

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

WEDNESDAY, 21ST MARCH, 1951.

The Council met at 2 p.m., His Excellency the Governor, Sir Charles Woolley, K.C.M.G., O.B.E., M.C., President, in the Chair.

PRESENT:

The President, His Excellency the Governor, Sir Charles Campbell Woolley, K.C.M.G., O.B.E., M.C.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Mr. J. Gutch, O.B.E.

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

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

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

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

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

The Hon. W. J. Raatgever, (Nominated).

The Hon. V. Roth (Nominated).

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

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

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

The Hon. D. P. Debidin (Eastern Demerara).

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

The Hon. W. O. R. Kendall (New Amsterdam).

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

The Hon. W. A. Phang (North Western District).

The Hon. G. H. Smellie (Nominated)

The Hon. F. E. Morrish (Nominated).

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

The Clerk read prayers.

PRESENTATIONS

The PRESIDENT made the following presentations:—

Hon. C. V. Wight, C.B.E. — Deputy President of the Legislative Council — the Insignia and Grant of Dignity appertaining to his appointment as a Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire.

Mr. Desmond John Parkinson, O.B.E. Deputy Colonial Secretary — The Insignia and Grant of Dignity appertaining to his appointment as an Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire.

HON C. V. WIGHT, C.B.E.

Making the presentation of the award to Mr. Wight after the Colonial Secretary had read the Royal Warrant, the President said:

By Command of the King, conveyed to me through His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, I present to you the Insignia of a Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire.

This further honour, Mr. Wight, has been awarded you in well deserved recognition of your long and meritorious public services in British Guiana. I warmly congratulate you. (Applause).

MR. D. J. PARKINSON, O.B.E.

The PRESIDENT: (*After the reading of the Royal Warrant*) By command of the King, conveyed to me through His

Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, I present to you the Insignia of an Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire.

This award has been conferred on you for exemplary service as a Staff Officer in the Secretariat. For the past five years you have held the office of Deputy Colonial Secretary and acted as Colonial Secretary on several occasions, acquitting yourself with great credit. I warmly congratulate you. (Applause).

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Friday, the 16th of March, 1951, as printed and circulated, were taken as read and confirmed.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

INTRODUCTION OF BILL

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL gave notice of the introduction and first reading of a Bill intituled :

"An Ordinance further to extend the duration of the New Amsterdam Electric Lighting Order, 1900."

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL also gave notice that at a later stage he would move the suspension of the relevant Standing Rule and Order to enable him to proceed with items 10, 11 and 6 of the Order Paper.

PRESENTATION OF PETITION

Dr. JAGAN tabled a petition on the question of the purchase of Campbellville for transmission to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

ORDER OF THE DAY

CUSTOMS (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1951

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: In pursuance of the notice I have just given I move the suspension of the relevant Standing Rule and Order to enable me to proceed with items 10, 11 and 6 on the Order Paper.

Mr. WIGHT seconded.

Question put, and agreed to.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I move the second reading of a Bill intituled:

"An Ordinance further to amend the Customs Ordinance."

This is one of the Bills to which the hon. the Financial Secretary and Treasurer referred in his Budget Statement. It seeks to introduce measures consequential to the entry of gasoline free of duty for use in certain industries. Such gasoline will be coloured with an approved colouring agent.

Section 184 of the Principal Ordinance enables certain officers to stop and search any cart, wagon or other conveyance for smuggled goods. Clause-2 seeks to amend section 184 to permit such officers to stop uncustomed goods. The expression "uncustomed goods" would include gasoline which has been entered for use in the Colony without the payment of duty, for use in certain industries, and which is being used for other purposes.

Clause 3 seeks to prohibit the importation of exotic fish except in accordance with the terms of a licence issued by the Director of Agriculture. This measure is considered advisable, as experience has shown that in some instances the introduction of exotic fish into the waters of certain territories has resulted in the destruction of fish indigenous to those territories.

I think hon. Members will agree that some such measure is necessary, having regard to the fisheries in this Colony. I formally move that the Bill be read a second time.

Mr. WIGHT seconded.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

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

Clause 1.—*Short Title.*

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I move that the figures "1951" be substituted for the figures "1950".

Amendment agreed to.

The Council resumed.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: With the consent of Council I move that the Bill be now read a third time and passed.

Mr. Wight seconded.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a third time and passed.

CUSTOMS DUTIES (AMENDMENT No. 2)
BILL, 1951

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I move the second reading of a Bill intituled:

“An Ordinance further to amend the Customs Duties Ordinance, 1935.”

The amendments sought to be introduced by clause 2 of the Bill are consequential to clause 4 which seeks to exempt from duty gasoline imported for use in certain specified industries.

Clause 3 seeks to add a new item to the Second Schedule (table of *ad valorem* duties) to the Principal Ordinance as substituted by section 2 of the Customs Duties (Amendment No. 2) (Consolidation of Schedules) Ordinance, 1944, with the object of reducing the rates of duty on aluminium sheets from 16 2/3% Preferential and 33 1/3% General to 2% Preferential and 11% General. This will permit aluminium sheets to be sold at approximately the same price as iron sheets.

Hon. Members will appreciate that this will enable those who desire to build to obtain aluminium sheets at reasonable rates and thus give a stimulus to the construction of houses.

In clause 4 of the Bill there is a provision relating to gasoline. It is proposed to add a new item (36A) to the Fourth Schedule to the Principal Ordinance which reads:

“36A. Gasoline of British Empire production when imported or cleared from a bonded warehouse for use as fuel for driving machinery for the purposes of any of the industries set out hereunder:—

Balata and rubber production.

Food production (including any drainage and irrigation incidental thereto).

Gold and diamond mining.

Woodcutting.

There is a proviso whereby the Governor in Council may by Order add any industry to or remove any industry

from the list of industries to be allowed this concession. I formally move that the Bill be read a second time.

Mr. WIGHT seconded.

Mr. DEBIDIN: May I ask what industries are at present benefiting?

The PRESIDENT: I think the position is that all agricultural industries benefit from this exemption from duty on gasoline.

Dr. JAGAN: I observe that the duty on aluminium sheets is to be reduced from 16 2/3 per cent. preferential and 33 1/3 per cent. general to 2 per cent. preferential and 11 per cent. general. At present the general duty is twice as much as the preferential. What is the reason for the difference in the ratio proposed?

The PRESIDENT: I think we are preserving the preferential ratio as we are bound to do. The ratio is not being disturbed. The whole point is that corrugated iron sheets are becoming increasingly difficult to obtain, and we do not want the housing programme to be held up for the want of corrugated sheets. What we are trying to do, as the Attorney-General has explained, is to make aluminium sheets cheaper in order to assist persons who want to build houses. Aluminium sheets are readily available, I am told, so we are reducing the import duty to facilitate building operations. That is the object of the clause.

Dr. JAGAN: I understand that the object is to reduce the duty so that the price of aluminium sheets might be lowered, but what I am saying is that the proposed rates are not in the same proportion as the existing rates. I do not know where the supplies of aluminium sheets are coming from but I know that quite a lot of those sheets are produced in the U.S.A. I do not think a great deal is imported from that source. If the general rate was reduced to 6 per cent. it would bear the same proportion to the original rate — 2 to 6. That is all I am saying.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY & TREASURER: I am sorry I cannot

enlighten the hon. Member on the precise arithmetical formula. The main point is that the price of aluminium sheets should be approximately the same as that of galvanised iron sheets which are chargeable with a specific rate of duty under *ad valorem* duties. Therefore, to maintain the price level between aluminium and galvanised sheets it is necessary to vary the preferential margin. I hope I have made myself clear. The reduction is not so much in relation to the duty, British Preferential Tariff to the General Tariff, but in relation to the desire to bring the price of the two commodities on the same level and yet preserve a reasonable margin of preference. The real object is to keep aluminium sheets at the same price and not lower than the price of galvanised iron sheets.

Mr. RAATGEVER: That is not quite correct. It was reduced to bring the price in line with that of corrugated iron sheets. The duty, both preferential and general tariffs, is now exactly the same as the duty on galvanised iron sheets. The first cost of aluminium sheets is higher than that of galvanised iron sheets.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY & TREASURER: I thought that was what I said.

The PRESIDENT: The hon. Member sees the object of it.

Dr. JAGAN: I see the object. I am only wondering about the figures.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

COUNCIL IN COMMITTEE

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

Clause 4 — Amendment of the Fourth Schedule to the Principal Ordinance.

Mr. ROTH: I observe that with regard to the mining industries the exemption of gasoline is only in connection with gold and diamond mining. There has been very recently advertised the

possibility of other minerals being developed commercially. I refer to columbite and tantalite. I suggest that instead of the words "Gold and diamond mining" the words "Mining of minerals" be substituted.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: The hon. Member will appreciate that that is covered by the proviso which empowers the Governor in Council to add any industry to or remove any industry from the list of industries in the sub-item. Therefore if it is established that that is required the Governor in Council would consider it.

Mr. ROTH: I understood that the Governor in Council has all the work it can reasonably do. Why put more work on it when you can avoid it by altering this here?

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member can be quite sure that if there is development in any other mining product other than gold and diamonds this concession would be given. I only wish we could find some more.

The Council resumed.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: With the consent of Council I beg to move that this Bill be now read a third time and passed.

Mr. WIGHT seconded.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a third time and passed.

INDUSTRIES AID & ENCOURAGEMENT BILL

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I beg to move the second reading of a Bill intitled:—

"An Ordinance to promote the establishment and development of certain industries."

In concluding his Budget Speech the hon. the Financial Secretary and Treasurer mentioned that this Bill was one of the Bills of which notice would be given of their introduction. The policy underlying this Bill was outlined in the Governor's

Message, No. 6 of 1950, dated 19th October, 1950. It will be within the recollection of hon. Members that in that Message the Governor stated that Government will be prepared as a matter of policy to make similar concessions for any other new undertakings, etc. That was after referring to a statement Your Excellency made on the 4th of January, 1950, when dealing with the proposals of the Colonial and Development Corporation for the establishment of their timber development project. In paragraph 2 of that Message the Governor went on to state:

"The general policy on this question has now received the Government's consideration and the conclusion has been reached that the present practice based on the discretionary right given in the law to the Governor in Council to grant remissions of the whole (but not the part) of any Customs duty and or Bill of Entry Tax should be discontinued, and specific provision should be made in the law to cover the conditions under which remissions of duty and tax would be granted, so that the rates of duty and tax to be paid in every case would be certain and not arbitrary, and that the time and manner of payment would be defined.

"It is considered that both Customs duty and Bill of Entry Tax should be waived on the items described in the next paragraph when imported by any industrial undertaking or any predominantly mechanised undertaking in Agriculture, Mining or Forestry in respect of a risk-bearing or developmental character, or for a Tourist hotel....."

Paragraph 4 of the Message sets out the various undertakings to which the policy referred—

"Forest, Field, Mine, Mill and Factory equipment; building material therefor; cultivation, extraction and haulage equipment for directly productive use on private lands or concession; river draft of a freight-carrying character; but not including any item competing with anything made in the Colony, or any item in respect of housing, domestic or office requirements, except in the case of a Tourist hotel project.

Paragraph 5 states:

"The concessions would apply only for a stated period (say, not more than 10 years for mining ventures and 5 years for other types, as each case requires) in respect of each project and, subject to the general consent of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, would apply

without regard to the country of origin of the equipment, provided that where foreign equipment might be concerned, the applicant could show reasonable grounds at the time of application for not obtaining the equipment from British sources."

The Message goes on to state further—

"To achieve these purposes, it is proposed that a special item should be inserted in the Fourth Schedule to the list of exemptions under the Bill of Entry Tax Ordinance, providing, subject to conditions to be prescribed by the Comptroller of Customs, for the free entry of items imported in respect of development projects which might be approved by the Governor in Council from time to time and publicly notified in the *Official Gazette*.

"Undertakings wishing to take advantage of the concessions would be required to apply to the Government in writing on a standard form which would not merely give the relevant particulars regarding the nature of the undertaking and the items in respect of which the duty concession was being sought, but would also link the application with a specific developmental project, however small.

"The application would then be considered by the Governor in Council and a decision taken as to acceptance or rejection in whole or in part. If a concession is granted, the decision would be given executive effect by the Comptroller of Customs.

"These proposals which are designed to provide an incentive for the establishment of new enterprises and for the expansion of existing industries, will, I hope, be acceptable to Honourable Members, and the necessary amending legislation to give them effect will be introduced in this Council at an early date."

This Bill, which is now before hon. Members, seeks to carry out what was adumbrated by the Governor in his Message. Clause 3 of the Bill provides that licences to import certain articles for the promotion of industry may be granted upon the application of any person by the Governor in Council. The clause reads:

"The Governor in Council may, upon the application of any person, grant such person a licence to import or clear from a bonded warehouse free of any customs import duties and taxes such of the

items in the First Schedule to this Ordinance as may be specified in the licence where he is satisfied that it is desirable so to do for the purpose of establishing a new industry or for the purpose of developing an existing industry, and where such items are to be used in direct connection with the establishment or development of such industry."

Clause 4 provides that the application for a licence shall be in the form set out in the Schedule, and it is to be made to the Comptroller of Customs, who in turn will submit the application to the Governor in Council with his recommendations or comments. Every applicant is required, on the grant of a licence, before he imports or clears from a bonded warehouse any item under the provisions of section 6, to enter into a bond with such sureties as the Comptroller may approve, in such sum as the Comptroller may fix for due compliance with the terms and conditions of the licence. Clause 6 deals with the period of exemption from customs duties and taxes, and clause 7 deals with the restrictions on the disposal of particular articles. Those articles cannot be sold, given away or otherwise disposed of by the licensees. In other words, if the purpose for which the licence has been granted is in any way outraged or avoided, then the duty which would have been payable, except for these provisions, would be required to be paid. Clause 8 provides for the revocation of the licence in certain circumstances. The First Schedule made under clause 3 relates to the following—Machinery and appliances, launches, tugs, barges and pontoons (where similar vessels cannot be obtained in the Colony), building materials for the erection of mills or factories, storehouses for items imported under the provisions of this Bill, and tourist hotels and such items of furniture and equipment therefor.

In the other Bill, which will shortly be dealt with in this Council, intitled: "An Ordinance to encourage the establishment or development of industries in the Colony, etc." there is in the First Schedule the following definition in respect of building materials for tourist hotels:

"Hotels providing mainly for accommodation of tourists and having— (a) if situated in a municipal area, not less than 30 bedrooms, and (b) if situated

elsewhere, not less than 20 bedrooms."

It will be appreciated that it would be very difficult to say what is and what is not a tourist hotel, and if the term "tourist hotel" is left in the Bill then there would be all sorts of lodgings brought forward as tourist hotels. Consequently, hon. Members will agree that there should be greater clarification of the term "tourist hotel" so as to agree with an application for the benefits accruing under this legislation being properly within it.

I think, Sir, I have dealt fully with the provisions of this Bill, and I am sure that hon. Members will agree that it is a very desirable step forward in providing a stimulus to work of the nature contemplated in the Bill. I beg to move that the Bill be now read a second time.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY & TREASURER seconded.

The PRESIDENT: Do you, Mr. Attorney-General, propose to amend the Bill in respect of tourist hotels?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Yes, Sir, in accordance with what I read. I will move that amendment when we get into the Committee stage. That amendment is in keeping with the terms of the other Bill.

Mr. DEBIDIN: I do admit what was said by the hon. the Attorney-General is correct—that it is very desirable to bring forward measures of this kind to act as a stimulus to the development of new industries in British Guiana. To be very consistent, we have been time and time again in this Council advocating the establishment of new industries which would provide for an increasing population some avenue of employment. We have stressed from time to time that we need the type of industries which would be available more or less to the small man and would be able to provide a reasonable amount of employment. The purpose of my saying something on this Bill, however, is to point out that in this Colony we have a number of small industries which can grow into very large industries, and will take

in kindred undertakings which, when developed, will become somewhat large industrial concerns. There were many occasions in the past when efforts made by individuals met with a great deal of disappointment and frustration. I know of many cases published in the newspapers within recent times in respect of one individual who wished to embark upon small industries.

I refer now to clause 6 of this Bill, proviso (b). There one would see that the clause would not apply to "items imported as replacements or renewals of any existing machinery plant or appliances or for the purpose of rehabilitation or modernisation of existing machinery plant or equipment." I think, Sir, that this proviso, should not be there. I feel that those people who have been struggling in the past years to put themselves on the map in regard to this or that minor industry are as much entitled to encouragement and stimulus, such as this Bill purposes to give to new industries. I would suggest very strongly that this matter be left open to the discretion of the Executive Council which, I notice, will be having complete discretion in the whole question of granting licences. That does not say I will not be opposed to too much power being passed over to the Executive Council. I nearly got up to oppose, but I did not think it was necessary. In the last Bill entire discretion as to the industries which should get the benefit of that Bill was left in the hands of the Executive Council and we who are sitting here and are not on the Executive Council would have no say, and possibly no opportunity of recommending or opposing new industries. I do feel that in a matter of this kind there is no great harm in the Executive Council having the power of granting these licences, for certainly we can be sufficiently alive to what is taking place and be watchdogs in respect of movements in the interest of new industries.

To come back to the point, I would say there may be industries, such as a soap factory or something else, which have started and which, because of conditions prevailing during and since the last war,

have been unable to get replacements. I feel sure it would be deserving encouragement to these small efforts in the Colony that they be given similar treatment. It would be to my mind, not charitable enough to them for a new industry to be formed and to be given not only free duty in respect of machinery imported for it, but possibly exemption from Income Tax as proposed by another Bill. I would strongly suggest that this proviso be deleted when we come to it in Committee.

Speaking of a stimulus to the establishment of new industries, I am going to make an appeal. I do not know how much this appeal will be appreciated by the Council. It is to British Guianese — and there are enough in British Guiana who have enough funds for the purpose — that they become sufficiently alive at this time in the history of the Colony, to invest the money they have tied up in more or less uselessness. I have been trying to enquire in my own mind as to what is happening to development generally, and I have noticed that we have been thinking more so of inducing outsiders to bring new undertakings and new industries into this Colony. But I feel that we have enough opportunity as Guianese to get together and form limited liability companies, and to embark upon projects, for instance one or more of the projects which have been suggested by the late Mr. G. O. Case — projects which are practical and possible of being embarked upon on our own. If Guianese show that amount of enterprise and adventure they would sally forth and make British Guiana, on their own initiative, a better and more developed country. Too long have we been looking to the north, west and elsewhere for monetary help. We have the money lying idly about, and if we can get together in a limited liability company, which is available to the ordinary man in the obtaining of shares, it would be to our own credit, because every cent would remain in the Colony and every man would have that feeling of development inculcated in him. That is something I have in mind to be one of the main sources of exploration for the development of British Guiana. I do hope

our own people will seize this opportunity to develop themselves.

When one turns to the First Schedule of the Bill one finds very wide terms being used, such as "building materials for erection of store houses". The term is all-embracing and includes even ordinary materials. I am going to ask that when discretion is exercised in respect of building materials none of our present industries should be affected. I am thinking of our forestry efforts, such as one-eighth of an inch crabwood boards made by the Willems Company. That is an endeavour which we would like to see carried through. If tented is being brought from abroad and sold here cheaper it might hamper any development of that particular project. There are many others. I think the Forest Department at this moment is getting out mills for making plywood and several other things. I feel sure we should not be too prone in the granting of this privilege which would result in the stultifying of our own development of industries of the kind which may usefully spring up if these particular types of materials were difficult to obtain.

Another thing is that store houses, hotel and other things may be required to be built and certain materials for the sake of convenience and beauty may be asked for to be imported under the licence, such as expanding doors, ready-made frames for windows, etc. While it may be said that they are useful and make for more economic construction, etc., and the licence may be granted, I feel it would strike at the very development of our timber industry. I hope that when the time comes for the Executive Council to decide upon these licences, and when the Comptroller of Customs has to go into them serious consideration would be given to the preservation of existing industries and industries likely to be developed in the Colony. These are some of the points which occurred to me while the hon. the Attorney-General was speaking on the Bill. I shall support the Bill except for the point I made about proviso (b) of clause 6.

Mr. FERREIRA: I think the Bill is certainly a step forward and should be

the means of stimulating industry and increasing the productivity of this country but, like the last speaker (although I do not go as far as he went) I think paragraph (b) of the proviso to clause 6 should end at the word "rehabilitation." Reference to "modernisation of existing machinery, plant or equipment" must to all intents and purposes apply to new industries. One can imagine a shirt factory, which uses manual labour to a large extent, introducing guillotines, and we would have a new industry just by the introduction of items of machinery of that kind. The same thing would apply to the laundry industry which is in its infancy. Those are minor industries but industries which could play a limited part in helping to solve our unemployment problem. As far as I am aware, items of machinery imported from Empire sources only pay a 3 per cent. bill of entry tax. If I am correct in that statement I think the Colony would have very little to lose. I would be satisfied if the proviso stopped at the word "rehabilitation" and we take the view that modernisation of an existing industry is tantamount to a new industry — something which is most desirable in this country.

The PRESIDENT: I quite see the hon. Member's point. Modernisation is development. Rehabilitation is just replacement, and replacement would not necessarily help us towards the development of industry, but modernisation would.

Mr. LUCKHOO: I think the hon. Member for Eastern Demerara (Mr. Debidin) has made a very good point because, as the Bill is worded, with new machinery which is imported, replacements, additions and spares may also come in free of duty. I agree with the hon. Member that it should be a matter for the discretion of the Executive Council, because it does seem to create a rather peculiar situation where new machinery may be brought in with any quantity of spares and replacements included, which would be permitted to enter duty free.

Dr. JAGAN: I also wish to support this Bill, but in doing so I would like

to make a few observations. Personally I do not think this Bill is really necessary for a solution of our developmental problems as they exist. Our developmental policy, like a dog chasing its tail, seems to be moving in a vicious circle, and by merely granting remissions of Customs duties we are not getting at the root of our developmental or economic problems. We are seeking to encourage these industries by remitting Customs duties, and only a few minutes ago we passed a Bill allowing for the remission of gasoline duty. There are other Bills for the remission of income tax and so forth for a limited period of years. While we are doing these things we must be very careful that, at the same time, this country gets something out of it all. By that I mean that the word "development" is very close to the word "exploitation". We may give encouragement by the remission of duties from which the Colony derives revenue, but we may find that, apart from the low wages which may be paid in many of those industries, perhaps most of the profits are not retained in this country.

That is why I support the view of the hon. Member for Eastern Demerara (Mr. Debidin) that local capitalists who have savings either in the Post Office Savings Bank or the commercial Banks, should have an opportunity to invest those savings in local industries. Unless the profits which will be earned by the companies which are coming here in the name of development are re-invested in this country I do not think we are going to achieve any great development in this country. We must remember that encouragement in the form we are now providing is also provided in the other Colonies of the West Indies and other places, and we must also remember that many of those companies which are coming to British Guiana are really foreign companies, in the sense that some of them are registered abroad, and most of them will bring foreign capital into the country.

I know that in the case of the bauxite industry there are plans to set up new machinery for the purpose of producing calcined ore and so forth, but

we must not lose sight of the fact that this country is not getting very much by way of royalty from this particular industry. As part of the mining policy I believe it has been laid down by the Colonial Office, by Circular issued some time ago, that the Colonies must either develop their mining industries themselves or see to it that they get their fair share by way of royalties from those wasting assets, whether they are diamonds or bauxite. What has been happening in the past is that industries have come and provided a few more jobs for people, but if we keep in mind that those jobs provided wages which only kept the worker and his family alive and allowed no margin for saving, we will see the necessity for embarking upon some other policy.

As the hon. the Financial Secretary has stated in his Budget Statement, there is a sum of 13½ million dollars on deposit in the Post Office Savings Bank, and there are large sums of money deposited with the commercial Banks. We also have many foreign insurance companies operating in this country. All the profits of those undertakings are taken out of this country and invested abroad. That is really responsible for our development stagnation, and unless we make some provision for either utilizing the savings in the Post Office Savings Bank or instituting our own banking system so that we can utilize those savings in this country instead of investing them abroad in places like Africa, we will get no real development in this area.

Some time ago, in reply to a question by me in this Council, the Financial Secretary said that there was no guarantee that if the C.D.C. made any profits as a result of its operations here they would be re-invested in the Colony. That is my fear. Here we are granting all these concessions, and the list is certainly formidable. When we remember that the same industry will get remissions of Customs duties, gasoline duty and income tax deductions; that the wages paid by those industries are no greater than those paid in other places, and that we have no control over any profits which may

be earned, we see the hopeless failure of all these development tit-bits — the schemes which are being put up for the development of this country. We are like a dying man struggling to maintain life. We are grasping at every bit of straw in order to see the development of this country.

The PRESIDENT: I hope the hon. Member does not think so. I know he does not.

Dr. JAGAN: Development will not come in this fashion, as we are attempting to do.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY & TREASURER: The hon. Member has made a few observations and so he has encouraged me to get up and speak. I never intended to speak. The position is, of course, that for many years there has been a race between the various territories in the Caribbean area in order to provide these incentives and encouragement to the introduction of capital for development. The race has become very keen within the last year or two, and this Government has been accused of great remissness in not having entered the race earlier and provided similar encouragement. We have at last done so in the hope that this stimulus will encourage the introduction of what the hon. Member calls "foreign capital." At the same time Government was recently accused of trying to keep out capital by increasing the rate of company tax from 40 per cent. to 45 per cent. of profits. That is quite a reasonable rate and I think it is unfair of the hon. Member to suggest that the revenue of the Colony does not get a reasonable share of the income which we hope will be earned by any new undertakings. After all capital is looking for profit. That is the main consideration, the incentive of the capitalist, and to suggest that it is incumbent on the Government to prevent part of the profit going back into the hands of the investors is a curious thing. Surely the use of the word "exploitation" in such circumstances is quite unnecessary.

In the case of bauxite, as the hon.

Member well knows, only this year we have increased the rate of export duty from 30 to 45 cents per ton, and in connection with the specialized item of calcined bauxite, to which he referred, we have imposed a new rate of duty of \$1 per ton. As I have said, the bauxite industry in this country is already providing a reasonably substantial percentage of the country's revenue, quite apart from what it does in providing employment for a large number of families.

The hon. Member referred to savings. While it is true that there is a very large sum in the Post Office Savings Bank, much of it is invested in loans to the United Kingdom and other Colonial Governments, but I hope he realizes that those investments are in a form in which they are readily realizable in cash. After all the Post Office Savings Bank is an institution which must return money put into it on demand, and while it is true that our present legislation — the Ordinance governing Savings Banks — permits a certain percentage of its funds to be invested in loans to the Government of the Colony, it is understandable that it might be a risky thing to put too large a proportion of those invested funds into investments unless we can be sure that at any time those investments can be put on the market and produce cash.

There is another point to realize. When the hon. Member says that our funds are invested in Africa and other Colonies of the Empire he must remember that the funds of those Colonies are invested with us. We hope this year to raise a 10 million dollar loan, and I can tell him that I have little doubt that the money for that loan will be largely subscribed by funds of other Colonies. It is a two-way traffic. Just as our funds go into their loans their funds come into ours, but in a form which can be easily realized on the London market, so that when the money is wanted by the depositor he can get it. If Government sought to take money out of the Post Office Savings Bank and invest it and could not get it when it is wanted there is bound to be trouble.

With regard to the point made by the hon. Member for Eastern Demerara (Mr. Debidin) regarding clause 6 (b), the governing factor in this Bill is set out in clause 3. Concessions are to be granted "for the purpose of establishing a new industry or for the purpose of developing an existing industry." It seems to me to be going off the rails very wide of the mark indeed if we should accept the hon. Member's proposal and also exempt from duty what would merely be a replacement of machinery already in being and in use. Members will understand how wide such a provision would be, and where it would lead us. It would mean that every bit of plant in an existing industry of any sort which is replaced, would come in free of duty.

That is not the intention of the Bill at all. It would be something inconsistent even with the title of the Bill. It is put in as a prohibition in paragraph (b) in order to make assurance doubly sure. If that were left out with the object of granting remission of duty on replacements I am sure the purpose of the Bill would be completely lost. It would be so wide as to be almost unreconcilable. There is some ground for asking that the words "or modernisation" be omitted from paragraph (b), for the reason that some types of modernisation may tend towards the development of an existing industry. I do not mean that mere replacement of a unit by a more modern type, but that there is some type of modernisation which is of such a character as may come within the category of development of an industry. If that is the argument then possibly we may delete those two words. Beyond that I seriously advise the Council not to go.

The PRESIDENT: It seems to me that if we cut out paragraph (b) there would be no import duty on any amount of machinery or anything else under this Ordinance.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

COUNCIL IN COMMITTEE

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

Clause 3.—*Licences to import certain articles for the promotion of industry. First Schedule.*

Mr. DEBIDIN: May I ask the hon. the Financial Secretary what is the meaning of the term "developing an existing industry" in this clause, because an existing industry might very well institute the renewal of certain parts of machinery in order to further the development of the industry. There ought to be some interpretation clause.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY & TREASURER: It is not difficult to imagine circumstances that may arise in an existing industry. Take for instance the tile industry. I have no doubt that there may be certain forms of additional equipment, such as better kilns. There are certain types of new machinery that can be brought into an existing industry which would develop it further.

The CHAIRMAN: It may be a new process for manufacturing the same product.

Mr. DEBIDIN: Take for instance the sugar industry as against soap making. The soap industry may require a great deal of development, whereas we know that the sugar industry requires to be developed and to continue to develop in order to make for more or better production. If a sugar estate required a particular type of milling apparatus that would come within clause 3, but would be excluded by clause 6 (b). It is going to create some difficulty. On the other hand a soap manufacturer may require some item of machinery for increased production or better production of a particular product. What would be his position? Under paragraph (b) he would get no help.

The CHAIRMAN: It is just the reverse.

Mr. MORRISH: I was just about to suggest that the opposite is the case.

The CHAIRMAN: I think the effect would be just the opposite. There would be no tax on machinery.

Clause 3 put, and agreed to.

First Schedule.—

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I move that the following be substituted for the last item in the First Schedule:—

“Building materials for hotels providing mainly for the accommodation of tourists and having —

(a) if situated in a municipal area, not less than thirty bedrooms; and

(b) if situated outside of a municipal area, not less than twenty bedrooms,

and such items of furniture and equipment therefor as the Governor in Council may approve.”

First Schedule, as amended, put and agreed to.

Clause 6.—*Period of exemption from Customs Duties and Taxes.*

Mr. DEBIDIN: I accept the suggestion to take the words “or modernisation” out, but I am going to ask for an amendment reducing the period from 10 years to 5 years. I would make this point: It is easier to have an enabling Ordinance brought to extend the time than to reduce the time. I feel, Sir, that five years is quite adequate for any mining undertaking, and anyone might be induced on the strength of that term of remission of these import duties. If it is necessary, I feel sure this Council would consider the extension of the time. I feel, too, why it is necessary to fix a time is that outsiders who might like to invest in the Colony should have some definite knowledge of a definite time within which they would get these remissions. The other point I wish to make, which is probably the chief point, is this: A reason why it should be five years is that this Colony must become more and more — probably that is accepting the suggestion made by the hon. Member for Central Demerara — alive to an important fact, and that is, that British Guiana has always been regarded as a country which is impoverished, because all the companies from abroad are taking the wealth out of it. It has always been said that British Guiana is not developed and not a wealthy country, but most of its industries which

have potential development relate to wasting assets, and mining is one of them. We have talked here that the bauxite industry is something from which we should derive more revenue, and that it admitted to the extent that we are getting an increase of duty on it. But there is no doubt whatever that if more companies come into the Colony there must be something at some time to prevent not only the taking out of the wasting assets of the Colony but also the profits and, as one hon. Member said, some of it should be returned to the Colony. I do trust that when we are giving such concessions either by legislation or otherwise — it is difficult I admit to bring in a form of legislation to induce them to reinvest the profits over a similar period of years. If they are going to get five years’ remission of one kind or another we should get that circulated back in the Colony by continual development in the interest of the Colony. That is something which passed through my mind as we were giving these remissions. That is why I make the appeal that the people of this Colony will not be too slow to jump into the various avenues for development and will be the first in the field in taking up things which will be very useful as new projects. I move that 10 years be reduced to 5 years, and that the words “or modernisation” be deleted from clause 6 (b).

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Does the hon. Member suggest, therefore, that 10 years should be reduced to 5 years in the case of a mining undertaking, and 5 years in the case of other undertakings should remain the same? Hon. Members will agree that there is a difference between the risks which a mining undertaking has to face, as against another undertaking. A mining undertaking has to expend money in exploring and in machinery, and eventually may be faced with getting nothing, or at least it will not be a paying proposition. The whole idea behind the Bill is to encourage the establishment of undertakings of this nature, and to induce those who have capital to put the money in the Colony with the idea of developing it. It is appreciated that mining products are a wasting asset, but at the same time those

who have the capital and would come to the Colony would wish to know what their position would be over a period of time, and whether they would not be subjected to a possible extension of that period later on.

Mr. DEBIDIN: I do not know whether the hon. Attorney-General appreciates that most of the capital investments would be well within five years unless they form subsidiaries or put up new plants.

The CHAIRMAN: If the hon. Member knows the history of gold mining and the efforts to establish gold mining on a big scale in this Colony he would never say what he just said. He talks of reducing the period to five years. Let him take the Anaconda Company; how much they spent and how much they got out of it. Take the example of any other mining enterprise, the Cuyuni Gold Company, and others. The hon. Member would then appreciate how great the risk is in putting capital into that industry in this Colony, and to treat them as you treat any other industry is out of the question. In the forest industry the forest is there to begin with, but you do not know what gold is there. There is a great distinction.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY & TREASURER: I was about to point out that in the case of mining the important factor is the time limit. The Bill is seeking to induce the establishment of new industries. In the case of a mining industry the establishment could well take much more than 10 years. You have had the example of the Anaconda Company and the Cuyuni Company referred to by Your Excellency. The Anaconda Company were here for two years and were just in the experimental stage; they had not yet started to establish themselves. If you are going to have good mining it may well take three or four years before it begins to be established. That is the reason for the distinction. Mining takes a longer preliminary period of exploration. Very few companies come and start knowing exactly what they are going to get. There is an exploration period which comes within the ten-year period. Five years is too short a time to provide what is necessary for the establishment of mining companies.

Mr. DEBIDIN: Three points seem to occur in answer to that. All companies should be put on the same basis where remission is to be given. In the case of mining we are dealing with a wasting asset, but we are also dealing with an asset which is valuable, and if for some reason a fortune is made within the first two or three years of operation, it seems to me that company would then get the full value of this Bill, and at the same time would get all the profits which would be derived from that. This point is far more important when we come to deal with income tax than it is here, but at the same time I am considering the loss of revenue to the Colony which may be considerable. I am considering the case where after two years — you mentioned it would take longer than five years — the Anaconda Company took only two years; before they knew what was the position — that Company, for the sake of argument, strikes a rich vein, it seems that if it wants new or renewal of machinery, or to put up another plant or to go into another district, it is because of the profits they are making from which they derive some revenue. They would not want any replacement between 5 and 10 years unless they are making a considerable amount of profits. Why should we lose revenue there?

The CHAIRMAN: I thought the hon. Member was asking that 6 (b) be cut out?

Mr. DEBIDIN: I am assuming now that you are allowing replacement.

The CHAIRMAN: I suggest to the hon. Member that to base law purely on hypothetical circumstances is a most dangerous thing to do.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY & TREASURER: The limitation is within the discretion of the Executive Council. The hon. Member was willing to give the Executive Council a certain amount of leeway. All the clause says is "not exceeding ten years in the case of a mining undertaking or five years in the case of any other undertaking". I can assure him, Sir, that the Executive Council would not give them ten years if they were in a position to make profits in five years.

Dr. JAGAN: I have heard all the explanations, but I am in agreement with the hon. Member for Eastern Demerara. It seems to me that a lot of changes are going to be made in ten years. I am anticipating a different kind of government also. We do not know what is going to happen within that period. I would like to speak on the first proviso (a). It says:

"Items which are not of British Empire manufacture or production unless the licensee satisfies the Comptroller that there are reasonable grounds for the importation of items which are not of British Empire manufacture or production."

I do not see the necessity for that proviso at all, because I am thinking particularly of the local capitalist who may have a few thousand dollars in the bank or in a grocery business, retail or wholesale. I am thinking possibly he may want to invest his small savings in a secondary industry. Why should we force him to buy from British Empire sources because remission of Customs duties will be given on goods from British Empire sources? It is true you have started that, provided there are reasonable grounds for the importation of items which are not of British Empire manufacture or production, such remission will be granted. But we do know that at the present time we can import goods freely from either Great Britain or other British Empire sources, or from other soft currency areas, or from dollar areas if dollars are available.

This Bill is to encourage people to set up industries. It seems we should go a step further by helping them to buy wherever they can get their plant at the cheapest price. I have quoted in this Council figures showing that in Japan and Germany certain articles can be purchased cheaper than from the United Kingdom. I am not thinking of the dollar areas, for which there is this difficulty of obtaining currency. There are other sources, soft currency areas, where goods are obtainable at a cheaper cost. It seems to me that the whole of this clause should be deleted from the Bill, and one should be free to import goods and be allowed remission

of Customs duties on those goods irrespective of their origin. If dollars are available and the goods from the dollar areas are cheaper, those persons should be permitted to buy from those sources. I therefore move the deletion of proviso (a) in clause 6 and support the amendment of the hon. Member for Eastern Demerara to reduce the ten-year period to five years.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY & TREASURER: We must not forget that we are working under a reciprocal British preferential tariff. I do not want to raise a debate on the preferential tariff, but we are working under such a tariff with the United Kingdom and Canada. When we introduce a Bill of this nature we must provide some kind of limitation which, although it does not entirely exclude benefits from non-British preferential sources, maintains what that tariff is intended to produce. I do not wish to enter into a debate on preferential tariff. This clause certainly gives a certain amount of leeway.

Dr. JAGAN: I regret I cannot agree with that argument. The whole object of this Bill is not in respect of tariffs but to encourage industries. If we are to do that we should allow persons to buy from the cheapest places. Does it follow that if a person can get a bottle plant from Germany at half the price of one from the United Kingdom he must buy from Germany and pay the full rate of tariff" as applicable to a foreign country of origin? It would be preserving the preferential tariff but not encouraging industry. If we are to encourage industries we must think of British Guiana and not of British Empire sources and of trying to maintain existing industries of Great Britain and other British Empire countries. We require development of British Guiana. Let us try to develop it by encouraging goods from the cheapest sources to this country.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY & TREASURER: What about the preference on some of our exports?

The CHAIRMAN: What about sugar? They may argue that they are not going

to give preference on sugar. It hits the other way too.

Dr. JAGAN : If you want to have a whole debate on that I am quite prepared to do that. I know the hon. Member would like to make a statement about sugar, but on this question I am dealing with the specific issue of the development of this country, and I am not concerned at the moment with protective tariffs.

Mr. FERREIRA : For the benefit of the hon. Member who has just taken his seat I may state that we are preferentially bound up with the Ottawa Agreement, and have to think along the lines of Commonwealth planning. I fully agree that this clause should be maintained. I take it that the hon. Member for Eastern Demerara has withdrawn the amendment of 10 years to 5 years, in which case the clause will be what I suggested in the first case.

Mr. WIGHT : I would have thought that paragraph 5 of Your Excellency's Message covered entirely the whole question raised by the hon. Member. Paragraph 5 seems to set out the reasonable grounds upon which action may be taken and a period of concession given. It seems to state exactly what are the reasonable grounds which may be accepted. One can quite appreciate if an American company came down here bringing its own equipment, that that would be reasonable ground for allowing exemption. Similarly, if a company came from Japan or Germany, or even Russia, it would probably come in on the same terms.

Clause amended by the deletion of the words "or modernisation".

Dr. JAGAN : I wish a vote to be taken on the deletion of proviso (a).

Proviso (a) of clause 6 put, and the Committee divided and voted as follows :—

For — Messrs. Luckhoo, Morrish, Smellie, Peters, Kendall, Debidin, Thompson, Ferreira, Roth, Raatgever, Wighf, Capt. Coghlan, Dr. Singh, the

Financial Secretary and Treasurer, the Attorney-General and the Colonial Secretary — 16.

Against — Dr. Jagan — 1.

Motion "That proviso (a) stand part of the Bill" adopted.

Clause 6, as amended put, and agreed to.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY & TREASURER : In view of the amendment of clause 6, I ask that clause 4 be recommitted so as to alter the Schedule which contains the words "or modernisation" appearing in the last line of the list of goods in the declaration in the Second Schedule.

The CHAIRMAN : We have not come to that yet.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY & TREASURER : But it is in connection with clause 4.

Mr. DEBIDIN : I do not think the Schedule should be recommitted. We agree that this be left to the discretion of the Executive Council. It is not necessary to put it here. I feel that is a matter so elastic —

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY & TREASURER : I do not think the hon. Member heard what I asked. The words "or modernisation" appear in the Second Schedule and I merely ask for the deletion of these words from that Schedule as they have been deleted from the main Bill

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL : I ask also that the figures "1950" in the Second Schedule should read "1951".

Mr. DEBIDIN : I move that an additional clause be inserted in the Bill as clause 9 which should read as follows :

"That a statement of the licences granted and the Customs duties and tax remitted shall be laid over in the Legislative Council once every six months."

In moving this additional clause I feel that effect would be given to the debate and also to the fact that this Council has been quite willing to vest the Executive Council with full discretionary power under this Ordinance. It is a matter which is wide, as the hon. the Financial Secretary himself has to admit in so far as interpretation of certain terms in this Bill is concerned, and I feel sure that Members of this Council as a whole must be interested in the development of the Colony, in what new industries are going to be formed, and to what extent the Principal Ordinance and development are tending, and what shape they are taking. I feel sure this is a reasonable request for such a clause, which seeks to give us an opportunity to take the fullest interest in what is going on with development. Six months is a long term and it may be within three months.* We are satisfied to have a statement of the licences granted and the import duties and taxes remitted under the Ordinance laid over so that we may have full appreciation of what is being done. There may be times when we may not agree to certain concerns having the remission or that other concerns which are knocking at the door should be debarred from having the licence, or better facilities under the Ordinance given to them. I feel we of this Council who are not Members of the Executive Council are entitled to this reasonable measure I am moving.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY & TREASURER: I do not think the hon. Member need have any fear. Every year we lay over a Return of Remission of Duties by the Governor in Council, and I have no doubt whatever that the licences granted, or an exemption list will be laid. To suggest that we should include in the Ordinance a section directing that the Governor in Council lay on the table such a statement, I think, is going a bit too far. The hon. Member should accept the assurance that the licences would in due course be laid with the schedule of remission of duties on the table, but to make it a clause in the Bill is a bit absurd.

Mr. DEBIDIN: I would like to say that we do not have any fear in what has to be done; otherwise we would not have passed

the Bill. I want it to be understood what is the reason for it. This is to let us be *au fait* with what is taking place. I can see that in the next few years we will have much interest so far as development is concerned. We want to be informed on a definite Ordinance as it progresses every six months. I do not see anything unreasonable about that. It is not compelling the Executive Council to do anything. If they do so every year what is the fear or objection in giving it every six months?

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY & TREASURER: I have not said a word about fear or objection. I say it is being done now every year.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I do not relish the idea of putting it in the Ordinance itself. So far as this Council is concerned information of that nature will be communicated to the Council. The hon. Member's point of view and desire is that periodically, once in every six months, the information should be laid on the table of the Council; I do not think it is desirable to include it in the Ordinance itself. After all the Legislative Council would be entitled to receive the information.

Mr. DEBIDIN: I am surprised at the speech of the hon. the Attorney-General because, as a member of the legal profession, he is fully aware of the sanction of law — that if something is made law it has to be done according to law. It is not a question of choice or the will of any person. I feel sure that there is more firmness in something that is made statutory than just a mere promise by word.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I would remind the hon. Member that there are important things built upon convention and custom which are not found in any written Statute, but they are honoured nevertheless.

Mr. DEBIDIN: This is a case in which custom cannot develop into an act.

Mr. WIGHT: If the opportunity is not provided at any time by Government, it is within the power of the hon. Member, or any hon. Member, to ask a question

about it. It would save a lot of unnecessary printing of blank returns. We frequently see such blank returns published in the *Gazette* with the word "Nil". It would be necessary to insert a proviso to the effect that if no licences are issued for six months no returns would be published. It seems to me that an undertaking to publish the returns will serve the purpose, and one could easily verify them from the report of the Commissioner of Lands and Mines. Members could even ask questions annually.

Mr. DEBIDIN: When there is no statutory provision Members could ask for the information at any time — perhaps once every two months — but if there is a statutory obligation we would know that the information would be forthcoming, and there would be no necessity to ask questions. If returns are published with the words "Nil", "Nil", that would be information. We would know that no development is taking place.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member can always get the information when he wants it. There would be no obstacle whatever. I see no point in encumbering the law.

Mr. DEBIDIN: I am going to rely upon the undertaking given generally, and I will exercise my right very frequently to elicit the information.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member can be assured that Government will be only too pleased to give him the information.

The Council resumed.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I move that the Bill be now read a third time and passed.

Mr. WIGHT seconded.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a third time and passed.

VENN COMMISSION REPORT

The Council resolved itself into Committee to resume consideration of the following motion by the COLONIAL SECRETARY:—

"That, this Council approves of the action taken and proposed on the Report of the Venn Commission as indicated in His Excellency the Governor's Message No. 4 of the 26th of September, 1950."

Mr. DEBIDIN: May I ask whether the Clerk of the Council has given the necessary information as to whether or not we have considered Recommendation 21?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, we did debate it but we did not come to any decision about it. We will come back to it.

Recommendation 29. —

29. Ordinance should be passed to provide for the clearance of all "ranges" and the re-housing of their occupants by the end of 1953. Pending demolition, defective ranges should forthwith be rendered weather-proof to the satisfaction of the Medical Department. (Chapter XVI, para. 38 — Page 124 of Report).

While fully sympathising with the desire to improve housing conditions on sugar estates and in rural areas generally, Government does not feel that it would be practicable to legislate for the clearance of all ranges and the rehousing of their occupants by the end of 1953. Full powers already exist under the Building By-Laws, 1911, and the Public Health Ordinance, No. 15 of 1934, to close any range or building which is insanitary or otherwise unfit for human habitation and these provisions will be enforced to the fullest practicable extent.

Under By-Laws 36 of the Building By-Laws, where a building is certified to be unfit for human habitation, the Local Authority may, unless cause is shown otherwise, declare the building unfit for human habitation and direct that it shall not be inhabited.

Under sections 78 to 81 of the Public Health Ordinance, where a building has been inspected by the local sanitary authority and is found to be in such a state as to be a nuisance or injurious to health, a notice may be served on the occupier or owner requiring him to do what is necessary to abate the nuisance. If he fails to comply, he may be summoned before a Magistrate who may make an order for dealing with the nuisance or prohibiting the use of the

building if he adjudges it unfit for human habitation.

Under section 138 of the Public Health Ordinance, where a building is in a ruinous state or dangerous to persons, the local sanitary authority may serve a notice on the owner calling on him to take down, secure or repair the building, within a specified period. If the owner does not comply within such period, the local sanitary authority has power to perform the necessary work itself and recover the expenses incurred by execution against the lot or land with the building thereon.

Many "nuclear" workers are already provided with reasonably satisfactory accommodation, while the rehousing of the "extra nuclear" workers must be considered in relation to housing conditions in the rural areas in general. Conditions are far worse on many of the abandoned sugar estates than on the estates still in operation. Housing schemes for "extra nuclear" workers will be financed from the Sugar Industry Welfare Fund and schemes to this end have been under consideration by the Welfare Fund Committee. One new housing scheme has already been approved, and several other schemes were started in anticipation of approval after it had been agreed in the Committee that claims could be submitted for any such work performed subsequent to the 1st January, 1947, when the Fund was first created. A notice has been issued informing workers of their rights under the Sugar Industry Special Funds Ordinance (No. 20 of 1949) and setting out the conditions on which they may borrow money, free of interest, to build houses on approved housing areas either (a) on sugar estates or (b) elsewhere. Provision is made for the payment of a grant on the final repayment of a loan.

The sugar estate companies have been carrying out a policy of re-housing workers for some time past and up to the 30th June, 1950, they had spent some \$1,476,000 on building houses for a total of 1,382 families of nuclear workers. In addition they have been making loans free of interest to workers to assist them to build their own houses on lots in housing areas approved by the Central Board of Health. The total amount outstanding on these loans at the 30th June, 1950, was 219,750 and at the same date approximately 1,300 houses had been built by workers with this assistance.

Dr. JAGAN: I feel that this matter of the ranges and re-housing on sugar estates should be viewed very comprehen-

sively. In the report of the Sub-Committee on the Ten-Year Development Plan there is a report by Dr. Giglioli on rural housing with reference to sugar estates. I refer to it now because I feel that something more tangible should be done in the interest of the people.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Sir, as Recommendation 30 also deals with rural housing I would suggest that we might deal with it together with Recommendation 29.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, I think they fit together. We will take Recommendations 29 and 30 together.

Recommendation 30. —

30.—*With an exception to be made in the case of nuclear schemes for certain types of worker now being adopted upon estates, Government should accept responsibility for the provision, either upon, or adjacent to the estates of all housing for the workers. Both schemes should be subject to Town Planning regulations. The principles of which we observe with satisfaction have recently been recognised in the Colony. (Chapter XVI, para. 54 — Page 127 of Report).*

As indicated above, housing schemes for "extra nuclear" workers are being prepared by the individual sugar estates and, subject to approval by the Sugar Industry Welfare Fund Committee and by the Central Board of Health, will be financed from the Sugar Labour Welfare Fund.

Dr. JAGAN: On sugar estates it is stated that there are about 11,500 families of whom 5,262 are considered to be essential workers, the remaining 6,000 odd being occasional or non-essential workers. While I appreciate the fact that these non-essential workers are not really contributing a great deal at present towards the development of the sugar industry I nevertheless feel that to house or tie them around the sugar estates is a short-sighted policy which will do this Colony no good in the long run. The sugar estate authorities have undertaken to house the nuclear workers by building small cottages or what are called two or three-apartment cottages, but in the case of the non-essential or occasional workers they are required to

build their own houses. I know as a fact that the Sugar Welfare Fund is being used to make loans to these non-essential workers for the building of their own houses, but I feel that the Committee responsible for the utilization of that fund has imposed certain conditions which are not readily acceptable to the people concerned. In the case of sugar estate lands a lease for 7 years only is given, subject to renewal for another period of 7 years, and a sugar estate worker who desires to build a house on estate land can apply for a loan from the Sugar Welfare Fund.

Mr. MORRISH: I believe that the term of the lease has been increased to 21 years.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: That is quite correct.

Dr. JAGAN: I am glad to hear that. I did not know there was a change in that policy, but while that is so I also know that in the case of workers who desire to live outside of sugar estate lands a similar lease for 21 years is required before loans are made available to them from the Sugar Welfare Fund. I know that there is great difficulty at present in getting leases for 21 years of land owned by private individuals, and I hope Government will look into the question of reducing the tenure of the lease in respect of non-sugar estate lands to a shorter period than 21 years. But my main point as regards housing on sugar estates is that Government should adopt some policy which would take into consideration the non-essential or part-time workers. If those people are tied around the sugar estates and as a result of the mechanization of the sugar industry there should be a substantial reduction of manual labour, those people would find great difficulty in obtaining a livelihood.

I have calculated that if lands which are available on sugar estates for the cultivation of rice and ground provisions were allocated to workers' families in equal amounts each family would get $\frac{3}{4}$ of an acre of rice land and $\frac{1}{4}$ of an acre of land for ground provisions. In view of the policy of the sugar estate authori-

ties to give lands to regular workers only, the part-time workers would be faced with the possibility of not getting any lands at all. The problem, therefore, is what will be the position of those occasional workers in the future, should there be either a drop in the production of sugar or, as a result of mechanization, less demand for manual labour? I think that some effort should be made to remove those casual workers from the neighbourhood of sugar estates to land settlements where they could obtain an adequate livelihood for their families and also produce more goods necessary for the improvement of the national income of this country. I know that when the Sub-Committee submitted the original draft of the Ten-Year Development Plan it was intended that Government should purchase some of those areas, and that Schoon Ord and Versailles were mentioned. It was stated that an area of about 200 acres would be handed over to Government at a nominal sum of \$1 per acre, but subsequently, I believe, that plan was abandoned.

According to Dr. Giglioli's report over 9,000 house lots are to be laid out on sugar estates. I am glad to hear that the leases will be for a period of 21 years, but I hope Government will also implement my motion which seeks to extend the application of the Rent Restriction Ordinance to the entire country, because instances have been brought to my knowledge in which attempts have been made to increase land rentals from the nominal sums of from 12 to 24 cents per month to \$1 per month. It seems to me that the correct policy would have been for Government to acquire those large areas of land which are being converted into housing settlements, and subsequently declare them as village districts. I believe the Venn Commission has commented on this phase of the matter in its report. I hope Government will not adopt the short-sighted policy of making available what I would regard as a waste of money — loans from the Sugar Welfare Fund to non-essential workers to build houses around the sugar estates. I think that money would be better spent if Government acquired lands outside the sugar estates and made loans to those

people to build houses on those settlements.

I know that Government contemplated the establishment of a land settlement scheme in an area on the Demerara river known as Lowlands, but I do not know whether it is proposed to proceed with that scheme. Many workers on sugar estates have come to me seeking financial assistance to enable them to move into other areas. Some of the workers at Ogle recently came to me with a request that Government should either make lands available to them or supply them with planting material so that they might settle on some of the abandoned lands on the East Bank. I feel that the Sugar Welfare Fund can be better utilized in those directions rather than in giving loans to workers to build houses on lands around or adjacent to sugar estates. Such a policy is merely providing a means of tying the workers around the sugar estates without making any long-term plan for the proper well-being of those people. I trust that before making any additional funds available from the Sugar Welfare Fund Government will give this matter very serious consideration and adopt some other policy for the betterment of the workers on sugar estates.

Mr. DEBIDIN: This question of housing on sugar estates is a very sore one with me. I have had to do with it very intimately on various occasions within the last 10 or 15 years. Officials have come to this Colony from time to time representing the Government of India. I wish to refer particularly to Pundit Hirday Nath Kunzru, Minister of State for the then Government of India, who visited this Colony in a more or less official capacity. I had the opportunity of accompanying him on his visits to various sugar estates, and I remember particularly our visit to Port Mourant, on the Courantyne, where, to my great dismay, we observed not only the bad housing conditions there but that the ranges were so low that the polluted water from flooded trenches over which the communal latrines were built entered the rooms of the people.

The CHAIRMAN: When was that?

Mr. DEBIDIN: Some time around 1944. As far as my information goes those conditions still exist, although there has been improvement in housing here and there. I know from personal knowledge what the conditions are at Plns. Enmore and Nonpareil. They are particularly bad at Nonpareil. One only has to go there during the wet season to realize the very serious conditions under which the people live. The contracts under which the immigrants were brought to this Colony specifically provided for free housing facilities as one of the amenities to which they were entitled. It is true that at the expiration of the five-year period of indenture, and after a further period of 5 years' service they were given a certificate of exemption from labour on a sugar estate, which entitled them to leave the estate, but no one can deny that under the Immigration Ordinance, Chapter 205, which still exists today, certain inducements were given those people to remain on the sugar plantations and continue service to the sugar industry. They remained and worked for generations. Unhappily there came a time after indentured immigration ceased, when the estate authorities checked up on the service being given by individuals, and those who were not giving reasonable service were given notices to quit the houses which they occupied.

I have given that bit of history in order to indicate the true effect of the recommendation of the Venn Commission. It is one which I believe the Commission thought out very carefully. It is clear, and it is an indisputable point, that the occupancy of a house after indenture ceased was regarded by the Court of Appeal as a tenancy at will under which an individual can be given a few hours' notice to quit the house, which had the effect of compelling the individual to quit the estate, because if he had to quit the house in which he lived he had to find somewhere else to live. There was a further stigma attached to the notice to quit the house, because when a person left an estate under notice to quit no other estate would accept him. That is a particularly cruel offshoot from the indenture system. It is clear that if workers are to be housed on sugar estates the con-

ditions under which they are housed must be completely safeguarded. If, as I have said, for any reason there is a notice to quit because the tenancy is one at will, then that person can be made to go overnight. The Court gives him a day to leave and take his belongings away from the estate. And so if houses are to be built with monies, whether from the industry's Welfare Fund which is provided by the United Kingdom Government or from the private funds of the sugar estates, and if that money has to be paid back to the Welfare Fund or to the plantation — I know as a fact and it has been admitted to me in the course of a conversation with the Commissioner of Labour that the people are not earning a wage from which they can save but are, perhaps, earning a living wage on which they eke out an existence — it seems to me, therefore, that it is going to be a very difficult thing for them to find the necessary savings from which to repay the amount advanced. The result of that would be, if over a period of years they have a loan of 200 to be repaid it follows that these people would be reindentured to their particular plantations, as far as I see the conditions of housing at the moment without any fixed control or rule. I do not want to be critical or to condemn the sugar plantations in respect of the useful work in housing which they are doing —

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I understand these loans are being made from Sugar Welfare funds.

Mr. DEBIDIN: I said so. Whether they are provided from that fund or from the sugar plantations' funds, the Venn Commission has recommended that legislation be enacted. My point is, unless that legislation is enacted with proper safeguards for the monies which are advanced to these people they might find themselves under an indentureship, whereby they are attached to the plantations permanently for life and it can be told to them "You owe us; if you do not pay us we would put you out or sue you", if the money is lent especially by the sugar plantation proprietors. So that feature of it comes in. I do not know—I

see the hon. the Colonial Secretary is anxious to say it is from the Welfare fund, but that will not last forever and the housing may have to be done through the instrumentality of the finances of the sugar plantation proprietors themselves. So I am making the point generally. I have made a study of what is taking place now on the various plantations. The areas which are being cleared for the housing of workers are outside of what is called "the plantation compound" which is usually known as the living quarter. I notice it is a far way from where they have to work. I will make this point on that — the distance which these people have to travel now to work—to come to the point that these people are going to be asked to erect their houses a greater distance away. It is true, it is a very useful thing, and I welcome it, that they should go under their own roof. I am in line with the Venn Commission here, but what are the safeguards which the general public should know and be able to take up here?

The CHAIRMAN: That Ordinance the hon. Member is referring to as being recommended by the Venn Commission—an Ordinance to make all sorts of provisions to safeguard the sugar workers in the occupation of the houses which are to be given them—I do not recall that.

Mr. DEBIDIN: Recommendation 29 states: "An Ordinance should be passed to provide for the clearance of all "ranges" and the re-housing of their occupants by the end of 1943". I am talking on the recommendation proper.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is interpreting that in a different way from that in which I interpret it. He envisages safeguards being put in the Ordinance.

Mr. DEBIDIN: What I am urging at this moment is the acceptance of this particular recommendation. I must say it is a peculiar finding about these recommendations of the Venn Commission. These recommendations, which I thought this Government would welcome, have not been welcomed and the others are left just like that. It seems to me that

we are making most of the useful work of the Venn Commission nugatory, and I am very much disappointed to see the manner in which we embrace the recommendations which are most important to the life of the people, those which go nearest to their living conditions, *viz.*—Wages Board — nothing is done; Contributory Pension Scheme — nothing. On this important and vexed question of housing, the Venn Commission's recommendation is thrown overboard. I want to know whether the complaint or suspicion that goes around that sugar is still powerful is not still good. I would welcome in this particular case legislation which will give a charter to the people of their rights. I took the pains to refer in this Council to their conditions before the Venn Commission Report, where at a moment's notice these people are told to go off the estate and they have to go. I had two cases in which I was personally engaged and I brought one to the attention of this Council. Mr. Seaford was a Member of the Council then and he offered to go into it — where a person did not work for a number of days through sickness and he was given notice to leave Pln. Vryheid's Lust. That person begged and did everything to remain on the estate, because he and his family for generations had lived there. He was born there and was then 31 years of age. He was taken to the Magistrate's Court after he resisted as much as he could, and an order was made against him. That was the precarious condition under which these people lived, and the point I am making is that they should have a definite charter providing definite security which we in this Council should provide for them, and the Executive Council and Government should provide for them. They should be able to say "We have got this not from the sugar producers but from the Government."

The CHAIRMAN: That is not the recommendation of the Venn Commission. What the Venn Commission said in effect was, "We recommend that a law be passed abolishing all ranges or pulling them down". The hon. Member has read my Message on the subject. The law exists already for dealing with every insanitary range. We have the legislation already and there is no need to pass one

on that. They say there should be re-housing. They did not recommend the enactment of a sort of housing charter principally for sugar workers. Sugar workers have no more right than any other class of workers to such treatment. They are in the fortunate position of being able under the Welfare fund to obtain what the rest of the rural population cannot get to the extent of loans and sites for houses. Sugar workers are better off in that respect than the rest of the rural population.

Mr. DEBIDIN: That is what it should be, because over a considerable number of years they were subjected to horrible conditions of living. Under indentureship there had been a definite obligation on the estates to house them.

Mr. MORRISH: To a point of information! The hon. Member may not know that the type of houses which existed on the sugar estates, the range, was forced on the estates by the Immigration Authorities. That was what the sugar estates had to build whether they wished or not.

Mr. DEBIDIN: I join issue there, though I cannot discuss it. I know the type of ranges built in the early stages. They were two-storeyed structures with the attic being the bedroom. We will not go into that. The fact is, they remain and are completely out of joint with what is called a decent and reasonable housing facility in this modern age. We find today there is a sufficiently strong claim by these people for the help they are getting. It is not something done for the other rural population; they stand out. You are reading this recommendation as though the word "and" after "ranges" is disjunctive. I say it is a conjunction.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: If the hon. Member refers to the Report itself, it is quite clear what the Venn Commission had in mind. They were merely thinking of clearing out the old ranges and providing new houses, and not offering a charter of rights to the workers. Paragraph 37 reads:

"We fully agree with the contention of the Sugar Producers' Association that the industry should no longer continue to be responsible for the housing of families other than those of their own "nuclear" labour force and we consider that this should be Government's responsibility. If energetically tackled in co-operation with the estates the problem should be solved in a comparatively short time, but meanwhile we feel that something should be done immediately to alleviate the conditions in the majority of the condemned ranges. As a temporary measure, until accommodation is available to rehouse their occupants, they should at least be made weatherproof. As the estates have an inherited moral, if not legal responsibility, they should be required by Government to effect immediate repairs."

Then follows the recommendation.

Mr. DEBIDIN: As a lawyer I cannot interpret this recommendation as being anything else, reading it by itself. "*An Ordinance should be passed to provide for the clearance of all "ranges" and the re-housing of their occupants by the end of 1953*". I cannot see. It is clear, there is the question of both the clearance of all ranges and re-housing to be provided for by the end of 1953 under an Ordinance.

The CHAIRMAN: You cannot make a clearance of the ranges unless there is somewhere else for the people to go. The two are inseparable.

Mr. DEBIDIN: I accept the compromise for the moment. The hon. Member for Central Demerara spoke of the term of occupation of any portion of land. If any regulation is made either by Ordinance or anything else for the re-housing of the people, I feel sure that sufficient security of continuance must take an important place in such regulation or Ordinance. I say an Ordinance should be passed, and they must be given above everything else that security from any influence which may be brought to bear by the management of the various estates in the form of forced labour. That is also a necessary ingredient of whatever protection is given to them, for if they are building houses where the estate-proprietors have control over the land the right

of possession should not be within the short period of five years.

The CHAIRMAN: Twenty-one years.

Mr. DEBIDIN: I would like to see that 21 years mentioned. We know it is a question of practice in law when a lease is given for 21 years it has to be advertised in the Official Gazette and it comes within all the provisions of a legal transport being passed to the individual. That is something which affirms the security.

The CHAIRMAN: I think there is a Bill to be introduced to make that perfectly clear.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The position is, that if the sugar estate leases are treated in that way the sugar estate workers or would-be tenants would be let in for considerable expense by way of advertisement fees and so on. It is proposed to introduce a special Bill in this Council which will relieve them of those fees by introducing some other procedure. I am sure the hon. Member will welcome the Bill when it comes forward.

Mr. DEBIDIN: I do not follow the purport of that Bill. I am hearing it for the first time. If the Bill contemplated is for fees or something else I am going to ask — and it would certainly curtail much of my argument — that it be made the instrument for containing all these necessary protective ingredients in the interest of the workers.

The CHAIRMAN: The sugar worker would get a lease for 21 years. The security of the lease would depend on its terms. He cannot get any more security than any other inhabitant. The security lies in the lease itself, not in the law.

Mr. DEBIDIN: I am glad to hear that. There is one point which can be made. The leases will embrace to my mind, as I see it is being done on the plantations, the "extra nuclear" workers. What is the position of the workers who are "nuclear" workers and are to be provided with housing accommodation? What is the security of tenure? It seems to me,

if the original Bill were put forward in the spirit of this recommendation it would take care of re-housing on the sugar plantation for the "nuclear" workers and those who will be given free houses, and only under certain conditions they would be asked to leave because at the present moment they can be given a day's notice and they have to get lock, stock and barrel, off the estate.

The hon. Member for Central Demerara spoke of the extension of the Rent Restriction Ordinance. Doubtless he had in mind the question of security of tenure for these people. I moved in this Council some time ago a motion asking for security of tenure for these people, immediately after the said incident I referred to at Vryheid's Lust. That is something which needs to be taken care of. It is no use referring to two old Ordinances which are observed more in the breach than in the letter. One of those two Ordinances is 40 years old and its provisions never seem to be operative. Had they been exercised I am positive we could not have had in our midst the ranges which had to be condemned by the Venn Commission in the way they were. I see much point has been made about your Message dealing with the various recommendations about these two sections, but I regret to say it would not mean much to this big issue, and those sections for all purposes are innocuous and may or may not be carried out. As I said before, and as I see happening on the estates, the houses are being built right outside the sugar estates. Possibly they may say they are for "extra nuclear" workers and should be put near to but outside the plantations. It does seem to me that on most of these estates unless they are going to pay for the extra time to get to work, a greater imposition is going to be placed on these people being so far from where they are working. Most estates, I knew, provide travelling facilities, a small train or punts to take them aback. This may be a matter of internal adjustment and need not be laboured here.

But I want to wind up on this question of housing. I wish to make this very categorical statement. I am

not at all satisfied with the progress of work done on the sugar plantations. It is no use to say that over a million dollars has been spent or so many houses had been put up, when as a matter of fact a large percentage of the population of the estates entitled to housing are living in squalor and conditions not conducive to the well being not only of themselves but the children who are to take their places in the world. It seems to be a sad commentary not only on the sugar plantations but on us to know that such conditions can exist so near the city in places where we should not expect them. It is no use to say an effort is being made. That effort has got a lot of leeway to make as very little has been done comparatively speaking, and now there is big development, thanks to the United Kingdom Government for its support of this Welfare fund. It seems we must get on with the job much faster in the interest of the people, and we ought not to be proud of the progress made at the moment. I hope it is not so, that in the mechanization of the industry it is an attempt to slow down this particular thing of re-housing and pulling down all the ranges immediately.

The CHAIRMAN: They have up to 1953

Mr. DEBIDIN: That is not far off. Nevertheless, I am thinking of those ranges which are very bad, and the conditions which are very bad. I would like to see something done and not wait until 1953 to do what work is necessary. What I am thinking is that so far as general conditions are concerned something must be done. I put it at that and leave it at that.

Mr. MORRISH: I would just make one or two very brief comments on this subject. In regard to the question of how quickly the ranges would come to an end on sugar estates, which is a thing we all desire to see, the sugar estates never wanted the ranges but they had to put them whether they wanted them or not. The question is how quickly they would get rid of them. That is almost entirely in the hands of the worker himself. The Sugar Estate Welfare Fund incidentally is not controlled by the sugar industry but it has representatives on

that committee which operates the whole fund, and the speed with which these old ranges will disappear depends on the speed with which the people, who wish to settle themselves in these "extra nuclear" areas, make application to the Fund for loans. I can assure hon. Members there is no shortage of sites for them. It does not seem to be very clear to certain Members of Council that housing, even in respect of the nuclear workers on the sugar estates is housing which is attached to a job. If a man no longer wishes to continue to work on a sugar estate he cannot be expected to be housed rent free for the rest of his days; he must of necessity vacate that house.

We have been told that people are put out at a day's notice. I am surprised to hear that. I do not deny that there were times when that did happen, but I think it is incredible that such a thing has happened this year. It is very many years since I heard of such a thing. The hon. Member, who has just taken his seat, said that nothing much is being done and the housing is going on very slowly. He also said it is no use saying we are spending over a million dollars on this and that. I suggest that the fact that the cost of "nuclear" housing on sugar estates is going on to the extent of \$1¾ million, I admit, is an appreciable effort. I am sorry I do not have the figures as to how many "nuclear" houses have been built, but on the East Bank, Demerara alone it has got on to close on 300, and I do not think that is a small effort at all. I think that is very appreciable. The hon. Member also made reference to what may be interpreted as an obligation — the fact that an individual was indentured to a sugar estate carried with it a perpetual right of being housed during his lifetime. I do not know whether that is so or not.

Mr. DEBIDIN: I did not put it exactly in that form. I think I used the phrase that they have at least a strong moral right.

Mr. MORRISH: On that score there may or may not be such right, but it may interest the hon. Member to know that it is definitely understood that, where it is so desired, a male or female resident,

who came to the estate from India as indentured to the estate, and who is at present living and is presently provided with housing accommodation on the estate, and the descendant of an East Indian born in India or on the estate, who is 60 years of age and has been living on the estate for 25 years in the housing accommodation provided by the estate, will be welcome to live there for the rest of their lives without any charge.

Mr. DEBIDIN: That is very good.

Mr. WIGHT: I need not say much. It seems that Government's policy on this matter is really implemented by the hon. Member for Eastern Demerara. He deprecates the fact that sufficient progress has not been made and not as fast as he would desire, but I would like to draw his attention — and I think he would appreciate the fact — that the only point in this particular paragraph on which I would like to comment is the fact that the Commissioners should fix a period of time stating that everything must be completed in 1953. It seems to me that they had no doubt. It was very patent in their comment. We had just been shown the danger of being dogmatic as to time in history or the time of any future progress. Surely they could not have envisaged the fact that there would not be an regulations restricting material production. Surely to be precise it must be subjected to anything which may come on in the meantime. Surely they did not envisage that we are on the verge of a war when they fixed the period of 1953. War may break out in the immediate future and you cannot expect to make further progress. It seems to me that was the danger, and that is my only criticism I desire to make on that particular part of the Report. They might easily have come to the same conclusion with the same effect and left out the fixation of period of time.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I should like to deal with one point raised by the hon. Member for Central Demerara. He is anxious about the availability of land in the immediate vicinity of the sugar estates, and his

idea is that the houses for the "extra nuclear" workers should be transferred and put in other parts of the country. That would be by no means easy of operation. But on the other hand, the hon. Member for Eastern Demerara seems anxious that they should not be too far from the sugar estates because of the difficulty of getting to work. As regards this question of the availability of land for the subsistence of people living on the new settlements, that question has already occupied the attention of Government and you, Sir, yourself directed that it should be gone into, and the District Commissioners at the moment are carrying out a survey of available lands in the immediate vicinity of the proposed settlements. I agree with the hon. Member that it is most important that the people living on these settlements should have adequate areas of land for their subsistence somewhere in the vicinity.

On the question of the progress made in developing these village settlements for "extra nuclear" workers, I made the point when I moved the motion that there is a tremendous amount of work to be done before the actual houses are built — wells have to be sunk, roads have to be made, the lands have to be drained and levelled. I have a few statistics here of the progress made: Settlement areas already developed cover 756 house lots already completed and ready for building operations; settlement areas in course of development — where development is in progress — the house lots cover 2,913; settlement areas to be developed, that is areas for which plans have been already made, cover 1,044 house lots. Therefore, I think, it cannot be correctly contended that nothing is being done.

Dr. SINGH: I would like to allay any doubts in Members' minds as to the term of the lease. It is to be 21 years and can be renewed for 21 years. As to the question of the "extra nuclear" workers it all depends on the Bill that is in draft, because we are quite ready to advance the money, but we want to be sure how to give the money so that we will be safeguarded. We must have

some sort of authority. That question came up only yesterday at our meeting. We are now hoping that Government will introduce the Bill so that we can go ahead advancing the money.

Dr. JAGAN: I think the building of houses should not be the only consideration so far as the workers are concerned. The hon. the Sixth Nominated Member mentioned that he could not recall when workers were evicted from estates houses in the recent past.

Mr. MORRISH: To a point of correction! At a day's notice!

Dr. JAGAN: I can remind the hon. Member that during the last strikes we had before the Venn Commission came, the workers who were on strike were given notice to leave the houses they occupied, and when they did not leave they were taken before the Magistrate. Merely building houses without giving some necessary security is not enough. I have before me an agreement. I do not know if that is the agreement to be entered into, but I would like to read one clause in order to get some information. This is an agreement to be signed with Ogle Estate Limited by the workers there. "...not to house any person warned off the estate or permit any such person to enter, reside or remain on the house lot or house". I do not see why it is necessary to restrict the rights of persons in this clause. As you know, at the present time the sugar estate workers cannot meet their Union leaders on the estate.

Mr. MORRISH: That is quite incorrect. The Trade Union leaders, at least on one estate to my knowledge, live on the estate.

Dr. JAGAN: So far as the hon. Member's reference is concerned, that is his estate. We do know that as the result of the last strike six persons were given trespass notices by those estates controlled by Bookers. Even in my own constituency I cannot go into the estates, and there is now a trespass damages claim for \$500 pending in the Supreme Court. I am speaking from knowledge. These factors are important in the life

of the sugar estate worker. Merely to give him a house is not enough. There is one other point mentioned, the question of the demolition of those houses recommended by the Venn Commission. It points to the fact that the Sanitary Authorities are not doing their work on the sugar estates, and I do not see anything said in Your Excellency's Message about the provision of more Sanitary Inspectors. It seems that if proper sanitary conditions are to be maintained on the sugar estates we have to provide least 10 or 12 more Sanitary Inspectors.

With reference to the house lots for these "extra nuclear" workers I am not saying that no work is being done. What I am saying is, that we are now giving these people a 21 years' lease providing them with security, and I hope the condition I have just read in that agreement will not be in the lease so that workers can have free and unfettered use of the land. It seems to me that the Government should look at this matter from a long term point of view. We know of the recent case of Campbellville, where the lands are leased to the workers at a small rental. Now that Government intends to purchase the lands in order to give those people security of tenure, Government is being asked to pay an exorbitant sum of money. In the same way after the first 21 years have expired the estates may demand exorbitant sums of money either from the workers themselves or from the Government, should the Government desire to purchase the lands. I feel that some provision should now be made to allow these workers to own these lands automatically after a period of over 20 years. By some arrangement that can be done. I do hope Government would look into that matter also.

Dr. SINGH: On a point of explanation! I think my friend is very anxious. He should wait until the Bill is introduced and then use his cannon.

Dr. JAGAN: The main point of my whole argument with reference to this question of housing is that the worker should be considered in all aspects of his life. What is to happen to him after he is housed? Merely giving him a house over his head and nothing in his belly is not enough. That is the whole consideration. I remember reading in this Council the report of Dr. Nieuemark, an admirable paper which he presented to the Caribbean Commission, in which he mentioned the question of the cost of production. Not only should you tie the workers around the estates but you should think of the welfare of the workers who have to be tied around the estates. These workers may be tied there so as to provide cheap labour for the estates. If there is a strike there would be a pool to draw upon. But that would not be in the interest of the workers or of the country as a whole. That is why I place emphasis on that aspect of the matter. I do know the Sugar Welfare Committee can provide the funds, but to plan for the workers demands a comprehensive view of the whole matter.

Mr. DEBIDIN: May I move an amendment that the original recommendation be accepted and made effective?

Government's action on Recommendation 29 agreed to.

The Council resumed and adjourned to Thursday, 29th March, 1951, at 2 p.m.