

# LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

THURSDAY, 5TH FEBRUARY, 1953

The Council met at 2 p.m.

## PRESENT

The President, His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government, Mr. John Gutch, C.M.G., O.B.E.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Mr. J. L. Fletcher, O.B.E., T.D. (Acting)

The Hon. the Attorney General Mr. F. W. Holder, Q.C.

The Hon. the Financial Secretary, and Treasurer, Mr. E. F. McDavid, C.M.G., C.B.E.

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

The Hon. Dr. J. A. Nicholson, (Georgetown North).

The Hon. T. Lee (Essequibo River).

The Hon. W. J. Raatgever, C.B.E. (Nominated)

The Hon. V. Roth, O.B.E. (Nominated)

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

The Hon. Capt. J. P. Coghlan (Demerara River)

The Hon. J. Fernandes, (Georgetown Central)

The Hon. Dr. C. Jagan, (Central Demerara)

The Hon. A. T. Peters, (Western Berbice)

The Hon. G. H. Smellie, (Nominated)

The Hon. J. Carter, (Georgetown South)

The Hon. L. A. Luckhoo, (Nominated).

The Hon. W. A. Macnie, C.M.G., O.B.E., (Nominated)

The Clerk read prayers.

## CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, the 4th of February, 1953, as printed and circulated, were taken as read.

**Mr. Smellie :** There is a very small clerical error on the last page (5) of the Minutes. With reference to the adjournment it is stated: "It being past the adjournment . . .". The word should be "past". Subject to that amendment the minutes can be confirmed.

Amendment made and Minutes confirmed.

## PRESENTATION OF REPORTS AND DOCUMENTS

**The Colonial Secretary** (Mr. Fletcher, Acting): I beg to lay on the table the following:—

The Report of the Directors of the New Widows' and Orphans' Fund for the year 1951.

The Report of the Registrar of Friendly Societies for the year ended 31st December, 1952.

The Reports of the Advisory Committees appointed to investigate the wages and conditions of employment in Cinemas.

Drug Stores, Dry Goods Stores, Garages (Hire Car Service), Groceries and Hardware Stores.

The Report of the Advisory Committee appointed on 25th January, 1952, to investigate the conditions of employment of, and to make recommendations in regard to the minimum rate of wages which should be payable to, persons engaged in watching or guarding premises (excepting private dwelling houses) throughout the Colony, and who are not covered by the Hours of Work (Georgetown and New Amsterdam Watchmen) Regulations, 1948, (No. 6).

#### ORDER OF THE DAY.

#### APPROPRIATION BILL, 1953

**The Financial Secretary and Treasurer:** I beg to move that the Council resolves itself into Committee to consider clause by clause the Bill intituled—

“An Ordinance to appropriate the supplies granted in the current session of the Legislative Council.”

I would like to refer to the procedure again because it is so new, and I can do no better than invite reference to the record of what I said in Finance Committee in opening the consideration of the Draft Estimates. With your permission, sir, I would like to read the record of the minutes of the Finance Committee of Wednesday, 7th January, 1953. It says:

“In opening consideration of the Draft Estimates of Expenditure for 1953 the Chairman explained the procedure with respect to the Appropriation Bill the second reading of which he had moved in Council in presenting his Budget Address. In the course of his remarks the Chairman stated that the Report of the Finance Committee on the Draft Estimates would be presented in the form of a revised Schedule to the Bill, the insertion of which would be moved in the Committee stage after the debate on the second reading. Every head of the Estimates (as set out in the Schedule) would be taken separately in the Committee stage so that Members would have an opportunity to speak on each head

and on the departmental activities to which it relates. Members could also, if they so desired, move to reduce the amount of any head by a specified sum so as to delete or reduce any sub-head or item appearing in the Estimates under that head, and if any such amendment were carried the amount of the head in the Schedule and the particular sub-head or item in the Estimates would be adjusted accordingly. The Chairman emphasised that the details of the Estimates would not be dealt with in Council except on specific amendments moved by Members.”

I think, sir, I should again bring that procedure to the notice of Members so that when we go into Committee we will know what the procedure is.

**The Colonial Secretary:** I beg to second the motion.

Question put, and agreed to.

#### COUNCIL IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 1—Short title—passed as printed.

*Clause 2—Financial Secretary and Treasurer to defray expenses of Civil Government.*

**The Financial Secretary and Treasurer:** I now beg to move that the Schedule as printed in Appendix A to the Report of the Finance Committee be inserted as the Schedule to the Bill, the total being \$29,838,543. Each head is shown on the Estimates and the total of each head.

Question put, and agreed to.

Schedule inserted.

#### I. GOVERNOR—GOVERNOR'S SECRETARIAT

**Dr. Jagan:** I wonder if you, Sir, intend to take the heads separately as I notice that “Governor” and “Governor's Secretariat” are dealt with as heads I and IA respectively. I would like to

make an observation under IA. I notice that in the reorganization of the clerical department certain changes have been made, and I note we are now going to have a "Governor's Secretary" and "Clerk to the Executive Council" and also an "Assistant Clerk to the Executive Council". A special memorandum was submitted to us stating in detail the reorganization of the Secretariat so that the new Constitution with the Ministers etc., will work very smoothly. In my opinion we have planned in the Estimates for too much staff, and in the case of this head—Governor's Secretariat—particularly, I feel that one Secretary, whether we call it Governor's Secretary or Clerk to the Executive Council, should be enough, instead of two as proposed. I will, therefore, move a reduction of the whole Head by \$5,400. It is my opinion that there should be a competent Secretary or Clerk to the Governor and that the post should be put on the Estimates at a salary of approximately \$4,800 per annum, which will be a salary of \$400 per month. I think that is, indeed, quite a handsome salary for any officer to be the Clerk to the Executive Council or the Governor's Secretary. At the moment we do know that a Civil Servant is performing the duties of Clerk to the Executive Council and his salary does not reach the figure of \$400 per month.

Another point which has to be taken in reviewing this matter is that under the new Constitution the Governor will be relieved of his duties as President of this Council, or of the House of Assembly as it will then be known. Consequently, we may say the Governor will have more time to devote to his duties of looking after the welfare and interest of the Colony as a whole. In view of that, I consider, as I have pointed out before, that the functions of the Governor's Secretary and Clerk to the Executive Council and of the Assistant Clerk to the Executive Council should be

united and one person appointed instead at \$400 per month. The explanation given in Finance Committee was that this officer will have to be a very high ranking officer who will have to be a sort of liaison between the Governor and the Ministers. The Ministers will be putting forward proposals which will have to be submitted to the Governor and also to the Executive Council, and this individual will have the responsibility of putting those proposals in shape, etc. But when we come to examine the composition of the Ministers we find that each Minister himself will be provided with a competent Secretary, and further, the Minister will also be guided by the Head of his Department. So I do not see where it will be necessary to have such a person holding such a strategic position to be a guide and adviser to the Ministers. I do not think it is necessary. I feel that we can save a good sum of money every year by deleting those two items or reducing the head as I have mentioned. I think that while we are preparing for the new Constitution and are reorganizing the Government, at the same time we should keep in mind the expenditure which we have to meet under the various heads for social development. I think we should try to curtail expenditure as much as possible, and this is one direction, I feel, in which it should be done.

**Mr. Fernandes:** It is my desire to see the new Constitution work smoothly and efficiently, and I disagree with the hon. Member for Central Demerara (Dr. Jagan) when he says the Ministers will be guided by the heads of their Departments. I think the position will be the opposite, taking it for granted that we have Ministers capable of guiding the heads of Departments. Because of my desire to see the Ministerial System work satisfactorily right at the beginning, I am not going to agree with the hon. Member's motion for the reduction of this head. After the system has

been working for six months or so and it is found that there is one clerk too many under this head. I have no doubt that those whose job it will be to see that no unnecessary money is spent, will recommend or move the deletion of the post at that stage.

**Dr. Jagan:** I did not mean to infer that the Ministers will be guided by the Heads of Departments. Obviously there must be some amount of co-operation between the Heads of Departments and the Ministers, because all the facts are at the disposal of the Heads of Departments who will bring suggestions to be considered either by the Minister of the particular Department or in conjunction with his colleagues. When that is done, the suggestion will be whipped into shape by the Minister's Secretary who will also be a responsible individual, as we see it, and then forwarded to the Governor or the Executive Council. I do not see that a great deal of further examination will be necessary at that stage, especially as the Minister will be there with a responsible Secretary. We have very capable persons in the Civil Service today. We have seen reports of various Committees written by them from time to time and we know the admirable work they do. I do not say I do not want the new Constitution to work smoothly, but I desire to see that we do not have a redundancy of expenditure. I know from experience that once heads are put in the Estimates it takes the Almighty to remove them. Those heads grow and grow and, as one hon. Member suggests, the experimental babe put on the Estimates becomes a permanent burden on the people.

**The Financial Secretary and Treasurer:** In the first place I want to assure hon. Members that this re-organization which we have provided for in the Estimates is by no means extravagant. We may be criticized for not being suf-

ficiently generous in our staff establishment for the Ministerial System, compared with arrangements I have seen forecast for other Colonies. I have seen that for Jamaica, and ours when compared with that may be regarded as fantastically small. As regards the Governor's Secretary I had tried to explain in detail in Finance Committee what his functions will be, and I can do no better than refer this Council to Legislative Council Paper No. 8 of 1952, the paragraph dealing with the Secretary's position. All I can do is to read it. It says:

"Governor's Secretary, Para III of the Report.

"As proposed by the Constitutional Commission, the Ministerial system will necessitate the appointment of a senior official as Governor's Secretary who would also perform the duties of Clerk to the Executive Council. All papers submitted by Ministers for consideration by the Governor and/or the Executive Council will pass through him, and it will be his task to ensure that such submissions are made in proper form and to convey requests in the name of the Governor, e.g. for further information on a particular subject or for prior consultation between two or more Ministers before re-submission and so on

It will be his duty to scrutinize telegrams and despatches submitted by Ministers for transmission to the Secretary of State and other Governments in order to satisfy himself that they are in proper form for the Governor's approval: in order to relieve the Governor of the burden of routine he will have to use his discretion in himself authorising the despatch of telegrams and cablegrams on minor matters. He will be responsible for the circulation to Ministers of copies of telegrams, despatches, etc., to and from the Secretary of State.

His duties will also comprise the preparation and circulation of the agenda and minutes of meetings of the Executive Council. Submissions to Executive Council, save on minor questions, will normally be made in the form of a comprehensive memorandum for circulation to members. Meetings of the Executive Council would be held, as at present, at Government House.



The Governor's Secretary will be responsible for the administration of the Governor's Office. This would include as at present the cipher staff and it would take over from the Secretariat the responsibility for registering outgoing and incoming mails to and from the Secretary of State and other Governments".

I am quite sure, sir, hon. Members will agree that this is a most important post. The re-organization which has been provided for is by no means extravagant. We have not been especially generous in our staffing arrangements and compared with other areas in the Caribbean, ours is slightly thin. I rather think people in those areas will regard this as being fantastically small. I gather, sir, from the hon. Member's remarks, that the Governor's position will be slightly altered constitutionally—that the Governor will himself be a sort of Clerk. Well, I think that is what he means. I think that the post to which the hon. Member has referred is going to be a big one and carries with it heavy responsibility. I do hope hon. Members will not support the amendment for a reduction.

**Dr. Jagan:** I do not disagree with all the functions the individual will have to carry out, but who can say that we cannot get an individual to do this job for \$400 per month? I do not like to throw bouquets in this Council, but we have in this Council a very competent individual who can fill this position and who, I am sure, is not getting \$400 per month but who, I think, can nevertheless fill the position admirably. I feel that while we want the work to be done efficiently, at the same time not because a man is paid \$600 per month that he is going to do it more efficiently than if he is paid \$400. I do not see that that argument holds at all. There are many Civil Servants who are working for \$200 or \$150 per month and are doing quite efficient jobs. I do not think salary alone is the whole consideration in

this matter. It is true we want a responsible individual, but I do not see why we cannot get that responsible individual to carry out the duties for \$400 per month. Let us take men from the Civil Service; let us shape them for Ministers of the New Constitution. With regard to the remarks about the Governor, I am not suggesting that the Governor should do the routine work of a Clerk, but I do suggest that the post in question can be usefully carried out at a salary of \$400 per month.

Question put and the Committee divided and voted as follows:

For: Dr. Jagan—1.

Against : Messrs. Macnie, Fernandes, Smellie, Capt. Coghlan, Dr. Nicholson, The Financial Secretary and Treasurer, the Attorney General, the Colonial Secretary—8.

Amendment lost.

## II LEGISLATURE

**Dr. Jagan :** I beg to move that this Head be reduced by the sum of \$8,640. This is in connection with Item (f) where provision is made for the remuneration of a Speaker and a number of Ministers and Members of the Legislature. Sir, we will recall that there was great controversy whether we should have a single House or two Houses in the New Constitution. One of the objections to a second House or two Houses in the Legislature was that a second House was going to cost the Colony more money. We know the famous statement which has been made, that the Upper House which agrees with the Lower House is superfluous and the one which objects is quite obnoxious. That is the famous dictum of the Upper House which has been quoted over and over. But leaving that aside, the statement has been definitely made that as long as we provide for a second Cham-

ber, it will mean an additional amount of money to be spent for the carrying out of the duties of that second House.

In view of that, I take it this matter was in the minds of the Constitution Commissioners when they recommended that the Members of the State Council should not be paid. They must have felt that a second Chamber is not necessary at this stage of our development; and having come to that conclusion they recommended that the Members of the State Council should not be paid. Sir, I agree with that suggestion. However, it may be said that some of the individuals may be performing useful services to society. In my view, I do not think it is necessary to have a State Council or Upper House. In any case, I am willing to concede that the Members of the State Council be remunerated at 50 per cent. of the rate that Members of the House of Assembly will receive.

According to the Constitution proposals we find that Members of the House of Assembly will be remunerated at the rate of \$160 per month. Taking 50 per cent of that, we will have a salary of \$80 per month and for nine members at \$80 we will have \$720 per month which will amount to \$8,640 per annum. In my opinion, I feel that is being very generous. I feel that while we have to spend \$8,640 per annum, if we are to give them the 50 per cent of the rate which Members of the House of Assembly will receive, we will also have to have additional Clerks, Stenographers; we will need more Official Reporters and we will have to have more expenses generally in the printing of Hansard and Minutes of the State Council—expenses which, I think, are totally unnecessary at this stage of our Constitutional history.

I do not think I have any more to say but that I feel strongly that the Members of the State Council should not be remunerated to the same

extent as Members of the House of Assembly. It is very likely that the State Council will not meet as often as the House of Assembly. This Body will have 27 Members, and we do know that many of the elected Members will have to speak on behalf of the constituencies they represent. Sir, I anticipate that the State Council will not have to do that, because the Members who comprise it will have been nominated by Government and will not have to do any gallery-playing, nor will there be as many as 27 Members speaking there, but only nine. So that when we take that aspect of the matter into consideration, we will find that Members of the State Council will actually be sitting for a much shorter period of time in comparison with those of the House of Assembly, possibly about 50 per cent of the time. Even if we take that as a basis, we find that the rate of 50 per cent payment is equitable. I therefore move that this head be reduced by \$8,640.

**Mr. Macnie:** I am sorry, sir, I did not catch entirely what the hon. Member said. May I, however, ask whether I am correct in understanding him to say that because a Member is nominated by the House of Assembly or by Government he does not speak his mind?

**Dr. Jagan:** I did not say that.

**The Financial Secretary and Treasurer:** I know that the hon. Member has strong objections to the State Council that is proposed, or indeed to any State Chamber. But the mere act of reducing this vote by \$8,640 could not by any means affect the situation, because payment of Members of the new Legislature will, of course, be in terms of the Order-in-Council and I think I am right in saying that this will be so framed that its position in this respect could subsequently be modified or varied by the new Legislature. The point I am

trying to make is that Members ought to see that by reducing this vote by a substantial sum worked out by some arithmetical device of the Hon. Member's own, cannot affect the terms of the Order-in-Council. This matter was debated fully when we had our discussion in this Council on the Constitution arising out of the Franchise Bill and the same point was made by the hon. Member and was not accepted. I think very rightly too. We cannot discuss it now because, as I said, no reduction of the vote can possibly affect the State Council; and I think the hon. Member should withdraw the amendment. It would not have the effect he seeks.

**Dr. Jagan:** The hon. the Financial Secretary and Treasurer suggested that we had complete discussion on the matter in this Council. It is a pity we did not deal with the Constitution Report and Recommendations point by point and take a division on each point, because I recall that when the matter was discussed we did so on a separate Bill which had to do with Adult Suffrage. An opportunity was not given in this Council for Members to discuss the subsequent dispatch from the Secretary of State for the Colonies. Everything seems to have been accepted and handed down to us; we voted without any division and I can see the difficulty now. I shall, however, agree that so far as salaries are concerned, \$160 per month is adequate. I feel this sum is more than enough for any Minister. If anything at all, the others should be brought down in line and not because Official Members are paid \$800 and \$700 per month that the Ministers must be taken up to those figures. I think \$600 a very big salary, \$300 to \$400 should be the highest salary, taking into consideration the standard of the people and the environment in which we live.

**Mr. Smellie:** The hon. Member for Central Demerara referred to the

I of the Constitution Commission and upon which he said he was not given an opportunity to debate. So far as I can remember, he was. By his speech he suggested that the Report might just as well have been written by the Commissioners in England without coming here and that the members of that Commission came with their minds made up. I do not think it would have done him any good if we had gone through the Report clause by clause.

**Dr. Jagan:** When the matter was considered, I discussed the Constitution Report on the broad principles of the Upper House and its relation to the Lower House and to this Colony. I did not discuss the details, and that is why I said that up to this moment I was not given an opportunity to debate it. It is true I rejected the Report on the Constitution on the ground that something was being forced down our throats, I should like to make some points on the basis of the requirements. In discussing the whole Report one has to make general observations, and in that way I say I was against the Report. That does not mean that the various points in the recommendations were not to be discussed fully.

**Capt. Coghlan:** I am sorry I have not got a copy of the last Hansard. I remember quite well when we were debating Adult Suffrage that I made the observation that there were many other things in the Bill which we should have discussed and which should have been put on the Order Paper for discussion.

**Dr. Jagan:** I will take the hon. the Financial Secretary and Treasurer's advice and withdraw the amendment.  
Head put, and passed as printed.

### III AGRICULTURE

**Dr. Jagan:** Sir, when we were discussing the question of padi yesterday, I made a very broad and sweeping state-

ment that the Colony had gone mad so far as rice was concerned. I said that, because I saw a very great danger ahead of our agricultural economy becoming lop-sided. Rice is pushing out cattle and cattle are pushing out ground provisions. The hon. Member for Central Georgetown referred to rice cultivation in the Rupununi, along the coastlands and in the interior. I would say that Government should give very serious consideration to the setting up of some Committee—call it what you will—land settlement or land utilisation Committee — so that we can take a given area, especially those areas which are now being converted into proper agricultural lands at Blocks I, II and III Corentyne, and decide how the land must be used and what should be reserved for pasture and for ground provision and so on. We have got on the Estimates under another head, provision for a Land Settlement Officer. I think that he should in conjunction with others, form a Committee to go into this matter in very great detail so that we do not lead our agriculture in a wrong way so far as the future is concerned.

While we are making those lands available, I feel that we should also carry out extensive soil surveys in those areas, because I do not think it is good enough simply to make the lands available and let them out to the people to plant whatever they like. There must be a proper soil survey so that the planting would be of the best. In the same way that Government is giving training to surveyors, a separate scheme should be got out for the training of soil chemists under the supervision of the Soil chemist, and these trainees can eventually go out and be available to give advice to the farmers as to soil content, the sufficiency of minerals in the soil, etc. I feel that is very important, and Government should make provision in the Estimates for that.

There is one matter which I do not think it is necessary to mention here, but I see that we are making provision for a new post — Plant Pathologist. It is proposed to provide for the establishment of a permanent research organization to study sugar cane disease. I feel sure that will be a very useful thing. We have seen what great havoc the last pest incidence we had, did in the sugar cane industry, and I feel we should make provision for some such research. However, there is one point, I would like to refer to in respect of this estimate, and that is with respect to Marketing. I do not know that Marketing and a Marketing Officer should come within the provisions of the Agricultural Department. I think we should put that under Control of Supplies. Let it be a separate department. We have at the moment trained agriculturalists doing such jobs as Marketing Officer for instance. These people have been to College and acquired useful technical knowledge which should be at the disposal of the people, and I do not think their knowledge which has been gained by hard work and the expenditure of much money should be wasted in commercial activities. There are enough commercial persons in the Colony who should be doing those duties.

I feel also that provision should be made in the Estimates for some research to be done in respect of rice breeding—improved varieties, better strain of grain, etc. I remember that the Mission which came here from the U.S.A. some time ago suggested that, especially as we were embarking upon mechanization, we should try to get species of rice which would stand up to that type of cultivation and harvesting. I think more should be done in that field. I think it would not be bad if we import some people who are efficient in that field of plant biology and who can grow things which were not grown before



and can improve the yield to three times what it was before. I remember discussing this matter with the acting **Deputy Director of Agriculture** while on a tour of the country with the Rice Farmers Security of Tenure Committee, and he told us that in one part of the world they are now growing three and four crops of rice per year by using new methods of production. I think we should be able to get help from those experts, whether they are from the United Nations Organization or otherwise, and in that way help to raise the economic standard and yield from these lands. One crop per year and in some cases two will not give a remunerative return to the Colony.

**Mr. Fernandes:** It is very nice for the hon. Member who has just taken his seat to repeat the point I made yesterday about the Agriculture Department doing everything possible to grow more stuff on the same lands that are being cultivated today. I made that point since yesterday. But it is rather late in the day for him to suggest the appointment of a Committee to go into the question of the distribution of lands for various agricultural crops and livestock, because in three months' time we shall have a completely new Council and the Ministerial System, and I think it would be wrong for Government at this stage to appoint a Committee to go into anything like that, as that concerns directly the future policy in respect of something as important to British Guiana as Agriculture. I say that because it will be remembered that I said yesterday that agriculture was in my opinion the most important item in the future policy of British Guiana. That, sir, should be the first charge of whoever is appointed as the first Minister of Agriculture in British Guiana. In the interest of British Guiana, I hope that person will be someone who is capable of doing the immense job which has to

be done if our agriculture is to be re-orientated completely, and I hope that such a person will be found among the six individuals who will be elected Ministers under the new Constitution.

**Mr. Macnie:** I share the hope expressed by the hon. Member for Georgetown Central (Mr. Fernandes) about the future Minister of Agriculture, and I also share the view, quite naturally, as to the importance of agriculture, but I would suggest, sir, that it would be of help to the Minister of Agriculture, whoever he may be, if he could have the report of the Committee suggested by the hon. Member for Central Demerara (Dr. Jagan), even if that Committee has started its task and, if possible, help him in the formulation of his policy. I do think there is a great deal in what has been said about the urgency of an examination by Government Officers, the Committee or otherwise, into the utilization of the lands of Blocks I and II and also the Boerasirie lands between Tuschen and Parika, and the facilities of the Boerasirie lands particularly. I do feel, sir, it is an urgent problem and the sooner it is tackled the better.

I also share the views of the hon. Member for Central Demerara—in fact I had intended to express them myself — about the time Senior Officers of this Department are spending on Boards of Control which began during the war years and are still being carried on. I think it is a great pity that highly trained and senior Officers — in fact one of the most senior officers in the Department — should be doing practically nothing else except looking after livestock control and marketing. I think it is high time that these Officers of the Department should get on with their real jobs and either these Controls be done away with as others and

myself have recommended in a report on Controls, or that these Controls, if Government decide not to do away with them, be placed under some other organisation, and let the Agricultural Department get on with its job for which its officers are trained.

**Mr. Smellie:** I would like to support the remarks of the hon. Member for Central Demerara about the training of soil chemists. Most hon. Members who have already had time to read the Report of the Committee appointed to investigate the depressing condition of the North West District, would see how very largely that problem of deterioration of the pegasse soil calls for technical knowledge and rejuvenation.

**The Financial Secretary and Treasurer:** On this occasion I am happy to be able to say that I agree with 95 per cent of the remarks of the hon. Member for Central Demerara. He referred to this important question on land utilization. It is indeed one of the most important matters on which the Government is giving very active consideration at the moment, notably in connection with what should happen with regard to the beneficial occupation of lands that will be made cultivable and useful by virtue of the drainage and irrigation scheme which we have already started. But the matter goes much farther than that. What we require now is not so much a Committee. The Government feels that we may almost have to set up a special organization, a sub-department or a special department. The question is extremely complicated.

There is not only the question of settlement on the land, the use of the land and the type of land but also this question of the re-occupation and use of our riverbank lands. Yesterday the hon. Member for Western Berbice (Mr. Peters) also im-

ported into the discussion the use of the various islands. There is also the question of land titles. The hon. Member for Western, Essequibo (Mr. Wight) is very interested in that aspect of the subject. A lot of the land which now lies idle along our river banks is held sometimes on very obscure title. One would like to think in some way or other of having them restored perhaps to Colony ownership so that they can be put to use. This whole question is very important, and I feel sure the new Government would have to take it into active consideration as soon as possible. I myself envisage the setting up of new organizations.

The hon. Member referred to marketing. I think Government entirely agrees with him on that score, because we have been recently considering the draft legislation for setting up something which we propose to call a Local Produce Marketing Depot, controlled by a statutory Board, something like the Rice Marketing Board. It will be taken out of our Departmental field and run on commercial lines and with a proper commercial staff. I have actually seen the draft Bill. There are certain aspects of it which still require decision. It is urged that we should not go on with Control — centralized distribution of livestock, etc. I do not like the word "Control". The object of it is not control, it is to try and collect and distribute in the best possible manner. That is also a matter which has been given consideration and which I hope, will come into being, not before this Council comes to an end but as soon as possible after the new Legislature starts to function.

The hon. Member mentioned research in rice breeding. Here again I hope I am not disclosing an official secret when I tell hon. Members that only last week a draft scheme was submitted for advice to the Colonial Office. It includes a comprehensive rice



breeding station with exactly the same objective as he mentioned. Hon. Members may know that a certain amount of research is being done under the Mahaicony-Abary Scheme and that relates to actual cultivation, elimination of drop seed and red rice. What is now required is the creation of a new and better type of rice itself, the provision of a variety which will stand up, as one hon. Member says, to mechanization and give a better yield. The scheme has been actually prepared and correspondence has been forwarded to the Colonial Office on that particular matter.

The hon. Member spoke of soil surveys. I think everyone realizes the advantage of a proper soil survey, but I am not sure that I understood him correctly when he spoke of apprentices of soil surveyors. I do not know enough of the subject to say whether it is possible to secure training in soil chemistry in that particular way. I feel it is much too technical a subject for that kind of training, but I am quite sure Government recognizes the necessity for maintaining an establishment of soil surveys. On the question of rice he did mention the possibility of more than one or more than even two crops of rice per year, something, he says that has happened in some other parts of the world as a result of expert investigation and research. There again, in our country the question of crop is somewhat dependent upon the weather, and I do not know whether it is possible to grow and reap more than two crops of rice in British Guiana at any time on account of our peculiar weather conditions. That is a matter for very high level research. I think I have dealt with all the points the hon. Member mentioned.

**Dr. Jagan:** I did not mention the name of the country because it is not nice to mention Russia in this Coun-

cil. That is information given by the Deputy Director of Agriculture. The Michurin School of Biology is growing wheat where wheat was never grown before. They are doing tremendous things so far as growing crops are concerned, and growing more things on the same area of land. I do not care what method is adopted as long as we get results. There is one matter which I would like to refer to; I omitted to do so when I spoke. It is the question of the Rupununi Cattle Trail. Every year we have this item on the Estimates, but I think the time has come when we must delete the item—"Maintenance Rupununi Cattle Trail, \$11,000". This is on page 6 of these Estimates. If we take into consideration the price which beef cattle is now fetching, we would find that the Companies in the interior which are bringing cattle to the coast can very well make a handsome profit from their undertaking. If we take the Balance Sheet of the Rupununi Development Company, we would also see that they are doing very well. At one time they were not doing well but they are not faced with that problem any longer. We have also the excellent service of the B. G. Airways which is transporting beef by air. I feel that this item for \$11,000 should be deleted from this head. Therefore, accordingly move that the head be reduced by \$11,000.

**The Financial Secretary and Treasurer:** The matter was fully considered in Finance Committee and there is a note in the Minutes of the meeting of the 8th January—page 2—on the question of the Cattle Trail which reads this way:

"Members agreed to record that the question of discontinuing the maintenance of the trail should be investigated in connection with the development of transportation of beef by air from the Rupununi to Georgetown."



We are by no means out of the woods as regards this transportation. The trail is still required and we have to subscribe to ensure that it continues. Consideration will be given to the matter during the year to see whether or not the time has come for us to abandon this trail.

**Dr. Jagan:** I think Government should give some information as to when last this matter was investigated, whether any Government Official has been over this trail. Every year we discuss this item and so far as my information is concerned, I am told this trail is most self-maintaining. The cattle, passing through, make their own trail. It only takes enough of them to move along that trail in the first instance. \$11,000, I feel, is a waste of taxpayers' money and is really a subsidy to the Rupununi Development Company which does not need a subsidy.

**The Chairman:** There are a number of bridges on the trail which I have built myself. People were working on it at the time.

**Mr. Fernandes:** I am sure the hon. Member should know that lots of other people—small people—around that area use this trail. It is not used by the Rupununi Development Company alone. I think it would be a retrograde step to discontinue the maintenance of this trail. Already I have been coming in this Council or in Committee and we have no roads into the interior, at least we have a trail where one can ride a horse and go through. I think it would be a retrograde step to abandon this trail, because I am absolutely sure that if we do so, in a year or two we would have to go back and spend large sums of money to open it again. We must not forget that air transport is working smoothly at present, one never knows when an

accident will happen and the special planes which are supplying the service in this area may not be available to run that service. Therefore, we should always have an alternative in such an eventuality. I think \$11,000 is a small amount to spend to keep the trail between Georgetown and the Rupununi which serves practically every rancher in that area. I am entirely against the deletion.

**Mr. Smellie:** I agree with the hon. Member who has just spoken. I do think the hon. Member for Central Demerara (Dr. Jagan) is quite incorrect when he says the trail is self-maintaining. At least 50 miles of it go through the forest and there are a considerable number of creeks which have to be bridged and looked after. If money is not spent on them you would have a tremendous amount of damage among the cattle crossing them.

Motion for the deletion of the item Maintenance of Rupununi Cattle Trail, \$11,000 —put, and rejected.

Head passed at \$886,948.

#### CENTRAL HOUSING AND PLANNING AUTHORITY

**Dr. Jagan:** I notice that an area in Georgetown has now been declared a slum area and that the houses within that area are to be taken down after the Central Housing and Planning Authority has conferred with the owners as to the question of compensation, etc. I would like to know from Government what plans they have made for the development of that area, and whether or not that area falls within the industrial zone of the City of Georgetown. If that area falls within the industrial zone of Georgetown, I can see a great deal of hardship being created, because individuals will not be allowed to build houses for residence there and when the



houses there are removed—we know the tendency today when houses are reconditioned—they will not be rebuilt for the accommodation of the poor people but of the middle and upperclasses. You find all over Georgetown that tenement houses are being broken down and comfortable flats or bungalows which can bring larger rentals from people who can afford to pay them are being erected. So the working people who cannot afford to pay a large rent are being pushed around. I would like to know what is going to happen to these people, whether Government has any plans to rehouse them somewhere else where lands are available. At one time we were told that about 30 or 32 acres of land at La Penitence would have been purchased and made available for building houses there. I do not know what has happened on that scheme.

I would like to know what provision will be made for the housing of the workingclass people—the people who pay \$4, \$5 and \$6 per month as rent. Many of them live in that area. I feel sure that while we are trying our best to eradicate the slums, we should not do so in such a way as to make those people homeless. The hon. Member for Georgetown Central mentioned the case of Campbellville yesterday, and that a reply had been given to his questions. I feel, sir, that it is really a disgrace that after nearly two years or more Campbellville has been allowed to remain in a parlous state. It is a pity. But Government is now saying, sir, that as we get revenue we will take care of it.

**The Financial Secretary and Treasurer:** Let me help the hon. Member. They will spend up to the full amount of the revenue for the year.

**Dr. Jagan:** I do not think that is a satisfactory way to develop this area, because, obviously, in any undeveloped area, at the beginning of its develop-

ment one cannot look only at revenue to spend for the purpose of development. If that were to be the case, let it be strictly a business venture on development associated with it. As far as I am aware, the revenue of that place is in the vicinity of \$10,000 to \$12,000 and I do not know whether that would be enough to do all the work that is necessary there.

In addition to that, sir, I would like to bring to Government's attention the very serious state of affairs in that area. I have pointed out this matter before the pumping of water from Bookers Housing Scheme in the Bel Air Area into the canal, thus causing flooding of the area. This Housing Scheme is now empoldered, but there is another area east of it where the people are growing cassava and rice. As these areas are being empoldered a lot of water is being pumped into the Cummins canal causing a great deal of flooding in that area. I do not think that is fair. I have already urged that before permission is given for the pumping of water on the south-western side of the housing scheme, Government should insist that a pump be put on the western side of the boundary of the Cummins canal so that there would not be flooding of the adjacent areas. It is fair and Christianlike. I would like to ask the Christian Members to talk about this because, after all, if I am living in a rural community I do not think I should protect myself at the expense of other people simply because I have money. I do hope that this will be stopped quickly and not be allowed to continue. That is why there are campaigns such as you have in Kenya, encouraging people to be lawless.

**The Attorney General:** Is this the cause of the pumping?

**Dr. Jagan :** If the rich are allowed to take advantage of the poor and Government does not come to the protection of the poor, these poor people will take the law into their own hands. I do not think Government could like to encourage lawlessness like that.

**The Attorney General:** The hon. Member knows that more than anybody else.

**Dr. Jagan:** That is why I am asking Government to do something about it. Now, Bookers are preparing these lands for planting ground provisions, cassava, and rice. If this is to be done, the interest of the public should be protected, therefore Government should immediately empolder the area and put down their own pumps in order to relieve the inhabitants of the excess water. I hope something will be done very quickly. I mentioned this nearly two years ago, and even the Member for Central Georgetown supported me on that occasion, when I stated as a fact that the area at Subryanville immediately adjacent to the Housing Scheme was flooded to a depth of two or three feet while the other area was completely dry. But nothing has as yet been done.

With respect to the Campbellville Housing Settlement itself, I feel that the matter should be gone into immediately and the land sold to the people, and I hope the price will not be too high. When I asked what the price was no one was in a position to tell me yesterday exactly what it was. The hon. Member for Georgetown Central said it was 7½ cents per square foot. I do not know how much that is going to work out to. I remember pointing out that when Government was paying the exorbitant figure of \$480,000 for the whole area near Bel Air, only a small rental was paid

formerly by the people and they had to pay such high prices for a house lot that many of them who did not have the ready money had to go to the money-lenders or to the Building Society and pay 6 per cent interest on the money borrowed. Now let us work it out—6 or 5 or 3 per cent on \$480,000 and see how much in interest charges they will have to pay for the house lots. Due to the fact that Government paid this exorbitant price for the land, the burden will be handed over to the people in that area. I hope this matter will be gone into very quickly so that we may know very definitely what is the position of the people and whether they would be able to buy their house-lots or not.

There is one thing Government should be very careful about, and that is not to allow the people to get into debt with some Building Society or anyone else, and eventually find themselves in the position of having to sell their land through not being able to repay the money borrowed. We know that the people who reside in that area are mostly those who migrate from Georgetown. Some are rearing poultry, others a few head of cattle and some sheep, in order to make a livelihood. In view of the fact that these poor people are striving their utmost to eke out an existence, Government must be very careful to see to it that after these lands are sold to the people they do not go back to those who had them before as a result of the people, who may have had to borrow various sums of money to cultivate it and for other purposes, not finding it possible to pay up their dues. The idea of buying those lands is to protect the people, and therefore the lands should not be allowed to go back to those who owned them before.

**Dr. Nicholson :** As a member of the Central Housing and Planning Authority, I desire to reply to a statement



made by the hon. Member for Central Demerara. Dealing with the Campbellville area, it was not bought by Government for developmental purposes. The hon. Member knows very well that Campbellville was bought to protect the people there from possible exploitation by a company which was being formed to purchase the property from the owners. The people knew they were going to be exploited and so they came to Government and asked through me for protection. In 1947 when the hon. Member was canvassing for the General Elections, it was reported that he said he would see to it that Government take this land from the owners and give it to the people. Well, later on when the lands were put up for sale the people went to him and asked him to see that they were not sold to that Company. They reported to me that the hon. Member told them they must go and help them selves and do not worry him. After a long time they came to me at my surgery—a committee of plot-holders—and asked me to intercede with Government for them.

I took the matter up with the Planning Authority who said they did not have enough money to purchase. When he learnt that they had come to me he then brought the matter up. I spoke about it and the hon. the Financial Secretary and Treasurer at once got interested as his brother-in-law who worked with the owners, had spent some considerable amount of money in preparing Campbellville for housing, and he thought it would be a shame if that property fell into the hands of the Company that was formed to purchase it. The first thing the hon. the Financial Secretary did was to get in touch with Bookers who agreed to sell the whole property to Government in order to protect the people there. The Company was willing to buy at a figure far in excess of \$480,000, but the owners

said to them: "We will not sell to you; the people must be protected."

That is how the land was got for the working people to rent. It was not intended to be a developmental area, it was purchased and a considerable amount of money has been spent in drainage and irrigation and the preparation of roads, etc. Anyway, we have arrived at a stage where transports are to be passed to the plot-holders. I can assure hon. Members that Government does not propose to make one penny, not a farthing, on the deal. The land will be sold to those persons for whom it was bought. Obviously there will be persons who can pay outright for the lands they purchase, while others will only be able to pay perhaps 50 per cent. and others 25 per cent., but there will be a long-term lease for which there will be a little interest charge. That is the reason for purchasing the land — for those persons who say they want to have a little piece of land to call their own in this world and do not want to remain as they are. If they do not have the money, they must naturally borrow it from somewhere, perhaps the Building Society. Some persons find it difficult to obtain loans from the Insurance Companies who cannot lend money on houses on lease land. That is what is happening.

But Government goes further; all the money that has been collected up to the present moment as rental will be spent on the improvement of Campbellville. Government contemplates going even further to get Finance Committee to approve a vote for re-conditioning the roads in Campbellville. So I think we are doing a very great deal for the people of Campbellville. Therefore, hon. Members cannot now come on the eve of the General Elections and say that Government is doing nothing for the people. That is all being done for Election pur-

poses, and I am rather angered about it. Those are the facts.

Coming to the Decanting Centre at Albouystown and La Penitence, the Central Housing and Planning Authority is making very adequate provision to house those persons in the area which is proposed to be used for industrial purposes. There are persons who are renting rooms and cottages in that area. Those persons will be translated to the La Penitence flats and whatever rental they were accustomed to pay, be it \$5 or \$7 per month. They would be placed in one of these flats temporarily. These flats are normally rented for \$18 per month each; for similar flats privately owned in Georgetown, the rental would be as much as \$40 per month. But the people at the Centre are only paying \$18 per month. Those people living in Albouystown and paying \$8 and \$10 per month will be translated to more hygienic surroundings, with all the amenities of sanitation and things like that. We had a gentleman who visited the Centre recently—one who travelled throughout the whole Caribbean—and he said that the flats at La Penitence were the finest ones he had seen in the whole area.

I used the word "translated" because it is going to make all the difference to the lives and outlook of the people when they are removed from the squalor, filth and dirt where they are now in Albouystown. And what about those persons who own a spot of land in that area? They would be provided with a similar piece of land on which to build their own homes in that area a little way north from the La Penitence area—and they would be adequately compensated for the removal and be able to build their houses in that area under perfectly sanitary conditions. What about those persons who are renting rooms at \$5 and \$6 per month? Finance Committee passed a bill to build four large flats further east where those persons will have one or two rooms which may be divided into little compartments.

I assure hon. Members that a paternal Government, such as we know our Government to be, would never do anything to the detriment of the people of this country and the people in Campbellville and in Albouystown.

**Dr. Jagan:** The hon. Member (Dr. Nicholson) said that Campbellville was never meant to be a developmental scheme. If he had read any of the reports submitted by the hon. the Financial Secretary and Treasurer about this matter he would have seen the word "development" appearing everywhere. He also speaks of my being an executive of this company that was to be formed to purchase Campbellville. I do not know who are the executives of the company.

**Dr. Nicholson:** I never said that the hon. Member is associated with the company.

**Dr. Jagan:** The hon. Member for Georgetown North, (Dr. Nicholson) said that these people in that area were to be protected no matter who purchased the land. The point not to be lost sight of is that the land is within the jurisdiction of the Rent Restriction Ordinance and, therefore, no individual there can be thrown out or charged any exorbitant rent. The hon. Member mentioned that the land would have been sold out. That is only pulling a red herring across the trail to fool some of the people who do not know the facts. The real facts are that some of the people wanted to own the land, but could not do so as it was suggested that it must be taken over by Government and I supported it. I was looking at the proposition as an economic one so far as the people were concerned. If we are to give benefits to the people in Georgetown, as he is saying our paternal Government is giving, then Government must provide for these people in Campbellville as well. I am not against providing benefits for people, but do not let us say that the Government is not making a penny out of his tale. Government is not supposed to, and I do not think Government is an agent. I think that Government is go-



ing to develop this area. Proposals are before this Committee as to how much money is to be spent for the development of this area. Let him say that is not true.

**The Financial Secretary and Treasurer:** I do not know whether the hon. Member for Central Demerara (Dr. Jagan) is addressing this Council or the people outside. The hon. Member for Georgetown North (Dr. Nicholson) is quite correct. There is a certain amount of confusion in this matter. I think the whole thing started in 1949 when, as a result of what the hon. Member for Georgetown North said, I spoke to Mr. W. S. Jones and then I wrote a letter to Government, I think it was sometime in February, about the third. I spoke to Mr. Jones, telling him that Government should make every effort to acquire the land which was for sale in the interest of the lessees. The idea was to acquire the land and sell it out in lots to the existing lot-owners, with the view that they should build their own homes and pay for them by monthly instalments. There was no question of development. After the purchase by Government, the land was to be surveyed and immediate arrangements made for the sale to the lot-owners. The hon. Member does not know this: we had proposed there and then, and even if it might not have been for that exact purpose, to levy a small toll to maintain the amenities of the area.

As regards the maintenance of the place, I said before that Government are spending and will spend all the money received from rents. That is to say, there is no profit-making on the operation at all. Of course, we were told that the previous owners made quite a lot of money out of it.

**Dr. Jagan:** To a point of correction! I said the Company made a profit of \$10,000 per annum in running the whole estate, and when Government purchased for \$480,000 the interest charges amounted to about \$6,000 for half of the area.

**The Financial Secretary and Treasurer:** Whether the previous owners of Campbellville made a handsome profit out of it or not, I am not talking about profits, Government purchased for \$480,000 and considered that a good price. With interest rates at 3½ per cent, Government will be selling the whole area to the people; it is not to be charged to public fund. All the rent collected will go towards maintenance of the estate. I am nevertheless a little bit disappointed myself as regards the delay of the sale. I think it is to some extent inexcusable, since the Planning Authority has been working on the project for a long time. It is also in a position to transport and the price has been approved and sanctioned by Government as one hon. Member stated, at 7½ cents per square foot. That means that the existing tenants have to pay prices ranging from approximately \$312 in the case of inside lots and \$720 for the outside ones. That is a calculation made by the simple process of dividing the area into lots. There is no profit element in it whatever, so that the existing lots will get the benefits of the prices without the imposition of capital charges.

It is also proposed to permit those lot-holders who do not have the cash, to spread their payments over an extended period at a reasonable rate of interest—to pay by way of an annuity. That is part of the scheme. What is more important is the question of the sale of the unoccupied lots. That is a matter which the Central Planning Authority has before it. It is for exactly the same reason that the hon. Member for Central Demerara mentioned. If the Authority puts the lots up at auction it is quite conceivable that the very people who wanted to get hold of the estate before might come in and buy at a high price and resell at an extravagant price. It is not an easy matter to determine what is the most reasonable and appropriate way of disposing of those unoccupied lots in respect of which, I

understand, there are over 890 applicants for about 200 lots. But whatever system or plan is devised for distributing those lots, it must be one that will ensure there can be no speculation in the resale of the property. I think myself that conditions can be framed which will make it equitable for those who really need the lots, to buy without capital.

Campbellville forms part of the Greater Georgetown Plan, and most of us would like to see it incorporated in the City. If that happens, a high ranking authority like the Georgetown Town Council would have to provide for its development, not development free of cost to those who live there. How can it be? The hon. Member expects the Government to spend a large sum of money as capital expenditure as a free gift to the people who live there. If it is a local authority or if it is part of the Georgetown Town Council and development takes place, for the particular development all the inhabitants of the particular area, quite obviously, would have to pay a rate and, I am sure, would be glad to pay that rate.

These lots are fairly cheap at the present and, consequently any lot-holder who lives there, if furnished with good roads, bridges and other amenities such as potable water supply, would be glad to pay rates. I hope the hon. Member would not allow the remarks he made here — that they are entitled to this at the expense of Government — to be repeated because Government purchased the land in order to assist them. I am bitterly disappointed at the speech of the hon. Member, because I think he should know that half of what he said is only imagination. There is nothing whatever in this transaction which can lead anyone to believe that Government would purchase the estate, put up a magnificent scheme and leave the

tenants as before, paying no more than a few cents per month.

**Mr. Fernandes:** I am not surprised at the speech the hon. Member for Central Demerara made yesterday on Campbellville. I am also not surprised at the statement he made when he said that the poor do not get protection and that they will take the law into their own hands. That is nothing surprising, as those are statements we have become accustomed to by now. It is really amusing to me to see him chime in on this Campbellville issue at this very late stage. While the hon. the Financial Secretary and Treasurer said he did not know whether the facts mentioned by the hon. Member were part of his imagination. I can tell him that they were not part of his imagination but part of his pre-election promises and as such, naturally they have to be defended at this time. I think you, sir, and Members of this Council must realize that over a year, perhaps two years ago, I came time and again into this Council on this Campbellville issue, and I must admit that the Administration has begged for the type of speech we got from the hon. Member (Dr. Jagan) this afternoon.

As late as yesterday I got some of my questions answered, and even then Government, in giving those answers, did not see it fit to give the date for the transports in respect of the lots at Campbellville. Had Government said that steps are being taken to have transports passed inside of a month to those who are ready to purchase the lots, that speech would never have been made. You will remember, sir, that yesterday I particularly appealed to Government that those transports be passed, as many as possible, before the 27th April. I had very good reasons for that because the people in Campbellville, as soon as the first transport is passed and one of them gets title to the land which he

has been leasing, would be satisfied, and all this campaign against the purchase of Campbellville and against the price paid by Government for it, would fall to the ground. It is right and prudent that it should fall to the ground before the 27th April.

I have been paying a lot of attention to this Campbellville matter even though it is not in my constituency. I was not doing it for political reasons. I was doing it because I was one of those who fought very strongly along with the hon. Member for Georgetown North (Dr. Nicholson) and the hon. Member for Georgetown South (Mr. Carter) to force Government to protect those people. When I disclosed to a few of those good people what was likely to be the price of those lots, I can assure you, they leaped for joy, and I am sure when the figure is published and they have had the occasion to work out what they have to pay for the lots they are going to be the happiest people in British Guiana. I say that without fear of contradiction.

I was very pleased with one answer given yesterday to the questions on Campbellville, and the hon. the Financial Secretary and Treasurer has mentioned it. The hon. Member for Central Demerara did not think it worthy of even casual mention, and that is, that Government has decided to spend the gross takings from this area on fixing the roads and other amenities. The words used in the reply were "The whole of the revenue derived from rents..." not the difference between the revenue and the expenditure. I venture to say the expenditure is quite a tidy sum. Government has properly decided that the interest on the capital expenditure should be borne by the entire country and that those people should not be made to pay it, even though Government can justifiably charge them with it because the land was bought for their benefit.

I am going to refer to the statement made in connection with the swamping of those lots at Campbellville. Anyone who knew that area before Bookers empoldered their little building development area, would know that the particular spot where houses are now along side the public road was, perhaps, the lowest bit of land in that area and was flooded after 20 minutes rainfall. It is said that I supported the hon. Member when he mentioned that the pump that was pumping that area and throwing the water into the Cummings Canal was responsible for the flooding of Campbellville. I did no such thing. I never supported him in any way. I live in Subryanville, and at one time I inspected the situation and it was found that the Subryanville surface water was running over to the Bookers' area and being pumped by that pump and, therefore, the draining of that land cannot revert to Subryanville.

It is obvious to anybody that a portion of Georgetown is being drained through the Cummings Canal, and we have heard suggestions made similar to the one made by the hon. Member that a pump should be put at each of the kokers in the City, but when the facts and figures were produced it was found that we needed several pumps to keep the City dry when there is a heavy downpour. Those pumps will only be needed two or three times a year and therefore, it was thought to be better perhaps, to put up with the occasional slight flooding of the City than to erect those pumps.

If the hon. Member's desire was that these people should not be flooded, and if it was his honest opinion that any flooding they suffer was the direct result of this water being pumped from the Bookers' area into the Cummings Canal, one would have thought he would have gone to the trouble to find out the bore of the pump and the horse power used

and then come in here and suggest to Government that this water that is being thrown into the canal by this pump is causing flooding, and therefore the canal should be relieved of the exact or a greater quantity of that water by installing a similar size pump at the bottom end to take this water off. But of course he did not do that. I can tell him this: if it is checked up by an engineer it would be found that all the water that can be drained into that canal by this pump cannot raise the level of the water by a single inch. I say that without fear of contradiction.

The hon. Member must not forget that at all times the Cummings Canal drains this area that is now being pumped. All the water that falls from God's heaven on to that piece of earth has to go into the Demerara River *via* the Cummings Canal. If it does not go immediately it is because the land is low, but it has to go at some other time. If it is pumped, it only means that it gets into the canal earlier than it would have got there through the ordinary natural surface drainage. Campbellville does not flood any more than Georgetown or Subryanville, or any of those other places, but naturally it is further away from the mouth of the Cummings Canal than Georgetown is and, therefore, Georgetown gets relieved earlier.

Any time we have had a spell of dry weather and there is a sudden heavy downpour of rain that puts all our City avenues and some of our streets under water, that first downpour has absolutely no effect on Campbellville and Subryanville and those areas at the upper end, but after the rain has fallen for a considerable time the water accumulates there and the City gets relief much faster than those areas. The question of the drainage of Campbellville is exactly the same as that of Georgetown, Kitty, Subryanville. It was very fortunate for us, residents of Subryanville and the

upper reaches of Kitty and even Campbellville, that the original owners of the land whom he complained about, saw fit to drain that land and prevent it from being what it was formerly—a mosquito swamp. If they are planting cassava there, all I can say is that they are producing food out of bad land which had never produced in the history of the place and not within my lifetime, as I have been passing that area throughout my lifetime. To come here and make the statement that the small pumps that are working in that area are flooding the Cummings Canal to such an extent as to cause Campbellville to go under, is a statement the hon. Member should be ashamed of. I would have been ashamed of it if I had made that mistake, because I would have known that it is not true.

I am tempted to ask Government to advertise for sale before the 27th April, at least half a dozen of the unallocated lots at Campbellville. If Government puts them up for sale at auction before the 27th April, there would be a different tale to tell on that day, because I am absolutely certain that the price the lot-holders at Campbellville will have to pay will be less than one-half of what those unoccupied lots are going to fetch at auction. If Government wants to benefit the lot-holders

along the lines the hon. Member has suggested, it can do so quite easily.

going to throw out

all Government bought Campbellville primarily for the protection of those occupying land there and not for the protection of persons who had no land or interest there and the persons who are going to go in there to live. No deny that—that Government should put up at auction 25 lots at a time of the left unoccupied, and I can assure Government that by the time the is sold Government will have \$100,000 over and above the



was paid for the land with which to develop the entire area. In that case Government will have to develop the **present occupied area** and the other area. Perhaps the hon. Member would like to see Government do that, and it would be an easy matter for Government to do that.

But Government will have to decide at this stage whether it is going to put up those 200 lots at auction which were not bought for the protection of anybody and should be sold to anyone who wants to buy at the market price, and the money used for the development of the entire area. At least Government will be doing two things — it will be giving the lie to the statement that Government paid five times the value of the land, and it will also give the people in the area the satisfaction of knowing that all they had been told and all they had been incited to do to stop Government buying the land at the time Government was negotiating the purchase was against their interest. Government, I maintained, acted in the interest of the people and I supported Government in the purchase because I realized it was going to be a Godsend to the people in the area.

Now, Sir, I still think that Government should advance some money in order to proceed to fixing the roads, and that money repaid over a long period. I have no doubt that if the transports are issued promptly a Local Authority would be formed. The people in the area are definite that they want amenities, and they are equally definite that they are prepared to pay a reasonable taxation in order to procure those amenities. As I have said before, Government begged for the kind of speech it got because of the absolutely—and in my opinion to use the words of the hon. the Financial Secretary and Treasurer—inexcusable delay in bringing this matter to a head. It is delay of this kind that causes persons to be able

to get away with a lot of falsehood and fool some of the people for a good deal of the time.

The other issue of the Central Planning Housing Authority is a very delicate one. I refer to the slum clearance of a certain block in Albouystown. This morning I had a visit from one of the proprietors of that area. He owns quite a respectable building in that area, a building in which the gentleman and his family have lived for years and years and which they keep in an excellent condition. When he came to me his words were: "What is happening? Are you bringing Stalin and Russia down here?" I said, "My friend, what do you mean?" He then said to me "I have been living in my house God knows how long, and I have got a note to call on the Planning Authority with a view to having my house taken away from me. A valuation is to be placed on it as to what should be paid for it. I do not want money. What I want is a house to live in. Now I am going to be thrown on the street." That gentleman has a number of buildings on the very land and they are all in very good condition, having been re-conditioned quite recently. They are all to be taken down and removed from the land. That is a delicate situation.

At this time when houses in this City are terribly in short supply, I consider it a crime to take respectable buildings, comparatively new buildings in excellent condition, and just break them down and, as the hon. Member for Central Demerara said, leave the land without buildings for an industrial area. It is true some Members may say that Government will find places for those people to live in, but I think that pulling down building of that class cannot by any stretch of imagination be considered slum clearance. I think Government will be spending money on something it cannot afford to do at this time. If Government has the money to buy those

buildings, then for goodness sake use that money to erect new ones and pull down only those that can be properly classed as slum buildings. It is a retrograde step for Government to take.

I advised the gentleman to go to the Planning Authority and find out exactly what they want to do with him and then return to me, and in the light of what has been told him I will know exactly how to act. That is if he gets back to me between now and the end of February as, I have said it before, I propose to ask for leave after the end of February for several reasons which I am not going to repeat. I want to warn Government at this stage not to pull down any residence in good condition, because there are a number of slum buildings in the particular block. That is something which British Guiana cannot afford at this moment.

Before taking my seat I want again to ask Government to try and hurry up with those transports, and above all to try and see that the people of Campbellville are notified immediately that the price they have to pay is 7 1/4 cents per squarefoot. I am sure they are going to be happy over it, and it will give them the idea that they can have their transports rightaway. I understand that it is Government's intention to give them 10 years to pay for the land, if they have not got the money and do not want immediate transport particularly. Let us assume that the land costs \$312 at the beginning. That amount will carry interest of 6 per cent. which amounts to \$18.72 a year. For ten years the cost will be \$31.20 a year which with the interest will give approximately \$50, which when divided into 12 months will give a sum of just over \$4 per month to be paid by these persons. But the amount is going to be reduced as time goes along, and the interest will go down as the capital reduces.

At the end of 10 years the people will own their homes. I can assure the hon. Member for Central Demerara that they are going to own their homes, despite the additional payment of 6 per cent. interest, without any money-lenders putting their hands on them. There is one satisfaction they will have and that is, any money-lenders who may have given loans on their houses, now that they are on lease land, will have to remove them the minute Government decides to sell the land on which they stand. The owners will no longer have to pay 10 per cent. per month or 50 per cent. a year as interest to those exorbitant moneylenders. They can borrow the money from the Building Society at 6 per cent. interest and release their houses from the clutches of the money-lenders, and in the not too distant future be able to own their homes without any mortgage or debt on them.

**Dr. Jagan :** There is one point I want to correct. The hon. Member said I referred to cassava growing on a portion of Bel Air and that he had seen that land not producing anything for years. I would like to point out to him and other Members of Council that this area—Bel Air—and the areas east of it were for a long time sustaining a very lucrative dairy industry which slowly but surely has been destroyed. If the hon. Member says nothing was growing there and it is better to grow cassava there now, that is only one side of the picture. Taking away the land from the people who are growing provisions and rearing dairy cattle there, is going to create a very serious situation for those people. Those people have now approached me to ask Government's permission to graze their cattle on the foreshore where there is grass. The hon. Member must not say that because the land was there and not being planted with cassava before, it was not being utilized at all.

**Mr. Fernandes :** I would like to say that I was correct in my statement. That particular land never carried any dairy-cattle. For the most part of the year it was a swamp and had "busy busy" which cattle do not feed on. As regards the matter in which the hon. Member was approached to get Government's permission for cattle to graze on the foreshore, I think the people had that permission three or four years ago. Every morning as I look out from my house I see a herd of beautiful cattle grazing on the foreshore, and at nights if I happened to take a long route to my home, especially when the street in which I live was under repair, I had a job to get through the herd of cattle on the stretch of road between the "S" bend and the gap to turn into Subryanville. They are driven from Bel Air every morning after being milked on to the foreshore and also every night. In the mornings I see them also being driven back home to be milked. I take it that that is not being done without permission. I am very surprised to hear now after two years that the hon. Member has been asked to obtain permission for that. The area referred to by the hon. Member is 50 per cent. covered with "busy-busy" and no cattle are put on it. To say that the people are thrown out of their dairy industry is not correct.

**Dr. Jagan :** The hon. Member always speaks very dogmatically as if it is the voice of God speaking, but I am sure it is correct to say that the people cut grass besides feeding their cattle on that land. He mentioned that cows have been grazing on the foreshore for the past two years. If that was done, it was simply because the Drainage Board closed its eyes to it, but whenever the Board desired to impound the cattle there it does so. Thirty-two heads of sheep were impounded even though the Drainage Board said no sheep would be impounded.

**Mr. Macnie :** To a point of correction ! I think the hon. Member is referring to the Sea Defence Board, and I happen to be the Chairman of that Board.

**Dr. Jagan :** If it is done, it is not being done legally. The people have no grazing facilities at the moment and have to take their cattle there.

**Mr. Carter :** I would like to voice my protest against the acquisition of that lot—6—in the Albouystown area, where it is proposed to remove the buildings and put some industrial concern there. I believe it is the same place my friend, the hon. Member for Georgetown Central, was referring to. The houses there are in a very good condition. It is one of the best lots in the Albouystown area and one of the lots that ought not to be acquired by this Government because of the inconvenience it will cause to the tenants who live there and of the large sum which must necessarily be given to the owner as compensation for the removal of such fine buildings. I feel it is not too late for that scheme to be changed and some other area taken for any proposed industry. I think that some other area in Albouystown should be acquired where the buildings are not so good as these particular ones. The people are to be taken out of there and put in the new Decanting Centre where they have to pay six times the rent they pay now.

**Mr. Lee :** The hon. Member for Georgetown North (Dr. Nicholson) said that the people will be translated from the slum area to the Decanting Centre and will be given buildings the rental for which is \$18 per month.

**Dr. Nicholson :** To a point of correction ! I did not say they will be given houses at \$18 per month. That is what is being paid now for the houses at the

Decanting Centre. I said definitely that if they are paying \$5 per month as rent now they would get a \$1 per month flat dwelling to live in for \$5.

**Mr. Lee :** If that is correct I have nothing more to say. I know that some of the people are very poor and cannot rent a flat at \$1 per month.

**The Chairman :** I am afraid I do not know what the position is as regards the slum area. As far as I know, the intention is not to pull down good

buildings but to deal with the slum buildings. For that purpose it may however be necessary to declare the whole area a slum area. The matter will be looked into.

Head passed at \$64,391.

Council resumed.

**The President :** As hon. Members know, I wish to discuss certain matters with them informally after this meeting. The Council is now adjourned to 2 p.m. tomorrow.