believe that in spite of the more difficult supply position, this department would be able to treble its output.

However, perhaps the deficit has been produced for a purpose. Even so, I am not dismayed. Speaking for myself (though I believe that most of my Unofficial colleagues will agree with me), I shall readily co-operate with Government in raising additional revenue provided I am convinced that there is real need to do so.

On the other hand, let me emphasise that the people of this Colony will not submit to any increase of taxation just to be in line with our good neighbours, or just because some visitor, however distinguished, thought that the rate of taxation in this country was not high enough as compared with other countries. (Applause).

Turning from the general, one is astounded by the huge increase of \$9.5 million in personal emoluments. I wonder how many of us realise that the recommendations of the Benham Cost of Living Allowance Committee and the Special Salaries Committee would cost the Colony as much as nearly 10 per cent of its annual estimated revenue, and that personal emoluments would absorb 36½ per cent of the Colony's

total estimated expenditure. The administrative machinery would appear to be top-heavy, and anyway it is obvious that we cannot allow this item of expenditure to enlarge any more except at the expense of other essential services of the Government.

Coincidentally, Sir, skimming through the Council Proceedings of September, 1932, I came across a speech by Dr Noel Clarke, in which he was lamenting the fact that the Colony was then only spending \$1.9 million, or 7.2 per cent of its revenue, on education as compared with an expenditure of 13.2 per cent by the Barbados, 10.88 per cent by Ceylon, and 10.2 per cent by Mauritius.

Well, we need not hang our heads in shame any longer, for we shall this year be spending \$14 million, or 12 per cent, of our revenue, on education as against \$8 million last year.

It is often better to leave the past well alone, but in the matter of public finance a glimpse of the immediate past is often enlightening. Looking backwards it is, I think, gratifying [gratifying] to note that the Colony has since 1948 accumulated a general surplus of \$34.2 million as against an estimated surplus over those three years of \$7.1 million. Thus, in spite of all-round increases in expenditure as a result of the unsettled conditions of the last three years, the Colony has been able to strengthen its general reserve balance by as much as 46 per cent, a feat of which, I think, Sir, you will agree, the people of Singapore can justly be proud. (Applause). (B370-371)

b) TCT took issue with the amendment of the Passport Regulation, viz, the invalidation of the certificates of admission, and the manner in which the change of a law of the Statute Book had been made. He urged that in the name of democracy, the Government should admit its mistake and revoke the offending Regulation.

TCT: Your Excellency, the amendment to

the Passport Regulations which was gazetted on the 25th September has rendered practically useless all valid certificates of admission as from the 1st of October.

Hitherto, holders of certificates of admission were readmitted into this Colony, unless under the Travel Restriction Regulations their admission would be prejudicial to the interests of this Colony.

This sudden and arbitrary measure of invalidating the certificates of admission has caused widespread hardship and resentment. Many have in good faith gone to China or to Indonesia, confidently believing that their certificates of admission would ensure their readmission to the Colony. They are now left in the lurch in foreign countries and, even though they may come back by obtaining a visa, they will have to wait in those foreign places for some time and thus incur expenses which they can ill afford.

Certificates of admission have also hitherto facilitated the trips of those whose business it is to go to and from the neighbouring Indonesian islands. Under the new Regulations, these people will now have to apply for and obtain a visa at least once in every six months. This will entail much loss of time and expense to them.

When the Aliens Ordinance was introduced in 1932, the Secretary for Chinese Affairs at the first reading of that Bill said that it was intended "to provide a system by which the landing of all aliens can be regulated and by which gradually an alien who has made Malaya his home will become possessed of documents sufficient to establish his identity to all local authorities."

In another part of his speech, he also said that "the alien already in the Colony when this Bill comes into force may, if he so wishes, apply to the Immigration Officer for a certificate of admission. He will in the

beginning, in fact, do so only when he is leaving Malaya with the intention of returning here again.”

This shows that the certificate of admission is intended to facilitate the return of an alien who has made this country his home.

In fact, Sir, it will be seen that when this Aliens Bill came up for the second reading most of the Unofficials, with perhaps only one exception, were opposed to it, and it was on the assurance of Government that this Bill was not intended to discriminate against the Chinese that the opposition did not pursue its objections.

I submit, Sir, that it is in any case quite improper for a statute sanctified by the approval of the Legislative Council to be nullified by the Executive Council by the mere passing of a Regulation, and that under a totally different Ordinance. In fact, I would protest very strongly against the manner in which this change of a law of our Statute Book has been made.

I do not know whether it is quite legal for the Executive Council to pass a Regulation which has the effect of nullifying the provisions of the Aliens Ordinance under the Passport Ordinance, an Ordinance which came on the Statute Book many years before the Aliens Ordinance. But even if it is not *ultra vires*, I submit that it is not in keeping with the present day's idea of democracy that the Legislative Council should thus be by-passed.

The proper course would have been for a Bill to be introduced to amend the Aliens Ordinance if any of its provisions are to be modified or repealed. Had that been done, this Council would have had an opportunity to debate the proposed change. If this invalidation is a necessary emergency measure, and I do not think it is, since there are the Travel Restriction Regulations to provide for all the security measures that are necessary, I submit that an Emergency

	<p>Regulation should have been passed. In that event, this Council again would have had a chance to consider the change.</p> <p>As it is, I respectfully suggest that the Executive has usurped the prerogative of this Council, and I therefore submit that that cannot be tolerated.</p> <p>I would urge therefore that, to prevent democracy being held up to ridicule in this country, Government should be honest enough to admit its mistake and immediately revoke the offending Regulation.</p> <p>Turning, Sir, to a more pleasant subject, may I take this opportunity to wish you, on behalf of my Unofficial colleagues, God-speed and a pleasant trip, and also to ask you to convey the respectful greetings and good wishes of this Council to the Speaker of the House of Commons on the occasion of the opening of the new House of Commons. (Applause). (B391-392)</p>
33. LegCo, Tues, 21.11.1950	-
34. LegCo, Tues, 19.12.1950	-
35. Proceedings of the First LegCo, Colony of Singapore, 4 th Session, 16.1.1951	<p>a) Motion by TCT- Certificates of Admission</p> <p>TCT spoke against the new passport regulations which rendered the Certificate of Admission useless, calling such act a gross breach of faith on the part of the government. He suggested that all Certificates of Admission be treated as if they were Re-entry Permits and to deal with the minority cases under the Emergency (Travel Restrictions) Regulations or under the Aliens Ordinance. This would ensure that most people were able to return to Singapore.</p> <p>TCT: Your Excellency, I beg to move the motion standing in my name, which is:</p> <p>“That in the opinion of this Council every holder of a Certificate of Admission issued to him under the Aliens Ordinance who was out of the Colony on 23rd September, 1950, shall be allowed to return to this country without being subject to the</p>

restrictions imposed by the Passport Regulations, 1947, as amended by the Passport (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations, 1950, and this Council requests that immediate steps be taken by the Governor-in-Council to amend the said Regulations to give effect to this opinion and that the benefit of any such amendment shall also be extended to those cases where Certificates of Admission have expired in the meantime by reasons of the delay occasioned by the necessity for applying for visas.”

Sir, this motion is really to enjoin Government to honour its assurances expressed or implied.

Certificates of Admission are issued under section 23 of the Aliens Ordinance and only granted to those already resident in the Colony. The Immigration Officer may refuse to issue or renew or cancel a Certificate of Admission if he should find that the applicant cannot show that he is able to earn the means of decently supporting himself and his dependants, if any; or is a professional beggar or vagrant or a person likely to become a charge upon the public or upon any public or charitable institution; or has been banished from any country or has been shipped from any country by the Government of such country with a view to his being repatriated; or is a person living on the earnings of prostitution; or is suspected of being likely to promote sedition or to cause a disturbance of public tranquillity.

The continued holding and periodical renewal of such a certificate is, similarly, only permitted so long as the local authority is satisfied that the holder is a fit and proper person to reside in the Colony. If he is not satisfied, the certificate may be cancelled under section 24 of the Ordinance, and the former holder will then be subject to deportation under section 25 of this said Ordinance. The holding of a Certificate of Admission is therefore, I submit, Sir, in itself

a proof of the fact that Government is satisfied that the holder is a fit and proper person to reside in the Colony. Consequently, until October, last, the holder of a Certificate of Admission may always leave and return to the Colony without further permission or formality. The new Passport (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations, 1950, have, however, revoked the former rule and thus rendered the Certificate of Admission practically valueless. As a result, a lot of people are now left stranded out of the Colony.

This, Sir, is in my opinion a gross breach of faith on the part of Government. No matter what Government may choose to say to the contrary, it has always been accepted in practice that Certificates of Admission represent an assurance by Government that the holders would be readmitted into the Colony. Many who have made this Colony their home have therefore left these shores armed with Certificates of Admission, confident that their return during the validity of their certificates is assured. They have paid for their Certificates of Admission; and now they are told that they must apply and pay again for visas. No respectable employer would dream of going back on his word to re-engage his employee, however casually given, and I am sure, Sir, that this Government has no intention of dishonouring its Certificates of Admission in current use.

In the new Immigration (Control) Bill which is now under examination by a Select Committee, provision is made in clause 60 (d) for Certificates of Admission to be deemed as Re-entry Permits. My motion, Sir, merely asks Government to do now what it already intends to do when that Bill becomes law.

It has been contended that for security reasons it would be undesirable for all holders of Certificates of Admission to be allowed return, but at the same time all holders of valid certificates are being

granted visas unless their return is considered to be not conducive to the public safety. I must confess that I find it difficult to understand why the majority should be penalised for the sins of a few.

I submit that it would be fairer to treat all Certificates of Admission as if they are Re-entry Permits and to deal with the minority whose return to the Colony would be undesirable under the Emergency (Travel Restrictions) Regulations or under the Aliens Ordinance.

It has been suggested that this will inconvenience the people concerned on their arrival in this port. Sir, I feel that most of the people would prefer to suffer some inconvenience here whilst undergoing screening rather than to be waiting for months away from their families and homes.

Anyway, I invite Honourable Members to support my motion if for no other reason than that we do not want this Government to repudiate its commitments in this unhappy manner. (Applause). (B8-9)

b) TCT clarified that his motion was only dealing with those who were already out and facilitating their return. He asked, that the Council be allowed to express its opinion freely on the matter, and for a division.

TCT: Your Excellency, I should like to make clear it that my motion will only affect those who are, at the moment, out of the Colony. The Honourable the Colonial Secretary has referred to my speech on the adjournment in October last. In that speech, I was pleading for the revocation of this amendment of the Passport Regulations, but in this motion we are merely dealing with those who are already out and facilitating their return.

Much has been made by the Colonial Secretary of security reasons, but I am afraid, Sir, that has not convinced the

	<p>people. I would draw attention to the fact that the petition presented to Your Excellency in Council is signed by no fewer than 279 associations and guilds representing a very large portion of the people of this Colony. I ask Your Excellency not to brush that petition aside.</p> <p>We are all – no one more than I – very concerned about the security of this country but, as the Honourable Mr. C.C. TAN has pointed out, there is a right way, and a wrong way, of going about it.</p> <p>If these certificates of admission are to be rendered wholesale valueless, the proper way for Government to go about it would have been either to amend or to repeal the Aliens Ordinance. Frankly, Sir, the people feel that Government has resorted to a subterfuge in order to achieve its end.</p> <p>I do appeal, Sir, that this Council be allowed to express its opinion freely on the matter, and for that purpose I do not know whether I am in order in suggesting that the Official Members should either be allowed to vote freely according to their individual inclinations or to abstain from voting altogether. Of course, it is rather unfortunate that today we have two absentees amongst the Unofficial Members, and on a vote of the whole Council it is clear that my motion would be defeated.</p> <p>...</p> <p>TCT: I ask for a division, Sir.</p> <p>...</p> <p>The motion is negatived. (B12-13)</p>
36. LegCo, Fri, 16.2.1951	<p><u>a) Motion by the Colonial Secretary- Increased cost of living allowance</u></p> <p>TCT queried the subject of the debate-whether it was on the cost of living or on price control.</p> <p><u>TCT</u>: Your Excellency, I rise on a point of order. I wonder if we are now debating a motion on the cost of living, or a motion on the price control? (B49)</p>

	<p>b) This being the last meeting of the Council before it dissolved, TCT recalled the harmonious proceedings in the Council and, on behalf of his Unofficial colleagues, thanked the Governor and the Unofficials for their understanding and guidance.</p> <p>TCT: Your Excellency, this being the last meeting of this Council before it is dissolved, one is highly tempted to look back and survey with satisfaction its achievements during the last three years. However, I have modestly decided to resist that temptation and leave it to others to judge our work.</p> <p>Nevertheless, I think my colleagues and I can honestly say that we have given of our best in our work in this Council and placed the interests of the Colony above everything else. (Applause).</p> <p>Unofficials, though at liberty to voice their views frankly and freely, have invariably exercised considerable self-restraint. The result has been that our proceedings have been harmonious, expeditious, and fruitful. At the same time, my Unofficial colleagues and I must gratefully acknowledge that our task has been made easier by the co-operation, understanding, and goodwill, which you, Sir, and all Official Members of this Council have consistently extended to us. (Applause).</p> <p>My colleagues and I are also indebted to you for guiding our deliberations with fairness and much skill and, on their behalf, I therefore take pleasure in saying: "Thank you, Sir." (Applause). (B66-67)</p>
<p>37. Proceedings of Second LegCo, 1st Session, Tues, 17.4.1951</p>	<p>The introduction of the restrictive measure of destinal control of rubber shipments, done without prior consultation with the LegCo, prompted TCT to call for a satisfactory explanation for its introduction.</p> <p>TCT: Your Excellency, I wish to associate myself with the remarks of the previous speaker (Mr. FERGUSON).</p>

	<p>The laws of a country must necessarily invest wide powers in the Government, it being intended that such powers should be used only for the benefit of the Colony and its people. When such powers are used without due regard to the interest of the Colony and without prior consultation with the representatives of its people, by which I mean this Legislative Council, the Government has abused the trust placed in it by the Legislature.</p> <p>Failing a satisfactory explanation, Sir, it will therefore be the duty of the representatives of the people to seek such redress by all constitutional means as lies within their power. I hope, therefore, that there will be a satisfactory explanation forthcoming. (Applause). (B30)</p>
38. LegCo, Tues, 22.5.1951	-
39. LegCo, Tues, 19.6.1951	<p>TCT opposed the motion of the Financial Secretary that the Loan (Premium Bonds) be read a second time, on the grounds of lack of necessity.</p> <p><u>TCT</u>: Your Excellency, I rise to oppose the motion of the Financial Secretary that the Loan (Premium Bonds) Bill be read a second time. I have listened with admiration to the very eloquent speech of the Honourable the Financial Secretary, but I am afraid nothing he has said has convinced me that it is either necessary or desirable for this Colony to raise money by exploiting its citizens' nature weakness for gambling. (Applause).</p> <p>Singapore stands high in the financial world and is fast becoming the most important financial centre in South-East Asia. Only those countries whose credit is questionable need resort to this means of raising funds by premium bonds. In my opinion, a loan which has all the attractions of this proposed Premium Bonds Bill, namely, a short life of six years, repayable to bearer and tax free, can be successfully floated at 3 per cent rate of interest, as indicated by the Financial Secretary, without</p>

	<p>being baited with a cheap offer of a windfall for a lucky few. (Some Honourable Members: Hear! Hear!).</p> <p>It has been urged that this loan will be a means of combating inflation. No doubt, the dangers of inflation were threatening until last month, but thanks to the successful efforts of our friends overseas, the prices of both rubber and tin have been depressed; and with that, the inflation bogey which had haunted our economic experts during recent months has retreated. We ought, I suppose, to fall on our knees in gratitude for this blessing in disguise. (Laughter).</p> <p>I trust I have said enough to convince this Council that this proposed Premium Bonds Bill will do more harm than good to this country, and I therefore hope that the motion before the House will be rejected. (Applause). (B121)</p>
40. LegCo, Tues, 17.7.1951	-
41. LegCo, Tues, 21.8.1951	-
42. LegCo, Tues, 18.9.1951	-
43. LegCo, Tues, 16.10.1951	<p><u>Motion by the Acting Financial Secretary</u> <u>Draft estimates of revenue and expenditure for the year 1952</u></p> <p>TCT commented that the projection of heavy expenditures by the Financial Secretary was not justifiable and decried the use of taxation as a means by the government to raise income to meet the projected expenses.</p> <p><u>TCT</u>: Your Excellency, your lucid resumé of our achievements and progress during the past year has made us all feel elated, the more so since last year has been unusually difficult and eventful. Anyway, I feel I am speaking for very Member of this Council, Official or Unofficial, when I say that it is our firm resolve that the regrettable incidents of the past shall not recur and that the best is yet to be in the year ahead of us. (Applause).</p> <p>We have been listening with great admiration to the eloquent speech of the Honourable the Financial Secretary. He has</p>

been trying to explain – but I am afraid he has not been able to justify – why he has threatened us with such a huge deficit in next year's Estimates. Our Financial Secretary is, we know, a trained advocate, but I submit that in spite of his skill he has not been able to make a good case out of this poor one.

He has been forecasting with great care the heavy expenditures that may have to be met in the years to come. On the other hand, he has omitted to tell us of the various expenditures that can be curtailed in the years to come; for instance, the Police Force. Surely we are not expecting that the Emergency will be with us forever? And again, the cost of living – surely we are not expecting to pay the increased cost-of-living allowances indefinitely?

The Financial Secretary asks us to be realists; but I think as realists we should only look to the immediate future. What would happen if the business community were to anticipate their potential commitments in the same way as the Financial Secretary has attempted to do? Should motor firms, thinking that in the years to come there would no longer be a shortage of motor cars, but that there would instead be a surplus of cars, be justified in exacting a bigger profit now in order to sustain them in future? That, I think, is what the Financial Secretary in his very able speech this morning wants us to agree to – that we should now get more by taxing the people more heavily so that we shall have plenty in hand for the future.

However, I think at the end of his speech the Financial Secretary has practically admitted that the real purpose in his mind in showing such a huge and unreal deficit is to try and persuade this Council to agree to increased taxation while the people can bear it.

Well, I do not think, Sir, that it is justifiable to increase taxation simply because the people can afford it. I wonder if, underlying

	<p>all this, there is not the usual ill-conceived idea that because income tax in other countries is at a higher rate the rate in this country should be progressively raised regardless of the need for it. One wonders whether those who advocate this realise that the economy of this Colony is still badly balanced in that we are all too dependent on the prosperity of rubber and tin. To correct this misbalance, we must encourage the establishment of more industries in this Island; and the best and most attractive inducement we can hold out to experienced technicians is to maintain the rate of taxation much lower than those in better-developed countries.</p> <p>Another aspect which seems to have been overlooked when comparing rates of taxation is that this country has been earning and pouring into the sterling pool much gold dollars. With the devaluation of sterling we have, in effect, been handing over three dollars to the Mother Country and receiving in return only two dollars. Thus, the income of Malaya has virtually been taxed by about 30 per cent even before it reaches its people. It will be well for our friends in the Mother Country to remember that fact when urging that the rate of our income tax is too low as compared with others.</p> <p>I do not propose to comment this morning in detail on the Estimates as that can best be done in Committee, but I must reiterate that whilst the people will bear without complaint such taxation as may be necessary for maintaining the progress of the Colony and improving the standard of living of its people, it will not submit to any increase in taxation which cannot be justified by immediate needs. We shall refuse to be taxed to ensure that the Government will accumulate huge surpluses to squander in the future. (Applause). (B334-335)</p>
44. LegCo, Tues, 20.11.1951	-
45. LegCo, Tues, 18.12.1951	<u>Motion by the Acting Financial Secretary-Entertainments Duty</u>

	<p>TCT queried the number of members present at the Finance Committee which arrived at the decision concerning the introduction of the above motion.</p> <p><u>TCT</u>: Sir, may I be permitted to ask how many members other than the Chairman were present at the Finance Committee meeting which made this decision, which amounts to an almost total reversal of a previous decision of the same Committee when more members were present? (B406)</p>
<p>46. Proceedings of the Second LegCo, 2nd Session, Tues, 19.2.1952</p>	<p><u>Motion by the Colonial Secretary- Message of Condolence</u></p> <p>TCT, on behalf of the Unofficials, supported the motion on the Order Paper as a Special Order of the Day.</p> <p><u>The Colonial Secretary</u>: Your Excellency, it is with the deepest regret that I rise to move the motion standing in my name on the Order Paper as a Special Order of the Day:-</p> <p>“That the Members of this Council render their humble duty and desire to express their loyal and profound condolence with Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, with Her Majesty The Queen Mother, and with the Royal Family in their great bereavement, and to record their sense of the grievous loss sustained by the British Commonwealth in the death of His Majesty King George The Sixth.”</p> <p><u>TCT</u>: Your Excellency, on behalf of the Unofficials, I support the motion. (B5)</p>
<p>47. LegCo, Tues, 18.3.1952</p>	<p>-</p>
<p>48. LegCo, Thurs, 17.4.1952</p>	<p>TCT enquired if it is proper for speeches on the adjournment to be debated.</p> <p><u>TCT</u>: Sir, on a point of order, is it proper that speeches on the adjournment should resolve into a debate? I think Mr. De. Souza is very near to debating a matter which has been raised by Dr. PAGLAR. (B130)</p>
<p>49. LegCo, Tues, 20.5.1952</p>	<p>TCT, on behalf of his colleagues, welcomed His Excellency the Governor J.F. Nicoll on board as President of the Legislative Council.</p>

	<p>TCT: Your Excellency, by leave of the Council and with Your Excellency's permission, I rise on behalf of all my colleagues, Official as well as Unofficial, to extend to Your Excellency a warm and sincere welcome on this the first occasion on which you are presiding over us in Legislative Council.</p> <p>Your Excellency comes to us with a long and distinguished record of service as an administrator in various parts of the British Commonwealth, and we are confident that under your skilled and experienced leadership Singapore will go forward in peace and prosperity and this Legislative Council will advance in stature and in prestige.</p> <p>My honourable colleagues will bear me out when I say that though we have occasional differences of opinion, there has always been understanding and goodwill between Official and Unofficial Members and, indeed, among all of us.</p> <p>On behalf of all my colleagues I would assure Your Excellency of our staunch loyalty and whole-hearted co-operation and express the hope that Your Excellency's regime will be one of great happiness not only for yourself, but also for this Colony of Singapore. (Applause). (B139)</p>
50. LegCo, Tues, 17.6.1952	-
51. LegCo, Tues, 15.7.1952	-
52. LegCo, Tues, 19.8.1952	-
53. LegCo, Tues, 16.9.1952	<p>TCT, on behalf of his Unofficial colleagues, expressed deep appreciation of the valuable services Mr. T.M. Hart had rendered the Colony as Acting Financial Secretary.</p> <p>TCT: Sir, as, with the return of Mr. Taylor (the Honourable the Financial Secretary) this morning, Mr. Hart will be relinquishing his appointment as Acting Financial Secretary shortly, I would like, with your permission, to express on behalf of my unofficial colleagues our deep appreciation of the valuable services he has rendered the Colony during his short term of office.</p>

	<p>(Applause).</p> <p>The task of the Financial Secretary is never an easy one and that of one acting in that office is even less enviable. However, our good-natured, hard-working and conscientious Mr. Hart has, with his open mind and tight grip on the purse-strings of the Colony, emerged from his trial with flying colours. (Applause).</p> <p>I can already see Mr. Hart blushing, and therefore I will not embarrass him any more than to say: "Thank you, Mr. Hart, and may you always be as successful in future." (Applause). (B291)</p>
54. LegCo, Tues, 14.10.1952	<p><u>Motion by TCT- Visit of H.R.H. the Duchess of Kent</u></p> <p>TCT begged to move the above motion which relates to the expression of gratitude and appreciation to the Queen and the Duchess of Kent.</p> <p><u>TCT</u>: Your Excellency, with your permission I beg to move:-</p> <p>"That this Council resolves that the humble duty of the Council be presented to Her Majesty the Queen with an expression of the grateful thanks of Her loyal and devoted subjects in this Colony for graciously approving the visit of Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Kent to the Colony of Singapore; and further that a message of thanks and appreciation for her graciousness in visiting the Colony be conveyed to Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Kent." (B326)</p>
55. LegCo, Tues, 18.11.1952	<p><u>Motion by the Colonial Secretary- Appointment of persons to Committee of Management, Silver Jubilee Fund</u></p> <p>TCT supported the motion.</p> <p><u>The Colonial Secretary</u>: Sir, I rise to move the motion standing in my name as No. 1A on the Order Paper:-</p> <p>"That this Council, pursuant to the provisions of section 13 of the Silver Jubilee Fund (Singapore) Ordinance, 1936, (No. 1 of</p>

	<p>1936) resolves that the following persons be appointed to the Committee of Management of the Silver Jubilee Fund:</p> <p>Secretary for Social Welfare; Head of Singapore Branch of the Salvation Army; The Honourable Mr M.J. Namazie; Mr C.M. Lee; Mr V. Pakirisamy, M.B.E., J.P., S.C.H.; Mr G.H. Kiat; and Mrs Loh Poon Lip.”</p> <p>Honourable Members will recall that at a recent meeting of this Council amendments to the Singapore Silver Jubilee Fund Ordinance, 1936, were passed, under which the Legislative Council was required to appoint seven members of the Committee of Management of this Fund. The seven names submitted to you this morning are names of persons who are well known to all of you and who, I feel sure, will carry out their duties as members of the Committee of Management to your entire satisfaction.</p> <p>TCT: Sir, I rise to second the motion. (B360)</p>
56. LegCo, Tues, 16.12.1952	<p>a) <u>Motion by TCT- Special defence contribution to Her Majesty’s government</u></p> <p>TCT sought the Council’s approval for a special defence contribution of \$8,570,000 to Britain as a mark of loyalty of the Government and people of Singapore. He also commented on fellow speaker C.R. Dasaratha Raj’s opinion that the contribution amount is exorbitant.</p> <p><u>TCT:</u> Your Excellency, I rise to move the motion standing in my name in the Order Paper, reading:</p> <p>“That this Council approves of a special defence contribution of \$8,570,000 to Her Majesty’s Government as a mark of the loyalty of the Government and people of Singapore and of their determination to assist Her Majesty’s Government to bear the heavy burden of the defence programme which has been undertaken in the interests of the Free World.”</p>

As we are all aware, faced with threats against their freedom during the last few years, the free nations of the world, including the British Commonwealth group, have been compelled to make desperate efforts to protect themselves, and these efforts have necessarily entailed heavy financial expenditure and commitments.

In the United Kingdom her Majesty's Government found it necessary last year to embark on a three years' programme which would cost the colossal sum of £4,700 million, or over Malayan \$40,000 million, the equivalent of our budget for over one hundred years. Such a programme has meant that the peoples of Great Britain have had to make many sacrifices; taxation has had to be continued on the heavy war-time scale and improvements to social services have had to be deferred or curtailed. Nevertheless, Her Majesty's Government has been forced recently to modify her defence programme to reduce the strain on the country's economy, but despite such reductions, the cost still remains heavy.

On the other hand, and to be concise, we in Singapore have benefited by all these preparatory measures to defend our freedom, and as during the last few years, for example in 1950 and 1951, the Colony has had surpluses of \$16.9 million and \$53 million respectively, it seems to me only fair and appropriate that Singapore should in some way show its appreciation of the difficulties which Her Majesty's Government is facing and of the determined and costly efforts which she is and has been making and of our determination to stand by her by making at this time a special defence contribution of \$8,570,000, this being roughly equal to one million pounds sterling. In doing so, let us hope that Singapore's gesture will be an example to the other Colonies.

Your Excellency, I now formally move the motion standing in my name, which I hope

will receive the unanimous support of this Council. (Applause). (B399-400)

...

TCT: Your Excellency, if I understand the Member for Rochore (Mr. DASARATHA RAJ) rightly, what he has said amounts to this: he is prepared to support the declaration of loyalty with words but not with deeds.

However, I do know that an overwhelming majority of taxpayers will heartily endorse this more tangible form of expressing our sentiments.

As regards our needs for funds for various services, I suggest that our gift is such a small drop in the mighty ocean of expense incurred by Her Majesty's Government that if it could be made without any sacrifice on our part, it would be worth little (Applause).

On question put, the motion is adopted. (B404)

b) Municipal (Amendment) (No. 4) Bill- 2nd Reading

TCT objected to the passing of the bill to raise the ceiling of the Municipal rate from 25 per cent of annual value to 30 per cent, in view of the impact it will have on property owners.

TCT: Your Excellency, I feel it is my duty to protest against the passing of this Bill.

It is, of course, an easy means of enabling City Councillors to balance their budget. However, as long as the rents of properties are rigidly controlled, I consider it most unfair that the City Councillors should be given powers to increase the rates leviable on properties within city limits. If this Bill is passed and assessments are consequently increased before a corresponding increase in rent is permitted under the Rent Control Ordinance, the owners of property, who have suffered even much more under the Rent Control Ordinance than the City Councillors, will be dealt another blow while

	<p>their hands are tied.</p> <p>That, I am afraid, I must consider as grossly unfair, and I therefore cannot be a party to this manifestly unfair proposal.</p> <p>On question put, the motion is agreed to, and the Bill is read a second time. (B413)</p>
57. Proceedings of the Second LegCo, 3 rd Session, Tues, 24.2.1953	-
58. LegCo, Wed, 25.2.1953	-
59. LegCo, Tues, 17.3.1953	<p>a) Exchange Control Bill- 2nd Reading</p> <p>TCT expressed his concern regarding the powers of the Controller in the revised Bill and called for proper enforcement of the Bill.</p> <p>TCT: Sir, although, as explained by the Honourable the Financial Secretary, this revised Bill incorporates the recommendations of the Select Committee, it is necessarily a piece of compromise. Therefore it retains clauses and features which are objectionable or undesirable in my opinion. For instance, this Bill, in effect, prohibits virtually all foreign trade but empowers the Controller to grant exemptions from the prohibitions and to sanction individual transactions.</p> <p>There is nothing whatever in the Bill itself to indicate on what principles, or in accordance with what policy, the Controller is to exercise these almost unlimited powers. He may, without giving reasons for his decision, grant or refuse the permits, without which no foreign trade can be carried on, and there is no right or redress by an aggrieved person against his decision. In fact, the Controller can, though it is not suggested that he would, by folding his arms and doing nothing, allow this law, when passed, to throttle the trade which is the life of this Colony.</p> <p>However, if we accept this control of foreign exchange as a necessary measure for countries within the Sterling Bloc until the declared aim of making sterling convertible</p>

can be attained, we may accept this Bill since, firstly, the Controller has given the assurance that it is intended to publish administrative directives and general exemptions simultaneously with the enactment of this Ordinance which will have the effect of introducing few, if any, changes to the law which is now in force; and secondly, provision is now being made in the Bill making it incumbent on the Controller to exercise his powers under the Ordinance, subject to the directions of the Governor in Council on all questions of general policy. This latter provision which has been recommended by the Select Committee is, in my opinion, very important, as it will ensure as far as possible that due regard is paid to the Colony's interests by the Controller when wielding the extensive powers which will be vested in him under this Ordinance.

Nevertheless, let me remind the Controller that Singapore depends for its prosperity on its position as a great commercial centre of South-east Asia and on its entrepot trade. Unless it can trade freely with the neighbouring countries, Singapore will rapidly lose this position. Neighbouring countries will by-pass the Colony altogether and the Colony will face commercial ruin and financial disaster.

These controls are, in fact, designed to help the Sterling Area as a whole rather than Singapore, and so far as the Colony itself is concerned, there is no financial or foreign exchange control problem which will necessitate the enforcement of such stringent financial and exchange control as is envisaged by this Bill.

Thirdly and lastly, the United Kingdom was faced with a different problem when the Exchange Control Act of 1947, upon which the present Bill has been modelled, was introduced.

It is therefore hoped that this unpopular control will be enforced with consideration

and understanding. The Members of this Council will, of course, watch carefully the practical effects of this Ordinance and if at any time it should appear to endanger the trade and industry of this Colony, I for one will not hesitate to seek to introduce amendments to curb the powers of the Controller, even before the Ordinance is due to be extended for another year. (Applause).

On question put, the motion is agreed to, and the Bill is read a second time. (B81-82)

b) TCT, on behalf of the Unofficials, paid tribute to A. Gilmour for his service to Singapore and wished him happy retirement.

TCT: Sir, with your permission, I should like, on behalf of my unofficial colleagues, to associate ourselves whole-heartedly with the warm tribute you have just paid to Mr. GILMOUR and the hearty welcome you have extended to Mr. YOUNG.

All who have been privileged to associate closely with Mr. GILMOUR, as I have ever since the Liberation, have come to hold him in high regard and esteem.

Mr. GILMOUR has had a long and distinguished career in the Public Service of Malaya, but it is as Head of the Economic Affairs Secretariat since 1946 (now known as the Department of Commerce and Industry), piloting Singapore's trade and economy along safe channels, that he has made the greatest contribution in his services to Singapore. (Applause).

Trade is the life-blood of Singapore, and Mr. GILMOUR, realising this more than anyone else, has never spared himself in promoting our entrepot trade and extending a helping hand to the merchants whenever required. Therefore, the conferment of the C.M.G. by HIS LATE MAJESTY KING GEORGE VI in 1949 was a fitting recognition of his services.

	<p>The traders and industrialists of Singapore feel that they will be losing a true and understanding friend when Mr. GILMOUR leaves us. It is on an occasion such as this that we wish the age of retirement of public officers in the Public Service could be extended and the valuable knowledge and experience of this outstanding officer retained for a few more years to guide Singapore's trade and industry through the gathering storm which appears to be threatening ahead.</p> <p>Sir, on behalf of the Unofficials of this Council, I wish Mr. and Mrs. GILMOUR a pleasant trip home and many, many years of happy retirement. (Applause).</p> <p>I would also like, Sir, to take the opportunity to wish the Honourable Mr. DAVIES, our learned Attorney-General, and his charming wife, who are sailing today for the United Kingdom on long leave, bon voyage and a well-earned rest. (Applause). (B93)</p>
60. LegCo, Tues, 21.4.1953	-
61. LegCo, Tues, 19.5.1953	<p><u>a) Motion by Lim Yew Hock- Legislative Council: Chamber of Commerce Seats. Review of the Constitution of the Colony</u></p> <p>TCT explained why he did not support the suggestion that it was time for the question of exclusive privilege representation of the Chambers of Commerce on the LegCo to be reviewed.</p> <p><u>TCT:</u> Sir, whilst I would be prepared to agree that in due course the exclusive privilege of representation of the Chambers of Commerce on the Legislative Council would be unnecessary or unjustifiable, I regret I am unable to support the suggestion that the time for this question to be reviewed has come. One of my chief reasons for taking this view is the fact that out of a total population of over one million, of which at least half is estimated to be eligible, only a little over 65,000 have so far registered themselves as voters. When more of the people of Singapore have bestirred themselves and registered as voters, and the Elected Members can be considered to</p>

be more truly representative of the people, it will not be too late to talk of abolition of the Chamber seats. That is, however, only my personal opinion.

The opinion of the Committee of my Chamber is fully expressed in a memorandum which they have submitted to the Honourable the Colonial Secretary. With your permission, I would now like to read extracts from it:

“From the earliest history of Singapore, trade has been the pre-occupation of the Government of Singapore, besides law and order and the welfare of its people which are the usual functions of all governments. The politics of Singapore has always been the politics of trade and in this the Government of Singapore had early discovered the soundness of close interdependence between Government and the properly constituted trade bodies found in the local Chambers of Commerce. Any threat to this interdependence is a threat to the historical bedrock of the stability of the country and the well-being and prosperity of its people. This link between the Government and the Chambers of Commerce has been the anchor-sheet of Singapore’s prosperity and any attempt to tamper with this link is to embark on the unpredictable.

“The history of the Legislative Councils will show that while the usual functions of Government have been attended to by the officials, the policies which have enabled Singapore to flourish and prosper have been largely the contributions of members hand-picked from the Chambers of Commerce. It cannot be denied that in the present newly constituted council with an elected majority, the greater measure of stability has been furnished by the elected representatives of the Chambers of Commerce. The mere presence of trade representatives in Council creates a large measure of confidence in it among business circles both inside and outside of Singapore. This confidence is most

essential if Singapore were to maintain its position as an international trade centre.

“With a change from a nominated legislature to a partially elected one and later to a wholly elected one as steps towards eventual self-government, it certainly is unwise to abandon altogether what has all along proved to be sound and dependable, namely direct representation of commerce in our legislature. Especially at a time when Singapore is facing acute problems in maintaining even her customary volume of international trade due to developments in neighbouring territories, the prosperity of Singapore is most vulnerable to any wrong move and it would be the height of folly to jeopardize a proved factor of strength in the close and direct representation of commerce in our legislature and rely on the off-chance of such contact being supplied by the hazards of a general election.

“It must be admitted that in matters of trade, our Chamber of Commerce with their long history of soundness and progressiveness are the best qualified parties to be relied on for the correct advice, so that as long as trade remains the primary concern of Singapore, the long established direct contact between Government and Chambers of Commerce through representation of the latter in the legislature must necessarily be maintained. To sacrifice this contact for a political theory however plausible is to risk a sure gain and strength for a speculative venture. Until Singapore can exist other than solely by trade, even to contemplate such a risk is suicidal.” (Applause). (B143-144)

b) TCT supported the amendment, which sought to review all seats in the LegCo, proposed by the Colonial Secretary.

TCT: Sir, I rise to second the amendment proposed by the Honourable the Colonial Secretary as, in effect, it seeks the implementation of one of the unanimous

	recommendations of the Committee, of which I was privileged to be the Chairman. (B148)
62. LegCo, Tues, 16.6.1953	-
63. LegCo, Tues, 21.7.1953	<p><u>a) Motion by C.R. Dasaratha Raj- Rent Control: Post-September, 1947, Premises</u></p> <p>TCT opposed the motion that a Bill be introduced to control rent, on grounds that it will work against the long term interests of Singapore, by discouraging the building of more houses and thus reducing investments.</p> <p><u>TCT:</u> Your Excellency, I rise to oppose the motion before the House, because I am convinced that such a law, if passed, will work against the long-term interest of this Colony. It would discourage the building of more houses which are so urgently needed, for no one will invest in land and buildings if he is left with a feeling that he may at any time be the target of discriminatory legislation. The result will be that very few will build for investment.</p> <p>There is still an acute shortage of housing in this Colony, and Government itself will never be able to meet it. If we wish to relieve this shortage and bring rent down, we must encourage private enterprise to build more houses and not discourage it by imposing more controls.</p> <p>As and when more houses become available, tenants will no longer be at the mercy of unscrupulous landlords. No doubt, attempts were made recently by some unscrupulous landlords of uncontrolled buildings to exploit their tenants, but obviously they are in the minority, and even they have retracted in the face of popular outcry.</p> <p>There is therefore no justification for this proposed control. One might as well suggest an island-wide curfew just because there have been a few robberies after dark.</p> <p>The present control of rent was introduced when the nation was in a life and death</p>

struggle and all its efforts had to be concentrated on defence projects, with the result that few, if any, new houses could be built. The present control should have been lifted at the end of the war, but was extended because of the unstable conditions of the last few years. Now, eight years after the Liberation, when conditions are becoming almost normal, it is ridiculous to talk of introducing any additional control. We should, instead, be thinking of gradual de-control.

I am really unable to understand how my honourable friend the Member for Rochore (Mr. DASARATHA RAJ), while protesting as he did against the extension of the Emergency on the ground that it is unduly interfering with the freedom of the people, can in the same breath, as it were, seek to introduce this additional control which would have the very same effect of interfering with the rights of a section of the people. Let us be consistent; let us jettison as many controls as we can and not encumber ourselves with more. (Applause). (B209)

b) TCT, on behalf of his Unofficials colleagues, paid tribute to the Colonial Secretary, W.L. Blythe, who was retiring.

TCT: Sir, on behalf of my Unofficial colleagues, I should like to join in the tribute you have just paid to our Colonial Secretary, Mr. BLYTHE.

If I may say so, Sir, the Singapore Ship of State is no different from other ships. Although the Master or Captain is ultimately responsible, it is the Mate who does most of the work, and Mr. BLYTHE, the Mate of our Ship, has carried out his duties very conscientiously and well, this in spite of the Emergency and the trying conditions. He is always considerate to his subordinates and co-operative and courteous to his colleagues on this and the Executive Council.

Moreover, ably assisted by his gracious lady, Mrs. BLYTHE, he has found time to devote much attention to the poor and the under-privileged. Both of them have endeared themselves to the people of Singapore – Mrs. BLYTHE, in particular, to the old folks of Bushey Park and Nantina Homes to whom she has been so devoted. (Applause).

Your Excellency, on behalf of the Unofficials, I wish Mr. and Mrs. BLYTHE many, many happy years to enjoy their retirement. (Applause). (B221-222)

c) Referring to the case of a devastating fire in Geylang, TCT suggested that action be taken to minimise the risk of fire.

[TCT]: Sir, I would like now to refer to the devastating fire in Lorong 3, Geylang, which has caused so much hardship and distress. Moved by this disaster, all of us have been trying to extend as much relief and sympathy as possible to the unfortunate victims, but I am afraid we can never restore to them all they have lost. They must, for instance, have lost many irreplaceable personal effects.

Suggestions have appeared in the papers that attempts should be made to prevent a recurrence of such a catastrophe. I wonder if the advisability and feasibility of creating fire-lanes in all such cramped areas of unauthorised and highly inflammable buildings have been considered.

I suggest that a survey should be made forthwith of all large kampongs of attap houses and our fire experts be asked to advise how the risk of fire can be minimised.

It will be many years before we can clear these kampongs. In the meantime, therefore, cannot fire-lanes be created to divide them into several sections, so that if a fire should break out it can more easily be confined to one section and prevented from

	<p>razing the whole village to the ground and rendering thousands homeless? Of course, some of the houses will have to be demolished to make room for such fire-lanes, but if alternative accommodation is provided for those affected, they will, I feel sure, appreciate that any sacrifice they may make would be for the common good. (Applause). (B221)</p>
64. LegCo, Tues, 18.8.1953	-
65. LegCo, Tues, 15.9.1953	-
66. LegCo, Tues, 20.10.1953	<p><u>Motion by the Financial Secretary- 1954 Draft estimates of revenue and expenditure, Colony of Singapore: Reference to Committee</u></p> <p>TCT gave his comments on the above. In particular, he suggested reducing some of the indirect taxation and expressed his support for a proposal to transfer \$100.3m to a Special Fund and a Development Fund.</p> <p><u>TCT</u>: Sir, I should like to congratulate the Honourable the Financial Secretary not only on his able presentation of the Estimates, but also on his dexterity in transforming with remarkable consistency each year a substantial deficit in the Estimates into a substantial surplus at the end of the year.</p> <p>Commencing from 1951, although the Estimates when presented have always shown a big deficit, the Colony has always ended the year with a big surplus: and strangely enough the difference between the First Estimates and the Final Accounts has always been round about \$70 million. This, Sir, is a feat which even the President of the Magic Circle could not emulate; (Laughter) and this Sir, would have been a good reason for all-round rejoicing but for the unfortunate consequence it has had of leaving our neighbours rather envious and perhaps even a little covetous.</p> <p>The Colony has been wisely building up reserves for a rainy day; but now that we appear to have adequate reserves, I suggest that it is our duty to consider reducing some of the indirect taxation, such as duties on tobacco, liquor, petroleum and</p>

entertainment. When income tax was introduced we were promised that eventually indirect taxation would be reduced; and I submit that it is now time for that promise to be redeemed, in part if not in whole.

I should like to welcome the proposal to transfer \$100.3 million to a Special Reserve Fund and a Development Fund. As a banker, I am naturally whole-heartedly in favour of setting aside reserves in good times in order to cushion ourselves against the lean years that may lie ahead. We shall, no doubt, need these reserves in the future.

As pointed out by the Financial Secretary, a big slice of the Colony's Revenue will have to be appropriated to meet Personal Emoluments next year. \$79.4 million out of our total estimated expenditure of \$184.4 million, or approximately 43 per cent of the total expenditure, is obviously disproportionately high; and I hope this will not be overlooked by those in Government service who seem to agitate habitually for improvements in their terms of service. The time is fast approaching when the people of Singapore may well ask themselves whether they should continue to contribute at the rate of \$70 per head towards the retention of the services of their so-called obedient servants.

The Estimate budget for a deficit of \$32 million; but we are obliged to the Financial Secretary for assuring us that this includes \$22.4 million of Revotes which may reasonably be set off against the surplus of \$33.4 million arising in the current year. It also includes \$10.1 million in respect of Colonial Development and Welfare schemes, which are recoverable in equivalent grants from the United Kingdom; and this, coupled with the likelihood that "many of the expenditure votes are not likely to be fully used", will, I hope, make our task of trying to balance the Budget not too difficult. In view of this reassurance, I shall reserve further comment on the

	<p>Estimates for the Estimates Committee. (Applause). (B316-317)</p>
<p>67. LegCo, Tues, 24.11.1953</p>	<p>a) <u>Motion by TCT- \$30-million loan to the Federation of Malaya</u> TCT proposed that the Council approved a loan of \$30m to the Federation of Malaya.</p> <p><u>TCT</u>: Your Excellency, I have your express consent under Standing Order 38 to dispense with the requisite notice, and also your permission under Standing Order 16 (1) to move the motion –</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">“That this Council approves a loan of a sum of \$30 million by the Government of the Colony to the Government of the Federation of Malaya for a period of 25 years, for the first 10 years free of interest and thereafter on such terms both as to interest and repayment of principal as may be agreed by the two Government.”</p> <p>Sir, as you have just indicated, the question of aiding our good neighbour has been under consideration for some time. You have also dealt fully with the considerations which render it necessary and desirable for us to help the Federation to the best of our ability and resources, and I will therefore not take up the time of this Council by repeating them. During the last week or two, there has been much speculation in the Press on what Singapore should or would do to help the Federation. As a banker I naturally deprecate such speculations. As always happens, those who have indulged in this unnecessary speculation have jumped to wrong conclusions; and others who have been too eager to air their views have merely initiated a useless controversy.</p> <p>Many are inclined to be ultra generous in giving out of the pockets of others; but as the representatives of the people it is the duty of the Councillors to remember that the public funds of the Colony are not theirs to dispose of as they like. They must carefully balance the justification of voting away a large part of the Colony’s surplus assets against the need of giving a helping hand to</p>

a good neighbour.

A gift of \$5 million, as suggested in the Press, would make little, if any, difference to our good neighbour's finances; and bearing in mind that we are dealing with public funds and not our own, it would be improper to vote a bigger gift without the special approval of the taxpayer. It is, therefore, after careful consideration that I have come to submit this proposal before you.

\$30 million may not appear to be much beside the \$500 million which is the approximate annual estimated expenditure of the Federation for next year; but it is quite a lot to Singapore. It represents about 14 per cent of our total annual revenue, or nearly the whole of our estimated receipts from Tobacco Duties, the second largest item in our estimates of revenue. Moreover, as this loan is to be interest free for ten years, it represents, in effect, a gift of \$14 $\frac{1}{4}$ million in interest if calculated at the current rate of 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ per cent.

However, the Colony can afford to make this gesture of friendship to the Federation. As Your Excellency has stated, the making of this loan will not retard our educational programme and the expansion of our social welfare services. In making this loan we may be giving away something which some of our City Councillors covet; but on the other hand, there is no merit in giving what is not wanted.

Sir, as the Senior Unofficial Member and with the concurrence of my unofficial colleagues, I do now formally move the motion standing in my name. (Applause). (B345-346)

b) TCT explained the circumstances surrounding his suggestion to increase the vote for grants-in-aid to Chinese schools.

TCT: Sir, all I have to say on the Estimates I have already said in Committee. However, I would like to take this opportunity to

	<p>welcome the explanation of the Honourable the Financial Secretary on the intent of the paragraph on grants-in-aid to Chinese schools in the Report of the Estimates Committee. I may add that I was responsible for making the suggestion in Committee that the vote for grants-in-aid to Chinese schools should be increased; and I made it because it was common knowledge that such increase was contemplated. Unfortunately, my proposal proved to be premature because Government had not yet finalised its decision on the extent of the increase in the grant and therefore any attempt to revise the vote at the stage would have been out of order.</p> <p>It was therefore for that reason, and none other, that the Committee stated in its Report that it was not in a position then to make any recommendation. No doubt, when the Government has reached a definite decision, the usual application for a supplementary vote will receive the sympathetic consideration of the Finance Committee.</p> <p>I hope these explanations will clear up the unfortunate misunderstanding which has arisen, a misunderstanding which is once more attributable to over-eagerness to indulge in premature speculation. (Applause). (B348-349)</p> <p>c) TCT gave his take on fellow speaker C.C. Tan's opinion that there is a Standing Order which says that there is to be no debate when it is a motion for adjournment and for the Council to resume again.</p> <p><u>TCT</u>: Sir, I think Standing Order 25 (2) (b) applies in this case. (B370)</p>
68. Tues, 15.12.1953	-
69. Proceedings of the Second LegCo, 4 th Session, Tues, 16.3.1954	-
70. LegCo, Wed, 17.3.1954	-
71. LegCo, Tues, 13.4.1954	-
72. LegCo, Tues, 18.5.1954	-
73. LegCo, Tues, 15.6.1954	-

74. LegCo, Tues, 20.7.1954	-
75. LegCo, Tues, 17.8.1954	-
76. LegCo, Tues, 21.9.1954	-
77. LegCo, Tues, 12.10.1954	-
78. LegCo, Tues, 2.11.1954	-
79. LegCo, Tues, 16.11.1954	<p data-bbox="715 383 1410 488"><u>a) Motion by the Financial Secretary- Draft estimates of revenue and expenditure, 1955: Report of the Committee</u></p> <p data-bbox="715 488 1410 712">TCT called for a reduction in indirect taxation and suggested that the Government adopt a well-defined policy in making grants to institutions, reminding that public funds should be dispensed carefully.</p> <p data-bbox="715 745 1410 1115"><u>TCT:</u> Sir, as we congratulate, firstly, the Financial Secretary and then ourselves on our good fortune in being able to provide during these last few years more schools, more houses and increased social amenities for our people and yet, at the same time, accumulate very substantial surpluses, I for one cannot help feeling that in one or two respects we have not quite satisfactorily discharged our duties.</p> <p data-bbox="715 1149 1410 1597">When income tax was introduced a promise was given that indirect taxation would be reduced. I fear that promise has yet to be redeemed, since we have so far not reduced any indirect taxation; in fact, we have missed many golden opportunities to do so over the last few years. Our entertainment duty, for instance, still remains high, and so is the duty on beer, the popular drink of the middle and the low-income group. I submit, Sir, that the reduction of these and other like duties deserves early consideration.</p> <p data-bbox="715 1630 1410 2031">Sir, grants are voted to various deserving institutions yearly, and amongst them is the proposed grant to the Family Planning Association of \$60,000 for next year. This was approved by a majority of 7 to 6 in the Estimates Committee. Without questioning the value or the desirability of the work done by this Association or the earnestness of its volunteer workers, I submit that Government should adopt a well-defined policy in making such grants. I suggest</p>

grants should be made to institutions which are non-communal and non-denominational; which are doing considerable social work that does not offend the tenets of any section of the population; and, lastly, have raised substantial funds themselves to show that they enjoy popular approval and support. If the above guiding principles are adopted, the Family Planning Association would, I fear, be disqualified under two of them.

However, during the last three years this body has been voted increasing grants of \$15,000, \$30,000, \$45,000 and now is to be voted \$60,000 for 1955. As I have conceded, the Family Planning Association may be doing good work especially amongst the poor, but I submit its work cannot be more important and more worth while than that of S.A.T.A. or the St. Andrew's Mission Hospital, and yet while it has only managed to raise a comparatively small sum of a few thousand dollars in voluntary donations, Government's generous grant of \$45,000 is to be further increased to \$60,000 next year.

Sir, I feel I should remind my honourable colleagues that they should not do as they like with public funds. When voting grants out of public funds, they must be even more careful than when giving away money from their own pockets. Everyone is entitled to do what he or she likes with his or her money, but public funds are exacted from taxpayers of many beliefs and, accordingly, should be dispensed with due regard to their susceptibilities. (B353)

b) Motion by J.B. Clegg- Control of imports and exports ordinance, 1950: Continuation in force

TCT expressed relief at the motion mover's assurance that the Government would try to remove the control at the earliest date possible, and highlighted the negative aspects of the control.

TCT: Your Excellency, I am very happy indeed to have the assurance of the mover

of the motion that it is Government's policy not only to relax the control as much as it can and as soon as possible, but also to try and remove it altogether at the earliest possible date. I had come prepared to urge that prolonged controls, which hamper the free trade of this Colony, are obviously detrimental to the interests of the Colony; but in view of the assurance already given, I think I can assume that that is well appreciated. However, there are one or two aspects of the administration of this control which have not been totally satisfactory in the past. For instance, during the last year this control was enforced to disallow the importation of certain grades of rice in order to uphold the price of such rice at a high level because Government had unwisely acquired and accumulated a very considerable stock of poor quality rice and would have suffered or sustained a severe loss but for such control. Government is still an importer of rice, as it must maintain an emergency stock-pile, but may I ask if it is going to rely again on this control to extricate itself from another similar blunder? [The Colonial Secretary: What would you have done?]

I fear it will have to, unless it pursues a better defined policy forthwith.

It is under the provisions of this Ordinance that control is enforced on the destination of our exports of rubber, with the result that this Colony is compelled to make an apparently unnecessary sacrifice, unnecessary because such sacrifice is merely exploited by another member of the Commonwealth to its benefit.

It is also due to the manipulation of this control, and the control of foreign exchange, that rubber produced in this part of the world cannot be sold and shipped direct to Russia but must go through London.

Sir, in view of the assurance of the mover of the motion, I have no doubt all the

unsatisfactory features of this control will be removed during the coming year, and most likely if this control should have to be renewed again next year, all its objectionable features will have disappeared by then. (B361-362)

c) TCT, on behalf of his Unofficial colleagues, expressed their deep appreciation of the services rendered by the Financial Secretary, W.C. Taylor, who was retiring.

TCT: Your Excellency, as this will be the last meeting at which we shall have our popular Financial Secretary with us, I would like, on behalf of my Unofficial colleagues, to place on record our deep appreciation of the valuable services he has rendered to this Colony.

Mr. TAYLOR joined the service as a cadet in 1924, so that, except for a short term of three or four years when he was in Nigeria, he has devoted the best part of his life in service in Malay. During that period he has held countless administrative and legal posts, juggling equally well with words as with figures. I will not embarrass him any more by enumerating all his sterling qualities and his outstanding achievements, but will simply emphasise that while he has been fortunate in holding office during a period of prosperity, it is nonetheless due to his sagacity and watchfulness that the Colony has avoided being extravagant and has consequently accumulated such very substantial reserves which will no doubt prove very useful in weathering any future recessions.

Those of us who have been privileged to associate closely with him know only too well that this apparent quiet disposition conceals a rare sense of humour, sincerity and understanding. We shall therefore miss him very much in our future deliberations. We hope, however, that both he and Mrs. TAYLOR will long enjoy their well-earned retirement and that since they will be

	<p>residing only about 19 hours away from us by air, they will come and visit this second home of theirs often and regularly. (B363)</p>
<p>80. LegCo, Tues, 14.12.1954</p>	<p><u>a) Tribute to the late Dr. C.J.P. Paglar (Member for Changi)</u> TCT, on behalf of his Unofficial colleagues, expressed their deep sympathy to the family of the late Dr. Paglar.</p> <p><u>TCT:</u> Sir, with your permission, may I, on behalf of my unofficial colleagues, express our deep sympathy to the widow and family of Dr. PAGLAR, an Honourable Member of this Council, whose sad and untimely death occurred but a few days ago? The news of his death really came as a shock to all of us, for it was only at the last meeting that he was in his usual place making his usual entertaining speech.</p> <p>Dr. PAGLAR represented Changi, to which constituency he was elected in 1951. He had always taken a keen interest in the people of the whole island, and not only those of his constituency. He was also always non-communal in his outlook and all this is readily evident from the long list of questions filed by him in practically every meeting of this Council. He was also one of those blessed with that uncommon gift of being able to be entertaining even in dealing with the most serious matters of this Council.</p> <p>We shall therefore miss the usual light-hearted half-hour during the adjournment, when he often brightened the proceedings with humorous allusions which tended to soothe any feelings which might have been injured by his forthright and caustic criticisms.</p> <p>Sir, we are sad indeed to have suffered this loss. (B372)</p> <p><u>b) Motion by P.D. Nair- 2nd reading of land acquisition (amendment no. 3) bill</u> TCT opposed the motion, calling the mover opportunistic and presumptuous.</p>

	<p>TCT: Your Excellency, I rise to oppose this motion, too. It is enlightening to see how presumptuous and intolerant some people can be as soon as they enjoy some privileges. I say it is presumptuous of the mover of this motion to conclude that any delay in bringing the second reading of the Land Acquisition (Amendment No. 3) Bill before this House is going to affect the Colony injuriously. Government must be well satisfied that this small delay would do little, if any, harm. It was the author of the Bill, and the proposals of the Preliminary or Master Plan are in its hands. Who then can know better than Government whether it can safely cold-storage such proposals for a while? I therefore say it is most presumptuous of the mover of this motion to try and force the pace.</p> <p>One wonders what then is the real object of the Member for Seletar (Mr. NAIR) in making this move? He has, I think, confessed to a certain degree his motive. He is trying to urge Government to take advantage of its bloc of nine Official votes to bulldoze, with the co-operation of a minority of the Unofficials, this measure through this Council while it is still in a position to do. There can be no other reason. He has already admitted it. What a ludicrous situation it is! Here, we have a Government often charged with being autocratic, anxious to avoid using its bloc of Official votes and preferring to leave this highly controversial issue to be decided shortly by elected representatives of the people, and there, we have an elected representative of the people intolerant and eager to exploit the opportunity of forcing his adopted ideas on this Council.</p> <p>Let us not support his opportunism. (B387)</p>
81. LegCo, Fri, 28.1.1955	<p><u>a) Motion by C.R. Dasaratha Raj- Multi-Lingualism System in Legislative Assembly and City and Island Council</u></p> <p>TCT expressed the views of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, viz removal of language restriction, on the recommendation of the Rendel Commission</p>

that only English be used in the future Legislative Assembly and the City and Island Council of Singapore. He also indicated his decision to abstain from voting on the motion.

TCT: Sir, the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, which I represent in this Council, would like me to emphasize that in advocating the removal of the language restriction in the Legislative Assembly and the City and Island Council, it has the interests of all races at heart, as all races should build Singapore together. It has declared that it adheres to the views it has expressed in a petition which it intends to submit to Her Majesty in Council shortly, and with Your Excellency's permission I will therefore read relevant excerpts from such petition.

“There is considerable antagonism to the new constitution because of a strong and widespread resentment against the recommendation of the Rendel Commission on whose report the new constitution is based to continue the present practice of English being the only language permitted to be used in the future Legislative Assembly and the City and Island Council of Singapore. This recommendation, which is objectionable to the Chinese Chamber, has been made because of the conjectures of the members of the Rendel Commission that English is probably spoken by a greater proportion of the persons qualified to vote than any other single language, and that English offers the best prospect of becoming a language common to the highest proportion of the various groups.

This objectionable recommendation of the Rendel Commission, if adopted, would drastically restrict the people's choice of representatives and would certainly nullify the benefits of popular election and the purpose of the extension of the electorate by automatic registration.

The following basic analysis of the position

of the electorate will also show the inequity of the distribution amongst the various racial groups of those eligible for election:

Europeans:

Numbers entitled to vote..... 10,400
 Numbers qualified to vote and
 literate in English..... 10,400
 Percentage of those qualified to
 vote and literate in English..... 100%

Eurasians:

7,400, of which 7,000 are entitled to vote and literate in English, and therefore a hundred per cent are qualified to be candidates.

Chinese:

156,600. Those qualified to vote and literate
 in English..... 45,400
 Percentage..... 28.9%

Malays:

50,200. Those qualified to vote and literate
 in English..... 6,000
 Percentage..... 11.9%

Indians and Pakistanis:

51,800. Qualified to vote and literate in
 English..... 11,500
 Percentage..... 22.2%

Others:

5,700. Qualified to vote and literate in
 English..... 2,800
 Percentage..... 49.1%

Of the total of 282,100, 83,500 are qualified to vote and literate in English. Percentage – 29.6 per cent.

The qualification literate in English for eligibility for election includes all standards, from a smattering to a profound knowledge of the English language. The criterion has been officially defined as “mere ability to read and write a simple letter in English”.

In Singapore persons who may be said to be truly literate in the English language, apart from the European element, are

comparatively few and are mainly found in the professions. The mercantile community, especially amongst the Chinese, the salaried and wage-earning classes, and the people in the rural districts who are farmers, peasants, industrial workers and petty shopkeepers are far from being literate in the English language. They, nevertheless, prefer their own spokesmen and representatives whom they know and understand to look after their interest in the new government. To deny them of this is to cause frustration and dissatisfaction.

It will be noted that of a total of 1,120,700, those qualified to vote number only 282,100 or 25 per cent of the total population, while those eligible for election number only 83,500 or 29 per cent of the electorate, and only 7.5 per cent of the total population.

The reasons for the small number of the electorate are:-

- (1) over half the population are under 21 years of age; and
- (2) a large majority of the adult population are people who were born outside Singapore but who had early emigrated to Singapore which they have now made the place of their permanent domicile. This is particularly true of the Chinese, who play a major role in the economic life of Singapore.

If the Rendel Commission pretends that English has been recommended because it is probably spoken by the majority, a stronger claim could be made out for the use of Chinese, which is one written language. The members of the Rendel Commission betray ignorance of local conditions when they presume that the dialectical differences amongst the Chinese render their language into several languages. The fact is, by reason of freedom of intercourse and association, dialectical differences present no difficulties to the Chinese population of Singapore.

There is already an example of the language of the majority race, for example Malay, being an official language in the Legislative Council in the Federation of Malaya. To exclude Chinese simply on the presumption of dialectical differences is therefore indefensible, especially when the majority constituted by the Chinese is as much as over 80 per cent of the entire population of Singapore, and about 60 per cent of the electorate.

The Chinese Chamber of Commerce do not contend that English should not continue to be used, but they do contend that the use of languages other than English should be permitted, especially the language used by the majority.

I would here, Sir, say that I associate myself with this contention to the extent that, as far as may be practicable, languages other than English, especially the language of the majority, should be permitted. I am also glad to note from the very clever definition given by the Honourable Mr. RAJ, the mover of the motion, of the word "multi", that he seems also to support this contention of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce. I am quite sure, if Government should ever agree to bilingualism with the Chinese language as the other language, the majority of the non-English-speaking Chinese voters will be most happy, and I hope the Honourable Mr. RAJ will also be satisfied.

I now quote again the petition:

"The objections of the Rendel Commission to the admission of languages other than English appear to be based on convenience, the possibility of errors in interpretation and the probability that procedures of the Assembly and the Council would be greatly lengthened".

To these objections, the Chinese Chamber of Commerce humbly state:

"If there is a possibility of a more

representative form of Government to be obtained by the permitted use of languages other than English, the convenience of the use of English should not seriously be considered. The possibility of errors of interpretation is small. All the population of the Colony have been accustomed to the use of interpreters for generations. The High Court, the District Courts and the Magistrate's Courts all have their interpreters, and a very large proportion of the work of these Courts is conducted through the medium of the interpreters. Most of the business offices, the banks and the legal offices conduct a considerable proportion of their business through the medium of the interpreters. The interpreters as a class are men of great ability and of the highest integrity. No one would doubt that the interpretation of speeches would lengthen the proceedings, but this should not be allowed to weigh against the importance of obtaining the best and truest representation that can be obtained.

The Chinese Chamber of Commerce therefore submit that at the present time when the new form of Government is about to come into being no effort should be spared to obtain as representatives of the people in the Legislative Assembly and the City and Island Council persons who not only have the interests of Singapore at heart and who command the respect, confidence and support of the people they represent, but also who have direct access to and contact with them.

Restriction of the people's choice of representatives to a minority group tends to create a ruling class on the one hand and a second-class citizenry on the other which would be a fruitful source of friction and dissension, besides vitiating the democratic principles isolating the Government from the people and thereby undermining the solidarity of popular support for the new constitution so vitally needed for success in the promotion of responsible and progressive self-government of Singapore".

Sir, those are the considered views of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce.

As regards the Honourable Mr. RAJ's criticisms of the Rendel Commission, I am sorry to say they sound to me like the ravings of one trying to stage an electioneering stunt, and I think it is hardly becoming for members of the Commission to pay any attention to it.

Now, as regards his motion, since it seeks to discredit completely the recommendations of the Constitutional Commission of which I was a member, I shall, in view of the rather special circumstances and the attitude of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, simply abstain from voting. (B428-430)

b) TCT called for the government to be consistent and fair in its policy towards gambling.

TCT: Sir, I know it is getting late now, but as this is probably the last session of Council, I should like to raise one small matter which, although cannot be dealt with immediately, I would like to place on record and leave for consideration in time to come. It is a matter that concerns a lot of the small people.

One read recently in the papers, Sir, that pin-tables are to be prohibited in coffee-shops, and several of our very upright Legislative and City Councillors have urged that such temptations to try one's luck should not be allowed even in community centres and clubs. Over the Chinese New Year 53 people were reported to have been hauled up before an emergency court and were each fined \$5 for having committed the serious offence of gambling in public. Chap-gee-ki promoters were also arrested and, after being sentenced to imprisonment, even banished. All these drives to purge the people of the evils of gambling are no doubt considered to be necessary and desirable in the public interest, and naturally have the

	<p>support of all the good citizens of this Colony; but, unfortunately, Sir, they also leave the man-in-the-street rather bewildered. He cannot understand why the Government and the City Council are so energetic on the one hand in suppressing petty gambling whilst, on the other hand, the big and influential Turf Club, which enjoys the patronage of the highest in the Colony, is permitted to promote monster lotteries the tickets on which are readily available to anybody who cares to pay \$10 and become either a subscribing or a lady member. In fact, for the \$10 one also acquires immediately the privilege to buy cash sweeps, double totes and tickets on the totalisator in a whole year. Our legal fraternity will no doubt explain that all this is according to our laws, but to the man-in-the-street it still does not make sense. Why must he be hounded for gambling a few cents or a few dollars when others, by just paying \$10 to the Turf Clubs, may gamble in hundreds and thousands?</p> <p>I suggest, Sir, that if it is the policy of the Government to protect the weak and the irresponsible from the temptations and evils of gambling, the law should be amended to make it not possible for any club, not even the Turf Club, to resort to the simple subterfuge of enrolling a disproportionate membership of subscribing members who have merely to pay \$10 to circumvent the law. In other words, Government should either liberalize its policy on the suppression of gambling — and that I do not advocate except perhaps as a very temporary measure — or plug this loophole in the law. Unless this is done, Government would appear to be discriminatory and inconsistent. (B451)</p>
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- Indicates no speeches by TCT or he was absent.