

# SECOND LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

(Constituted under the British Guiana (Constitution) (Temporary Provisions) Orders in Council, 1953 and 1956).

*Friday, 14th July, 1961*

*The Council met at 2 p.m.*

## PRESENT:

<b>Speaker, His Honour Sir Donald Jackson</b>	
<b>Chief Secretary, Hon. D. M. Hedges</b>	
<b>Attorney-General, Hon. A. M. I. Austin, Q.C.</b>	} <i>ex officio</i>
<b>Financial Secretary, Hon. W. P. D'Andrade.</b>	
<b>The Honourable Dr. C. B. Jagan</b>	<i>—Member for Eastern Berbice</i> (Minister of Trade and Industry)
„ <b>B. H. Benn</b>	<i>—Member for Essequibo River</i> (Minister of Natural Resources)
„ <b>Ram Karran</b>	<i>—Member for Demerara-Essequibo</i> (Minister of Communications and Works)
„ <b>B. S. Rai</b>	<i>—Member for Central Demerara</i> (Minister of Community Development and Education).
<b>Mr. R. B. Gajraj</b>	<i>—Nominated Member</i>
„ <b>R. C. Tello</b>	<i>—Nominated Member</i>
„ <b>F. Bowman</b>	<i>—Member for Demerara River</i>
„ <b>A. L. Jackson</b>	<i>—Member for Georgetown North</i>
„ <b>S. M. Saffee</b>	<i>—Member for Western Berbice</i>
„ <b>Ajodha Singh</b>	<i>—Member for Berbice River</i>
„ <b>Jai Narine Singh</b>	<i>—Member for Georgetown South</i>
„ <b>R. E. Davis</b>	<i>—Nominated Member</i>
„ <b>A. M. Fredericks</b>	<i>—Nominated Member</i>
„ <b>H. J. M. Hubbard</b>	<i>—Nominated Member</i>
„ <b>A. G. Tasker, O.B.E.</b>	<i>—Nominated Member.</i>
<b>Mr. E. V. Viapree</b>	<i>—Clerk of the Legislature (acting)</i>
„ <b>V. S. Charan</b>	<i>—Assistant Clerk of the Legislature (acting).</i>

## ABSENT:

**Mr. W. O. R. Kendall**—Member for New Amsterdam  
**Mr. L. F. S. Burnham, Q.C.**—Member for Georgetown Central  
**Mr. S. Campbell**—Member for North Western District  
**Mr. E. B. Beharry**—Member for Eastern Demerara  
**The Honourable Janet Jagan**—Minister of Labour, Health and Housing.

The Clerk read prayers.

## MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Thursday, 13th July, 1961, as printed and circulated, were taken as read and confirmed.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

## GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE

**Mr. Speaker :** Honourable Members, you are aware that this is the last sitting of the Legislative Council under the present Constitution. His Excellency the Governor has asked me to present his Message to you, and I shall do so now. It reads as follows:

Mr. Speaker and Honourable Members of the Legislative Council.

At the end of today's sitting you will come to the end of your labours together in this Legislative Council of British Guiana. The legal life of the Council will cease on July 17, and an important chapter in the constitutional life of this country will close. My purpose in claiming my right to address you is, therefore, not as is customary to look forward to the future and its prospects and intentions, but to halt briefly and proffer you my personal thanks and publicly to record appreciation of all that you have done together.

In public, as in private life, brief farewells are best: and I shall not long detain you. There is much to be done if we are to usher in successfully the next stage of this country's political progress. The tasks of the future will require all our energies and all our powers of thought and will, if we are to make British Guiana happy and prosperous, not only in material things but in the whole fullness of life. But before we turn to these great tasks it is good to pause awhile and think of what has been done in this handsome and historic chamber by this Legislative Council.

You, in your work together here, have made history. Whether you have made it well or ill, the future must tell and succeeding generations must judge. Parliamentary assemblies upon the Westminster model are but rarely dramatic. Perhaps that is part of their virtue. You may have looked on your meetings here as something less impressive than my words, the making of history, suggest. Often, no doubt, business has been dull and attendance a tedious obligation. Sometimes your conscientious obligations as members of the Legislature must have been painful. And always your membership of this Council has demanded a sacrifice of time and energy. But, following a long succession of Legislatures and of great men in the life of British Guiana, you have served this country through four critically important years.

As has been said before in Messages upon the dissolution of a Legislature, it is not the bulk, but the burden, of what you have done that matters. Not the quantity, but the quality. For the record, however, I remark that you have, as I understand, heard about one hundred parliamentary questions asked and answered and have disposed of nearly one hundred and forty motions and passed a like number of Ordinances. You have debated the welfare of the country (and many other topics) and have made its laws. You have considered what financial provision should be made, not only through the Annual Estimates but, even more importantly, through a comprehensive Development Programme that sought to establish the main lines of economic progress for the five years from 1960 to 1964. You have thus sustained the Government in its business of governing. And you have, from time to time, duly admonished it and its servants and forcibly reminded them of their obligations to the public whom all of us must serve.

But you have served your country in a wider way than a mere account of

your day-to-day legislating would indicate. You have continued the development of parliamentary democracy in this land of many peoples and, as you now end your work, you make way for a wholly elected Legislative Assembly which will, with the aid and sometimes, perhaps, the restraining hand of the Senate, sustain the Council of Guianese Ministers who will have full responsibility for the internal self-government of this land. A notable writer upon constitutional affairs, Sir Ivor Jennings, has written a very persuasive passage entitled "The Importance of Being Ancient" in regard to the Parliament of the United Kingdom. He shows how substantial is the effect upon Parliament's work for the people of the traditions and ceremonies that have developed over the centuries and how useful it has proved to be that the exuberance of new legislators should be controlled by the association with more experienced men and the usages that Parliament has evolved for itself. Next month we shall have a brand-new Legislature but it will not have to start and build from nothing. It will be heir to traditions and usages formed and developed by you and those who have sat here before you that, so far from frustrating the energetic efforts of new parliamentarians, will enable those efforts to be directed most efficiently for the country's good.

You have had to play your several parts in circumstances of some difficulty. You are an assembly partly elected, partly nominated and partly holding place here by right of office in the public service. That of itself has inevitably imported some difficulty into your common task. I am happy to pay tribute to the success you have achieved in overcoming it.

Each element in the Council has had difficulties of its own. Revering, as we do, parliamentary democracy and the rule of ballot-box, those among us who sit in the Council by right of popular election may feel a comfortable security

from question as to our title to legislate for the country as a whole. That is, no doubt, an advantage. But the elected member is answerable to an electorate that can be vocal and critical and that has powers of parliamentary life and death. Elected members may sometimes have chafed at the necessity to accommodate their wishes to the views of nominated and official colleagues who share their responsibility. Again I am happy to pay tribute to the way in which they have accepted that need.

It is proper that I should proffer special thanks to the Nominated Members. They may feel that they are exposed to the pains that afflict both their elected and their official colleagues without enjoying the advantages of either group. They accepted office in this Legislature as a public duty and have found it a duty that more commonly earns blame than praise. They merit the special thanks of the community. Although as a group they will vanish from the Legislative Assembly, they may take rightful satisfaction in the knowledge that they have contributed to great constitutional developments and that they or their like will still have a part to play in the second Chamber of the future.

Council will understand, I am sure, if I make special reference to those officials, Guianese and non-Guianese, who have served here with you. Theirs is a position of great difficulty that calls for a peculiar subordination of self to duty. None would claim to have accomplished all that he set out to do—for all who serve British Guiana there is so much yet to do; but all can justly claim to have sought loyally and strenuously to serve this country through common membership of this Legislature. When, next month, they pass their tasks to the hands of elected representatives of the community, they will do so in the knowledge that they have deserved well of that community.

On a personal note, may I give my sincere thanks to the Legislature for the kindness shown to me and my family by the Council collectively and by its members.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I offer to you, as the embodiment of the dignity and importance of the Legislature and as the guardian of its privileges, appreciation of the way in which you have presided over this House, seeking ever to maintain the best traditions of the past and to mould the usages of the evolving parliament of British Guiana in the worthiest fashion.

Mr. Speaker and Honourable Members, I thank you for your work together and pray that God's blessing and guidance will sustain those who succeed to your labours here. [*Applause.*]

#### PAPERS LAID

**The Financial Secretary:** (Mr. D'Andrade): I beg to lay on the Table—

The Report of the meetings of the Finance Committee held on the 19th May, 1961, and the 7th July, 1961.

I beg to move that the Report be adopted.

Question put, and agreed to.

Report adopted.

**The Financial Secretary:** I beg to lay on the Table—

Comments by the Financial Secretary on the Reports of the Public Accounts Committee of the Legislative Council on the Director of Audit's Reports on the Accounts of the Transport and Harbours Department for the years ended 31st December, 1958, and 31st December, 1959.

#### ORAL ASKING AND ANSWERING OF QUESTIONS

##### BREACH OF CUSTOMS REGULATIONS

**Mr. Speaker:** The hon. Member for Georgetown North.

**Mr. Jackson:** I beg to ask Question No. 24 standing in my name on the Order Paper:

(a) Will the Honourable Financial Secretary say how many businessmen have been convicted for breaches of the Customs Regulations during the life of the present Government, and who are they?

(b) Will the Honourable Financial Secretary say whether there are any cases in which investigations have been made but have not been carried to finality, and will he give details of those cases?

**The Financial Secretary:** Sir, during the life of the present Government there were 92 contraventions of the Customs Regulations, principally of the Import and Export (Control) Order, 1942, involving a total of 79 businessmen or businesses in respect of which the Comptroller of Customs and Excise has accepted money by way of compensation in accordance with section 269 of the Customs Ordinance, Chapter 309. I shall be pleased to let the hon. Member see a list of the names of the persons concerned, if he so wishes.

There have been no Court proceedings in respect of breaches of the Customs Laws. There is one case in which investigations have been made but have not yet been carried to finality.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS OF  
EXECUTIVE COUNCILGOVERNMENT PRIMARY  
SCHOOLS

**The Minister of Community Development and Education:** (Mr. Rai): Sir, pursuant to an undertaking I gave to this Council on the 12th January, 1961, during the debate on the Education (Amendment) Bill, 1960, I extended an invitation to those Bodies of primary schools affected by the Education (Amendment) Ordinance, 1961, to send a representative to discuss with me the question of leases to the Government of the sites on which the schools set out in the Schedule of the same Ordinance are situated.

I very much regret to report that none of those Bodies accepted my invitation. They have now been formally asked to inform me of the terms on which they will be prepared to grant such leases to the Government.

## ORDER OF THE DAY

## KITTY RAILWAY LANDS BILL

**Mr. Speaker :** The Council will resume the debate on the Motion for the Second Reading of the Bill intituled:

“An Ordinance to make provision for certain lots of land to be transported.”

Yesterday the Motion was moved and seconded; the hon. Minister of Labour, Health and Housing (Mrs. Jagan) had spoken on it, and the hon. Member for Georgetown North (Mr. Jackson) was speaking. There was a Motion, which was carried, that he should be allowed to speak half an hour longer.

**Mr. Jackson:** As I said yesterday, there was hardly anyone on this side of the Council Chamber who will oppose

this Bill, the provisions of which are for the granting of transport to the people who occupy the Kitty area of the railway line. But I pointed out that the Government did not take the opportunity to put before this Legislature its plans and price for the selling of the land to the people concerned. I said this Council ought to have been, in the first place, notified that the lands were to be sold, and of the price Government proposed to ask for the lands.

I quoted from *Hansard* of the 29th March, 1951, to show where the hon. the Minister of Trade and Industry (Dr. Jagan), then a Member of the Legislature, regretted that Government did not appoint a Land Valuation Committee in respect of its purchase of lands at Campbellville.

I also said that he had laid down a kind of measuring rod, and I think that measuring rod is the one which is used at all times and which can be used now. That is, the cost of the land at the time of purchase, the cost of development up to the moment and some other factors which may be involved. I read from the *Hansard*, and I intend to read more from Column 2026, where Dr. Jagan said at that time:

“I point out these facts to show why it is absolutely necessary that a Land Development Committee be set up with competent individuals to go into the question of the price paid for lands when they were originally purchased, the amount of money which might have been spent on the development of those lands, the profits or losses which might have been made during the occupation of those lands, and on consideration of all those factors, to determine a fair and just price to be paid now for them.”

What I am seeking now is exactly what Dr. Jagan, who is now Minister of Trade and Industry, sought for the people of Campbellville, who were plot-holders at the time; and I cannot see why there can be any objection to this Council making the request, when the

[MR. JACKSON]

time comes for the land to be sold, that the price which is to be paid for the land must be fair, just and reasonable, taking into consideration the original price paid, the cost of development and rents paid by the people who are occupants. I am sure the Minister of Trade and Industry, who is here today, would not deny that the land had been developed and that the cost of the development had been met by the people themselves.

I said yesterday that the land at Campbellville was sold or purchased at 7½ cents per square foot; and if, as we understand the newspaper report, the price now asked for the land involved is 17 cents, the Government, for the 82 acres, would be taking as much money as that paid for the land purchased at Campbellville, which was sold for \$480,000—\$18,000 more than the price paid for the land at Campbellville. I hold the view that this Council should, in its last effort at legislation, do one last just thing by placing on record that its final act has been to decide that the people who are going to purchase this land would purchase it at a price which is fair, reasonable and just.

I pointed out that the Transport and Harbours Department pays \$1,550 by way of subsidy for this land. I am not aware of the extent of the rents paid, but I understand that the Kitty and Alexanderville Village Council charges 4½ per cent as taxes to the people who own land there, and if we assume that each lot is sold for \$200, at 4½ per cent, the people would pay far more in taxation than the Transport and Harbours Department has been paying by way of subsidy. Without making any unfavourable comments or statement which would irk anyone; without trying to upset anyone in this Council, I say this would be an effort to do justice to all the people concerned. I propose, in Committee stage, to move an Amendment to the Bill to see whether we can reach an agreement.

#### **The Minister of Trade and Industry**

(Dr. Jagan): The hon. Member who spoke last has raised some very interesting points to which I should like to refer. Briefly, mention was made of having a Land Authority or a Land Valuation Committee which can establish what a fair price should be. The hon. Member did not make any distinction as to Government purchasing lands in one case from private individuals and Government either leasing or selling lands in another case. Obviously, there are fundamental differences between the two. What he was reading just now referred to the sale or, rather, the purchase by Government of lands which were held privately. The view which was held by some of us was that the price demanded was far too much in relation to the price paid—I used the word “paid”—by the same company, and that is why I had suggested, when the matter was debated several years ago, that a yardstick should be used to assess any purchasing from private individuals so that they do not profiteer.

How should the value be determined? In some countries the rental values are taken over a number of years; in other cases, the present day values are determined by what was paid, and so on. Obviously, in the case of the Government, these same yardsticks cannot be used. Government did not purchase this land from anyone else. Indeed, Government was leasing the land at a very normal pepper-corn rental. It was merely a facility which was given to the persons occupying the land, pending removal at any time the Government desires to utilize this land. Therefore, the rental value which was put on this land cannot be said to be the true rental value for land of an equivalent kind.

I want to make it quite clear to the hon. Member and other Members, that Government did not rush into this matter blindly, but had considered expert advice given by people who know this job of planning, who know this job of

valuation; and I understand that the Planning Officer and, indeed, the technical officers of the Housing Department were asked to give their views as to the value of the land which is now to be sold. My information is, that the Government was advised by these competent and technical people that the value of the land should be 80 cents per square foot for ordinary land and \$1 per square foot for business land. The Government did not accept this advice and, instead, used the figure of 17 cents per square foot, which is approximately 21 per cent. of the value which was assessed by these experts.

We can take another yardstick of present day values. For instance, lands in the Housing Scheme were sold to persons who were desirous of constructing their houses at the rate of 33¾ cents per square foot; so that the price which is being asked of the settlers along the railway line is exactly half of what others have been asked to pay for similar types of land. Now, considering that the people have expended some amount of time and energy in building up this land, one can fairly say that the figure of approximately 50 per cent. of the sale price of land in the Housing Scheme is certainly a fair value.

I cannot see, if we had taken the advice of the hon. Member and appointed a Valuation Committee which would have examined the situation objectively as it is today, that the Committee would have come to any conclusion which would have been as fair as what the Government has done in the case of these people. Indeed, one would not have thought that hon. Members would have got up here and charged the Government with giving out the land as an electioneering stunt. And so it is rather surprising to hear criticisms at this time, when the Government went, more or less, out of its way in the face of cold facts which I have already related and which I do not want to reiterate. Therefore, I do not feel that

the hon. Member should be worried because we cannot get anyone, under present circumstances, who is more competent than the Valuation Officer himself.

Incidentally, it should be noted that the price which will be paid by those people who are on the lots will amount to about seven hundred dollars. Immediately after the sale of the lands, the people can turn around and sell the lots for five or, possibly, ten times the amount they have paid for them. We know that the value of land in Georgetown and the suburbs today is extraordinarily high. We know that values have been going up very rapidly.

For instance, lands which were sold only a few years ago to Bank Breweries Limited and others for \$4,000 were recently sold to the Government for \$12,000 per acre, so, considering all of the factors objectively and taking into consideration the situation as it is, I do not think the charge levied by the hon. Member is justified. He says that Government is charging the people too much for the land and, possibly, a Committee should be set up to arrive at the true value of the land. I am certain that, if a Land Valuation Committee were to be appointed to go into the question, the price of the land would be much higher.

I am glad that the Government is not charged with giving away land for electioneering purposes. This shows that Government is anxious for people to own their own house lots and holdings contrary to the views which are expressed both in this Council and at the street corners. For many years these people have been trying very hard to purchase these lands. Government, in keeping with its declared policy, is going ahead with the sale of these lands at a reasonable price so that the individuals who are on the land will have a sense of security which, I am sure, hon. Members desire to see.

[DR. JAGAN]

Sir, those are the main criticisms which have been levelled against the Bill. I am grateful for the support hon. Members have given to the Bill. I am sure that we are all glad to see this question, which has been pending for a very long time, finally settled.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a Second time.

Council resolved itself into Committee to consider the Bill clause by clause.

#### COUNCIL IN COMMITTEE

Clause 1.—*Short Title*—agreed to.

Clause 2.—*Power to transport certain lots of land. Cap. 145. Cap. 150.*

**Mr. Jackson :** Mr. Chairman, I wish to move a slight Amendment to this Clause which, I think, ought to be acceptable by the Government. My Amendment is: After the word "transported" add the words "Provided that the price of such lots as aforesaid shall be fixed by the Legislative Council by resolution". I want to say that, in view of the comments made by the Minister of Trade and Industry, it is only fair for him to make some observations while moving this Amendment. In the first place, the Minister was absent yesterday when I said that I did not know what was the price paid for the land when it became the property of the Government—that is when the Government took it over from private enterprise.

However, when we take into consideration what the Minister has said about Government giving out the land at low rental, it must be remembered that the people were paying this low rental for many years. One of the

things which was very irksome to them was their uncertainty as to the life of the tenancy or occupancy, and that was a more serious problem than the low rental which they had to pay. While it is true that the people can sell the land after they have received their transports, the point made by the Minister of Trade and industry does not apply only to these people.

The people in Campbellville paid four thousand and something dollars for their house lots, and they could get more for them today. The point is that the people in Campbellville did not develop the area to the same degree as the people in Kitty. The comparison of the price per square foot of land which the people on the Kitty Railway Lands are called upon to pay is not relevant, because Government had to build up the Campbellville area at considerable expense.

According to the Minister of Trade and Industry the price which one has to pay for a lot of land is \$700. The fact that we have to pass a law enabling the Government to give transport for a piece of land which does not conform to the existing law of the land makes it almost negative in value. You are asking people to purchase a piece of land for \$700, and the size of the lot is not in keeping with existing provisions.

It seems to me that there is room for a challenge of the price of the land mentioned by the Minister of Trade and Industry. If the Government is fixing the price of the land at 17 cents per square foot, then the people should be given an opportunity to appeal to some authority if they feel that the price is too high. Unless you are going to give the people an opportunity to appeal against the price fixed by Government, I feel that this matter should form part of a discussion at the level of the Legislature.

It is possible that the present Minister of Trade and Industry or another Minister may have to fix the price for

the land, but it seems proper that the people should either be given an opportunity to appeal against the price fixed for the land, or the Legislature should be the body to determine what price should be paid for it.

**Mr. Jai Narine Singh:** Sir, I wish to congratulate the Government in taking this step to transport land to members of the community. This is an indication that the members of the Government have been revising their views in some respect, and they might have thought it would be a good thing for those who have been clamouring through the ages to reach their goal. Be that as it may, we know that land in that area is being sold at 17 and 18 cents per square foot. But from 1951 to 1961 is ten years. The land sold at 17 cents per square foot is not rice land in and around the City of Georgetown. I think any delay on the part of this Legislature to pass this Bill and give Government the power to transport the land to the people would not be in the best interest of the community. Let us complete the matter and give the people the land.

I have just passed through Trinidad, and I observed that about four hundred and eighty acres of swamp land owned by Mr. Bhadase Maraj was just sold to the Trinidad Government for \$1 million. That is only an indication of what value is being placed on land today. This is a matter in which we are all concerned. A large number of people will benefit if we pass this Bill today.

This Government needs money for the purpose of developing this country, and every cent it can get justly from every quarter should be used for the development of other areas having similar claims to the people in Kitty. I feel that hon. Members should give their support to this Bill.

**Mr. Tello:** I, too, am glad to give an opportunity to the people to own land, but I still have the same anxiety as the hon. Member for Georgetown

North. (Mr. Jackson). This came not only from what I read in the Press, but from representations by the purchasers of the land. It is quite true that the hon. Minister made reference to other lands sold at prices higher than that for which the lands are being sold to the present purchasers at Kitty. Also, it was pointed out that the bulk of the development of these lands has been made by the present holders and would be purchasers.

Then an impartial inquiry for an assessment, fair and just, should be made so as to arrive at the true value of the lands. The purchasers would be much more satisfied to know that Government feels there is the need to spend the taxpayers' money in order to obtain a Committee to assess the value of the land. The conditions have not changed. What has happened now is that Government insists on recording that its dealing with the individual taxpayer is just the same as when the taxpayers' money is involved.

It is quite true that the hon. Minister made reference to lands sold at a greater value. We are reliably informed that at the present time the lands on the East Coast are not so developed as those which are being sold at Kitty at less than the price Government is now asking. It is quite natural that the people purchasing the land would make comparison and feel somewhat dissatisfied, especially when it is public knowledge that the sugar companies have consented to sell their extra-nuclear area at, I am told, one-tenth of an acre for \$1.

I am not saying that is the current price, but it shows some willingness on the part of one to allow the people to have as fair a bargain as possible. In this case the taxpayers are dealing with the Government as trustee of the taxpayers' money. I hope the hon. Member for Georgetown Central (Mr. Burnham) will accept my suggestion of an amendment to his Amendment. Rather than

[MR. TELLO]

have the price fixed by this Legislature by way of resolution, I want to suggest that we delete the words "by resolution of this Legislature" and substitute therefor "a land Valuation Committee representative of both seller and purchaser". This will give an opportunity for fair bargaining.

I am almost confident that Government already has qualified persons to advise it. We have been told by the hon. Minister that Government has been already advised, but I know that the purchasers will find a competent person to advise them. If two persons of equal technical background and knowledge can get together and work out a reasonable price, it would be satisfactory to both sides. Even if the price is not 17 cents, the purchasers are confident that the price recommended would be less than 17 cents.

It would not be wrong for Government to subsidize the development expenditure these people have put in on their own over the past years. So I am suggesting to the hon. Member for Georgetown Central to accept my Amendment, instead of forcing me to make a formal one.

**Mr. Gajraj:** I am afraid I cannot support the Amendment, or even the suggestion that the Amendment be changed. One has to realize that there are certain limitations to what a Legislature can and ought to do. In the form of Government which we have, certain obligations are placed on the Legislature, and other responsibilities on the executive branch of the Government.

So far as fixing the price for property sold is concerned the principle I want to suggest is that it is not the function of the Legislative Council, but rather the function of the executive branch of the Government through its Ministers. On the actual figure to be

charged, the hon. Minister of Trade and Industry (Dr. Jagan) has stated that advisers to the Government have indicated that the lands in that area are being sold at a smaller price than those in other areas which are sold at \$1. per square foot. I think those of us who had the opportunity of looking into things like this, will realize that the advice Government has received is no advice at all.

The hon. Member for Georgetown South (Mr. Jai Narine Singh) spoke of his knowledge of land being sold between 80 cents and \$1. Clearly the difference between 17 cents and 80 cents is indeed very great. One thing that worries me is this: we, who are in this Legislature, are very often called upon to vote large sums of money to cover deficits in the running of various Government enterprises, and I have heard it said in this Legislative Council that Government should always endeavour, through its departments or organisations, to get the greatest value out of what it does. If it gives services, those services should return as much as if they were run by private enterprise.

Indeed, when Government wishes to purchase supplies, in the face of the normal price, it advertises for tenders. The underlying object is to encourage competition so that Government will be able to obtain its supplies at a lower price. I wonder whether this Legislative Council should entertain the suggestion that when Government wishes to sell its property, similarly, it should do so at public auction. One finds that when unwanted articles are to be disposed of in Government Departments following a survey, they are sold at auction so that the people can compete among themselves to buy at the highest price, and the coffers of Government profit thereby.

I am sounding a note of warning that if Government were to invite competition for the purchase of these lands the price would go up very high, and

people who do not have their houses on those lands but wish to have those lands would pay at public auction a price very much higher than the price the hon. Minister has said is the valuation by Government.

The whole object behind this legislation and this move on the part of the Government, as I understand it, is to enable those persons who have owned the houses which have rested on those plots of land all these years to have the opportunity of owning the land on which their houses stand. If that is the main criterion, it has to be the underlying principle. Certainly the lands cannot be sold at public auction; they have to be sold to those people.

I myself feel that the price that has been fixed by Government is not what may be termed a very reasonable and fair one. It is only because of the peculiar circumstances of this period of time in which we are living that we have this cry raised that the price is too high. On the face of it, it is said that in Campbellville the land was being sold at 17 cents per square foot. Therefore it looks as if the Government is profiteering on the lands by selling at 17 cents. But that is not so; there is no profiteering. If one were to value the lands alongside lands sold by private owners, the price will be found to be very low.

Let us consider the lands alongside the East Coast public road which have been owned by the sugar plantations, and have been for a long number of years almost abandoned and used for cattle-grazing. Those lands have all been surveyed and sold for housing purposes. Hon. Members must know that if they were to convert the price of those lands from per acre to per square foot, they would find that the price charged for the Kitty Railway lands is indeed very reasonable in view of those factors I have mentioned. I am unable to accept the Amendment.

**Mr. Bowman** I would like to support this Bill. I appreciate very much the decision which the Government has reached finally. But I am wondering why the Government has waited until this last minute to bring this Bill. This Government has served four years, and did nothing about it. The Leader of the Majority Party (Dr. Jagan) is one of those individuals who have been advocating that these lands should be sold, but it is only at the end of the life of this Council that he has decided to bring this Bill for the sale of these lands. Though it is belated, I still appreciate it.

I should like to say that this is an electioneering stunt. This is intended to secure the votes of those people who are to become the owners of those lands. Apart from that, I have one personal grouse about this Bill. I feel that this measure should enable other people of the country to own the land on which their houses stand. I know there are people who rent land on which they have had houses for years, and, because of restrictions in the law, ownership of the land cannot be given to them.

I feel that since, under this Bill, we are going to allow these small lot-holders to become owners of the land, the same facility should be extended to all persons throughout British Guiana who are at present occupying land but are debarred from becoming proprietors in their own right because of restriction of the law. I am therefore going to move an Amendment to Clause I in order to extend the same facility to lessees in other parts of the country. I am pleading for those lessees who would like to become owners of their own land.

This question of ownership of land has been debated in this Legislative Council. As this is the last time I may be here—I do not know whether I will be here after the Elections — I want to plead with the Government to include in this Bill provision to give title to

[MR. BOWMAN]

those people who are renting lands for homesteads. I hope the Members of the Government will not be reluctant and stubborn in refusing to give title to land to a large number of people who cannot get it. I refer to families. That is one of the things this Government aimed at.

**The Chairman:** What is the Amendment you propose to move?

**Mr. Bowman :** I should like to delete the last word "as" at the end of the third line and to substitute therefor the word "is"; to delete the word "of" in the fourth line and substitute therefor the word "any", and to insert the words "plan anywhere in the Colony including" after the word "any" in the fourth line.

The Amendment would read:  
". . . where any lot of land as shown on any plan anywhere in the Colony, including the plan referred to in the schedule to this Ordinance is less than the minimum size or portion specified, etc." That is my Amendment.

**The Chairman:** I shall put the Amendments now. I shall put the last Amendment first.

**Mr. Jackson:** I wish to make some observations on the comments made. I want to make it very clear that I have not accused the Government of any intentions. What I have been trying to do is to establish a case for fair treatment. When it comes to the disposing of property, it is a matter where the parties negotiate for the best terms -- where the vendor offers his property for sale to the buyer; the buyer and the vendor negotiate and they strike a medium. That is when both parties have agreed.

I did say yesterday that, as far as I understand, the people had approached the Ministry concerned and expressed disapproval over the prices stated. Therefore, it seems to me that, in addition to the Government's arguments,

there is one aspect to be considered. That is, did the people agree? If they did not agree, what is the best step to be taken next? You cannot put them off the land, because they have prescriptive right to the land on account of the years they had been there. If you are offering them the land for purchase, let it not be felt that the price charged is an imposition. Let them feel that they are being sold land at a price which is fair and reasonable. If you are going to oppose the Amendments, let there be some undertaking whereby, if they are dissatisfied over the price, machinery will be set up to go into the matter.

**Dr. Jagan:** I am afraid that Government cannot accept the Amendments which have been proposed. I am glad to hear the hon. Member say that he does not want to accuse anyone. Well, if he does not want to accuse anyone, I do not see any problem arising. It is true that the people have raised objections, but the Government must govern and decisions must be made at some time. We cannot be perpetually arguing one thing month after month and year after year. If we accept these Amendments, we will be putting this question back and forth. As I have said, we have had expert opinion on this question. Valuation Officers, taking the existing yardsticks, have arrived at the figures of 80 cents per square foot and \$1 per square foot. Government sold lands a few years ago at twice the value at which these lands are offered for sale. Where can it be said that the price is too high?

The Government must govern, and govern fairly. This is all we seek to do at all times. In trying to see that no one is robbed, we must not bend over backwards and give away the taxpayers' money, lest the Government be accused of robbing certain people in the community. The people at Ruimveldt can say: "Why was it we were asked to pay 33¼ cents per square foot, and the people along the railway line are asked

to pay 17 cents?" The reason why Government has arrived at this figure, which is 50 per cent less, is that it has taken into consideration the fact that the people have built up the lands.

The hon. Member said that the people are made to pay more for this land which was worse than Campbellville. That is not so. The railway line embankment was built up to support the rails. It was not in the same condition. We have not said that the people have not put in labour. That is why a 50 per cent reduction has been made.

Another Member made reference to the sugar estate prices. This is totally irrelevant because we are dealing with an entirely different question. Government is not an exploiter; and let that be clear. The sugar people are giving lands at \$1 per house lot. This is the concession they had made to the workers in the industry who have sweated many years for them. This is a separate matter; and I cannot see why all these irrelevancies are injected at this stage. Anyone looking at the situation objectively cannot say that the Government is unfair. I am rather surprised to see these "red herrings" drawn across the trail.

On the question of Campbellville, how many of them supported us? [Mr. Bowman : "Only Bowman."] [*Laughter*]. Yes, only Bowman. I do not think, in the interest of all concerned, we should delay this matter. Hon. Members know that the people are not obliged to buy the lands. They have the right to rent the lands and pay a pepper-corn rental, if there is no desire to purchase them. We are going ahead. All this opposition is because of the fear generated by some of those people who are continually saying that the Government is confiscating lands. No one can say that the prices are high. If they are, the people have the right to rent or lease the lands.

**Mr. Tello:** I do not object to governments governing, but governments must govern so that there appears to be justice, and my Amendment offers justice both to the vendor and the purchaser. The hon. Minister says that he has obtained expert opinion. But the Government is aware of the fact that the people are not satisfied. Why not give them an opportunity, also, to get expert advice? What I am saying is: if you are confident that it is a just thing, and even if the sugar producers are doing the same thing as the Government, I still think that my Amendment is a just one and is a challenge to justice.

**The Chairman :** The Amendment reads as follows:

"Notwithstanding anything to the contrary provided in subsection (5) of section 135 of the Public Health Ordinance or in section 122 of the Local Government Ordinance, where any lot of land is shown on any plan anywhere in the Colony including the plans referred to in the schedule to this Ordinance is less than the minimum size or portions specified in the said provisions, it shall be lawful for any such lot to be transported."

Those who are in favour please say "Aye"; those against please say "No".

The Committee divided and voted as follows:

For	Against
Mr. Bowman	Mr. Hubbard
Mr. Tello--2.	Mr. Fredericks
	Mr. Davis
	Mr. Gajraj
	Mr. Jai Narine Singh
	Mr. Jackson
	Mr. Ajodha Singh
	Mr. Saffee
	Mr. Rai
	Mr. Ram Karran
	Mr. Benn
	Mr. Jagan
	The Financial Secretary
	The Attorney-General
	The Chief Secretary
	—15.

**The Chairman:** The Amendment is lost.

[THE CHAIRMAN]

The other Amendment is that the following words be added after the word "transported." in the last line:

"Provided that the price of such lots as aforesaid shall be fixed by the Legislative Council by resolution."

Those who are in favour please say "Aye"; those against please say "No." I think the "Noes" have it. The Amendment is lost.

**Mr. Tello:** I have an Amendment.

**The Chairman:** You said that you would be putting forward a suggestion, if it would be accepted by the Mover of the Amendment or the Government. That is the reason why I said just now that there were only two Amendments, because neither side accepted the Amendment you had suggested.

**Mr. Tello:** Sir, I made no mention about the Government. I said that if the Mover of the Amendment did not accept it, I would move it myself.

**The Chairman:** In that case I will put your Amendment. The Question is, That the words "Provided that the price of such land as aforesaid shall be fixed by a Land Valuation Committee representative of the conveyer and the purchaser." Those in favour please say "Aye"; those against please say "No".

The Committee divided and voted as follows:

For	Against
Mr. Bowman	Mr. Hubbard
Mr. Tello.	Mr. Fredericks
Mr. Jackson—3.	Mr. Davis
	Mr. Gajraj
	Mr. Jai Narine Singh
	Mr. Ajodha Singh
	Mr. Saffee
	Mr. Rai
	Mr. Ram Karran
	Dr. Jagan
	The Financial Secretary
	The Attorney-General
	The Chief Secretary

—13.

**The Chairman:** The Amendment is lost.

Schedule — Agreed to.

Council resumed.

**Dr. Jagan:** Sir, I beg to report that the Bill has been considered in Committee stage and passed without Amendment. I now beg to move that it be read the Third time.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read the Third time and passed.

#### INCOME TAX (AMENDMENT) BILL

**Mr. Speaker :** The Financial Secretary to move the Second Reading of the following Bill:

A Bill intituled: "An Ordinance to amend the Income Tax Ordinance."

**The Financial Secretary:** In 1955 by the Income Tax (Amendment) Ordinance, No. 7 of 1955, a ceiling of \$1,500 per annum was placed on the amount that a taxpayer could claim as a tax free deduction in respect of payments for life insurances, contracts for annuities or arrangements for contributions to any superannuation scheme. This limit was additional to the limit already imposed in the Ordinance of one-sixth of chargeable income. The one-sixth limit was in the Ordinance before the Amendment to place the ceiling at \$1,500 was made in 1955. However, it was not considered equitable that taxpayers who had entered into commitments of this kind before notice of the Amendment was given should be denied the full extent of the concession under the old one-sixth limit. It was decided that such taxpayers should continue to be allowed the full deduction of one-sixth of chargeable income even where that exceeded the new additional limit of \$1,500 per annum.

The Bill was therefore drafted to provide that commitments entered into before notice of the change was given on the 17th December, 1954, should continue to be allowed on the old basis, that is, to the limit of one-sixth of chargeable income even if the tax-free deduction claimed by the taxpayer was higher than \$1,500 per annum, but that in respect of new commitments after the date of the proposed change, the limit should be one-sixth to a maximum of \$1,500 per annum.

The Bill was drafted on that basis, but it now appears that it is open to another interpretation: that the taxpayer is allowed in respect of the commitments which he entered into before the 17th December, 1954, a tax-free deduction up to a limit of one-sixth of chargeable income and if he enters into any commitments after the 17th December, 1954 he can claim another one-sixth of chargeable income up to a limit of \$1,500. That was, certainly not the intention behind the 1955 Amendment. The result of this possible interpretation of the Amendment as it stands is to allow such taxpayers to get that concession to claim some twice \$1,500 per annum.

The purpose of the Bill now before Council is to put the intended interpretation beyond doubt. It is a limit of \$1,500 per annum or one-sixth of chargeable income at most. I now beg to move the Second Reading of the Bill.

**The Attorney-General :** I beg to second the Motion.

Question put, and agreed to.

**The Financial Secretary :** I beg to second the Motion.

Bill read a Second time.

Council resolved itself into Committee to consider the Bill clause by clause, and passed it without amendment.

Council resumed.

**The Financial Secretary:** Sir, I beg to report that the Bill has been considered in Committee and passed without Amendment. I now beg to move that the Bill be read the Third time.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read the Third time and passed.

#### **FRIENDLY SOCIETIES (AMENDMENT) BILL**

**Mr. Speaker :** The Minister of Trade and Industry to move the Second Reading of the following Bill:

A Bill intituled: "An Ordinance to amend the Friendly Societies Ordinance."

**Dr. Jagan:** Sir, hon. Members will recall that for some time now proposals have been put forward for Amendments to the Friendly Societies Ordinance. We have had discussions with various parties concerned, and, in trying to meet the wishes of these societies, we have had fairly long discussions on the various points which are listed in this Bill.

The points raised are not controversial. I am sorry that these Amendments were not proposed and introduced in this Council before, but we are happy to see that even at this late hour Council is prepared to consider them and give them an easy passage. The Amendments are in keeping with the recommendations made.

I should like to say that the Friendly Societies Movement is not being run as satisfactorily as we would like. There are several snags. In many cases we find that their books are not properly audited because of a shortage of staff in the Co-operative Department. We are now attempting to reorganize the Department by putting officers there, who not necessarily are competent in all the fields of the Co-

[DR. JAGAN]

operative Movement, but who know the rudiments and essentials of book-keeping and accountancy, so that they can give a great deal of assistance in the routine work of the very highly skilled and technical officers of that Department.

Very soon the Government intends to appoint four such officers. An investigation is being made in the Department to find out how many more additional junior officers will be required to staff adequately the Co-operative Department so that they can give proper service, not only to the Co-operative Societies but also to the Friendly Societies. At the present moment, as I have said, some of the books of the Friendly Societies are not properly audited. I hope that the backlog of work will soon be wiped off and the Department will be able to do more work.

Clause 6 of this Bill provides that no member of a registered friendly society should have a claim or interest exceeding \$1,000 in the funds of that society other than a building society or co-operative society. In the case of a registered building society or a co-operative society the limitation is fixed at \$2,000. An amendment is being proposed so that section 36 (1) of the Friendly Societies Ordinance will prescribe the limitation.

Clause 4 seeks to exempt societies which do not declare bonus, from the obligation to establish a Reserve Fund in accordance with the Friendly Societies Ordinance. These amendments which are being proposed are simple and very straightforward, and do not require much argument and debate. The question of the holding of shares in a society only arises in the case of a building society and a co-operative society.

Clauses 5, 8, 11 and 12 seek to delete all reference to the holding of shares under the Ordinance. Clause 12

also seeks to delete all references to a company in section 49 of the Friendly Societies Ordinance, as companies are dealt with under the Companies Ordinance, Chapter 328. These are the principal Amendments which are being proposed. I now move that the Bill be read a Second time.

**The Financial Secretary:** I beg to second the Motion.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a Second time.

Council resolved itself into Committee to consider the Bill clause by clause, and passed it without amendment.

Council resumed.

**Dr. Jagan:** I beg to report that the Friendly Societies (Amendment) Bill was considered in Committee and passed without Amendment. I beg to move that the Bill be now read the Third time.

**The Financial Secretary:** I beg to second the Motion.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read the Third time and passed.

#### VALEDICTION

**The Chief Secretary :** Mr. Speaker, I understand it is the practice in the House of Commons at Westminster to eschew speeches of thanks in reference to its servants.

At the risk of being in breach of this admirable practice, however, and thereby incurring your displeasure, Sir, I would need to say briefly how much I have, in my position here, appreciated your patience, your understanding and your dignity as Speaker of this Council.

For my own part I cannot claim that this is a day of great joy, neither do I presume that it is for the other two Officials or, indeed, for some of the Nominated Members, as this is the final occasion on which we shall be here as Members of the Legislature of this country.

But I recognize that for other Members of this Council it is a great and memorable day, as the demise of this Council heralds further constitutional advancement towards the ultimate aim of Independence for this country. The stage is set for Internal Self Government, and the new Legislative Assembly will be comprised entirely of Elected Members. My one hope is that this Council will have provided a firm foundation for the future Assembly; so that when one reflects and looks back on this particular chapter in the history of this country's affairs, no one will be ashamed of the work that we have done.

Another chapter is about to be written, and it is my earnest hope and desire that it will be a chapter of progress, prosperity and stability.

**Dr. Jagan:** Sir, I, too, on behalf of the Elected Members on this side of the Council, now that my official colleague has spoken on behalf of himself and the two other Official Members of this Council, would like to add my quota of thanks and gratitude for the way in which you, Sir, have conducted the proceedings of this Council. We are all, in spite of the sharp clashes we may have had from time to time, sorry to see that this Council is now coming to an end. I do not know if it is appropriate for me to say that I wish all those who are here will be present in the new House of Assembly. But, be that as it may, whether they are all in the new House or out of it, I wish them sincerely the very best for the future.

Mr. Speaker, we are about to enter into a new and different stage of gov-

ernment, and although the Constitutional Instruments of 1961 are not as far-reaching as my Party would wish, I hope nevertheless that the Party which the people of this country will elect in the majority position on the 21st August to form the Government, will continue to uphold the traditional parliamentary practice, which we have attempted to uphold under your guidance in this Chamber.

I know, Sir, that some of us in our speeches have been long-winded and boring. Some of us have uttered other's views, and some of us have goaded others on the other side. We appreciate the fact that you have not directed us out of the Chamber but, instead, admonished us to behave. We have had the pleasant time of getting out of the Chamber when speeches became unbearable, but you, unfortunately, had to sit through it all and bear and forbear.

I wish, again, to say how much we all enjoyed being, for the last four years, in this Council and to thank you for your labours as Speaker of this Honourable Council and for conducting your duties so admirably. [*Applause.*]

**Mr. Jai Narine Singh:** Mr. Speaker, I rise for the last time—[*Laughter*]—in the life of this Legislature to add my quota of thanks to you for the very able manner in which you have held the scales in the course of debates that took place here. You have held the scales so evenly that we have always left the Chamber feeling that you have done your duty, whenever we have been having very serious arguments on both sides of this Chamber.

This Legislature, that you have had the honour to preside over, will go down in history as the Legislature that took a step beyond the shores of this land to the United Kingdom to state the principle of independence very clearly. I think whatever may be the future of

[MR. JAI NARINE SINGH]

this great land, this Legislature will be remembered as the Legislature that fought, with all its might and in unison, for the independence of this country.

The great degree of harmony that has prevailed in this Legislature can be attributed to you, Sir, when rancour and hot words were passing from one side of the Council Chamber to the other. Sitting like a schoolmaster and sometimes like a judge giving a strong decision, having earned the respect of those who were debating before you and putting their points of view, you have kept this Legislature on a high level of debate as Legislatures should, whether they are in the United Kingdom, France, or in any of the colonies. In France, men go out of the Legislative Chamber and fight each other; but you, Sir, by your very careful way of conducting the proceedings of this Legislature, in your usual dignified way, have been able, cautiously, to carry us through these four years up to today, the last day of this Legislature, when we are all still smiling with each other. I think that can be attributed to the way in which you have dealt with the Members of this Council.

I wish to thank you for the very able manner in which you have carried on the tremendous task which you took on your shoulders. [*Applause.*]

**Mr. Jackson :** Mr. Speaker, everyone who has spoken before me has paid tribute to your qualities in controlling the functions of this Legislature for the past four years. It is clear, from all that has been said that, in spite of the fever which has been so often generated in this Council, there is one person who has never caught the "fever"—the Speaker—for right through you have remained calm, recognizing that your task is to maintain the dignity of the Legislature when individuals have lost their tempers.

In spite of our disagreements at times with your rulings, which I am

sure were not many, we have come to the conclusion that we could never have had a better Speaker during the period we have sat in this Council. It would have been difficult, I think, to find one as good as you, with the combination we have had in our midst—Officials who sat here by virtue of their official positions, Nominated Members and Members who had been elected—a great combination of interest, intention and objective; and that we could have come to this stage, today, feeling that you have done your duty admirably, is a result of your very good judgment and tact.

Before I take my seat, I want to add a few words of praise to the staff which is under your administration. We have witnessed the work of the Clerk of the Council, his Assistant and those who have worked with him in this Council guiding us, first of all, as neophytes until we reached the stage where we gained experience. We must ask, too, that they be commended—the Clerk of the Council and his Assistant. We also ask to be commended, our note-takers who have had to sit here in and out of season at all hours of the day and night, when we have to sit, to report the speeches we have made from time to time. It would be wrong on our part if we did not include them in our commendations.

We know all those who work in the Council Chamber, but we know, in addition to them, there are those who serve in your office as typists and in other capacities; and none of us can deny that those who are under your jurisdiction have, from time to time, given of their very best. They have met the call of everyone of us; and I am sure that everyone would like to have it recorded that we are grateful to them for the service they rendered, not because they are paid by the Government, but because they have always been ready and willing to do what has been asked of them—because they are so co-operative and de-

voted to the cause of this Council. Therefore we ask that a record be made of our gratitude to your staff as well.

**Mr. Bowman :** Mr. Speaker, I would like to add my quota by extending my appreciation of the dignified way in which you have conducted the affairs of this Council.

Perhaps, Sir, being one of the most troublesome Members [*Laughter*] — I have been admonished by you several times, nevertheless, it made me appreciate Parliamentary principles more. I hope that whichever Party wins at the forthcoming election, it would take into consideration the dignity with which you have conducted the affairs of this Council and think in terms of giving you another chance as Speaker.

To those few words I wish to add, as the Leader of the Majority Party has said, the hope that all of us—Nominated as well as Elected Members—will have the privilege of meeting here once more.

**Mr. Hubbard :** Mr. Speaker, this is a moment of humility for me as a citizen because it is a moment of greatness for my country. The King is dead, long live the People. The age of Rulership comes to an end and the age of Government begins. Those of us who have had the privilege of making a contribution to this last period of rulership and have, as it were, been midwives to the new era can, I think, feel that we did a reasonably good job for our people and for our country.

I, Sir, am proud to have had an opportunity to have served, to have associated with those who have made up this Council and to have sat under you and been guided by your wisdom or restraint. I also feel enriched by the loyalty, the self-sacrifice and the unquestioning service which those whose duty it is to serve this Council have given to me and to all who have sought their help.

This moment of death for the old era does fill me with a sense of hope, a sense of pride, a sense of destiny and the realization that whatever confronts Guiana from henceforward, her sons will rise equal to the task and lead this great country into a very great future.

**Mr. Gajraj:** Sir, this is an historic moment, for it is the last meeting when the four elements which comprise this Legislature as prescribed under the old Constitutional Instruments meet. Firstly, Sir, you are the Speaker appointed by His Excellency the Governor to preside over us; secondly, we have the Official Members of the Government; thirdly, the Elected Members; and, fourthly, but by no means the least, the Nominated Members of this Council. I say that we meet together for the last time, because when the new House convenes, as we have heard this afternoon, neither the Officials nor the Nominated Members will be here. The House will itself elect, either from within its own body or from without, someone to preside as Speaker.

The moment of parting does leave, as His Excellency has said in his Gracious Message, one with certain emotions, but, in the evolution of things and in the development of man's purpose, changes must take place. I feel sure that all of us in this Council must carry a very deep sense of pride in having taken part in setting in train that movement which enables us to look forward with great expectation and hope upon the new and advanced Constitution which will bring into existence an Elected House of Assembly and an appointed Senate.

That is not the end of our hopes and aspirations, of course, it is but one step forward towards that day when the people of Guiana will be able to rule and govern themselves completely—the day when independence comes as come it will. How soon that day will be is a

[MR. GAJRAJ]

conjecture at the moment, but I am sure it will not be delayed any longer than is necessary in the circumstances to prepare such Constitutional Instruments and other things necessary after the Elections on the 21st August, 1961.

We have worked together in this Council, as His Excellency has said, with one great object in view; that is to arrive at decisions in the interest of our country. It is true that we have not all been able to see with the same eye each problem that presented itself, but, by the process of Parliamentary Democracy, the acceptance of the vote of the majority, questions have been resolved, and by such resolutions we have seen the work of Government proceeding during the four years which have now come to an end. The way in which we have carried on the work of this Legislature is proof that there should be no fear as to what will happen with our country as we move boldly into the future to take the helm in our own hands.

It is true that the people of Guiana can rise to any occasion when they are given the opportunity, for within our breasts there reside those same high principles, strong emotions and a proper sense of judgment whereby, even though we might approach a subject somewhat differently from others, we, nevertheless, resolve things as others placed in our position also resolve them. Many a person has expressed fear that the great desire for Constitutional advancement evinced by us in this Council and by the many thousands outside of this Council should cause us to pause and move slowly.

The day for slow movement is gone. We no longer take the slow boat to China, but we go by jet planes. Therefore if the physical movement of the person has been hastened by the advance of science, then certainly the people of the underdeveloped regions can claim

that their process of thinking and arriving at solutions should be hastened and quickened by what we see around us. We are a part of the whole world, and, if the world moves forward with greater pace, it would be foolish of us to accept the role that we should only go at the pace at which others before us have tried to get us accustomed.

It has been suggested this afternoon by the Leader of the Majority Party in the Government, and I am sure with a good feeling in his heart, that it would be good to see all of our faces back in this Chamber when the new Legislature convenes. I think that is a hope we must all express, because at this moment when we are dissolving the Legislature certainly the feelings which, perhaps, divided us when we dealt with problems of State must be submerged in favour of the human emotions of kindness and good fellowship with one another. But let us not fool ourselves, for all of us will not be coming back. Some of us will return; there are others who may return, and there are still others who certainly will not return. At this moment, as Members of the Legislature who have worked together for the good of the country, we must wish one another the best for the future. I feel that everyone of us will continue our task in the interest of the country whether he or she is within these hallowed walls of the Legislature or is outside of these walls.

We want everyone to realize that Guiana is our country and each citizen of Guiana has a big obligation in the years that lie ahead. Everyone must devote at least a part of his time and energy to the common good. We must, of course, work for ourselves because we have an obligation to our families, but when Guianese realize that they have an obligation to their country, they fulfil that obligation we will forward more rapidly than we have within the last four years. I hope we will be able to overtake many of

neighbours who have had the advantage of time on their side whilst they had freedom and independence.

Sir, I would like to join with the other Members of this Council in paying tribute to you for your work as Speaker presiding over the deliberations of this Council. I am sure my colleagues in the nominated section will be with me in saying that we appreciated having you in the Chair. I want also to join my hon. Colleague, the Member for Georgetown North, when he expressed appreciation of the work of the officers of the Legislature. May I make one small addition to what he has said by referring to our Mace Bearer who adds to the dignity of the entry and exit of Your Honour when you enter the Chamber to preside over us and when you leave it so that we can speak a little more loudly after you have gone. To all of you we express our appreciation and we wish you well.

May I say that the Official Members of the Government who have sat with us have at times been, perhaps, personally worried about their role in the Chamber, but they have done their part loyally and well. As such they deserve commendation, not only as Members of this Council but as citizens of Guiana.

May they, when they leave this Council Chamber this afternoon and go to their new positions, carry with them the knowledge that we have expressed our appreciation of their services in this Legislature and to our country.

**Mr. Speaker :** Hon. Members of this Council, the hon. the Chief Secretary, the hon. Dr. Jagan, Minister of Trade and Industry, the hon. Member for Georgetown North (Mr. Jackson), the hon. nominated Member, Mr. Gajraj and other hon. Members who have spoken, I am, like you, most grateful to His Excellency the Governor for his most kindly message. I do appreciate His

Excellency's understanding of our combined efforts in this Council, and I am sure you will wish me to convey to him the sentiments that you have deep down in your minds.

May I say that I do hope that the good lesson learnt by us during this period of our service will occupy a high and permanent place in our minds, and may be useful to those who will be permitted to give service in the new Council.

As for myself, I cannot sufficiently thank His Excellency the Governor for his kind and generous reference to my efforts to maintain the quiet dignity of this Council and preserve inviolate its best traditions. I wish also publicly to thank him for much personal encouragement.

I wish to say right here and now to you, hon. Members of this Council, that I am equally grateful to you for the tribute you have paid to me this afternoon. I cannot sufficiently express in language my thanks to you. I have been happy with you. I believe I have some understanding of human nature. I have always had it before my mind that in this world we cannot at all times have the same views. If everyone thought alike on every topic, the world would be a very bad place, the debate in any gathering would lose its richness and its character.

I am more than grateful to you for the co-operation I have had in this Council; for your assistance whenever it was needed, and also for the mutual respect we have all enjoyed. After all, it does not matter if on occasions we say some word or utter some idea that may be contrary to the thoughts of others, for when those utterances are put forward with the best of intention and in a spirit of friendliness and conviction, they do not disturb the relationship which should exist among men of goodwill. As I have said before, I cannot thank you sufficiently, but I desire to add that but for

[MR. SPEAKER]

your co-operation, your goodwill, your understanding, we could not in this Council have accomplished as much as has been accomplished with so little difficulty.

I wish also, on my own behalf, to record my abiding gratitude to the Clerk of this Council (Mr. Crum Ewing), the Assistant Clerk (Mr. Viapree), and the entire staff, including the Marshal and Mace-Bearer, for their continuous faithful help and their loyalty.

I sincerely hope that as many of you who offer yourselves as candidates for the new Legislature may be able to con-

vince the electorate that you should serve them again, provided you do not offer yourselves in the same constituency. I think you can confidently mention that you were Members of this Council and say that you had worked very hard and under trying conditions, and you have done reasonably well. It is only when one has attempted much and tried very hard that others may properly judge of the excellence of one's excellent performance.

The Council will now rise.

At 4.39 p.m. the Speaker closed the Session.