

## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

FRIDAY, 2ND MARCH, 1951.

The Council met at 2.00 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. Dr. J. B. Singh, O.B.E. (Demerara-Essequibo).

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

The Hon. T. Lee (Essequibo River).

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

The Hon. V. Roth, (Nominated).

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

The Hon. G. A. C. Farnum, O.B.E., (Nominated).

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

The Hon. J. Fernandes (Georgetown Central).

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. J. Carter (Georgetown South).

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

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

The Clerk read prayers.

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Thursday, the 1st of March, 1951, as printed and circulated were taken as read and confirmed.

### ORDER OF THE DAY.

#### ESTIMATES, 1951.

The Council resumed consideration of the following motion by the FINANCIAL SECRETARY & TREASURER:—

That, this Council approves of the Estimates of Expenditure for the service of the Civil Government of the Colony for the year ending 31st December, 1951, to be defrayed from the annual revenue of the year and other resources of the Colony and from loan funds.

The Council resolved itself into Committee to consider the draft Estimates for 1951 and the Report of the Finance Committee thereon.

#### COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE — DEVELOPMENT COMMISSIONER.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for New Amsterdam was about to speak when we adjourned yesterday.

Mr. KENDALL: I would like to make a few observations which, I believe, would be applicable under this Head. I am a bit worried over the development programme of this country, and I am wondering whether Government has any fixed policy as regards the

making of British Guiana self-sufficient in respect of certain commodities we produce and consume locally, and we have employed experts towards this end to whom are being paid large salaries which, I feel, should go towards making this country what we want it. There are times when I feel, that British Guiana is becoming a training ground for persons who, after receiving that training, accept jobs in other countries on promotion, and we are just left with blue-prints and other documents as a legacy for the money we have spent in having them here. I think that accounts for the lack of continuity of policy which, to my mind, is not doing this country any good. It is well to hear you say that we should produce this thing and that thing in order that British Guiana can be self-sufficient, but since I have joined this Council I am yet to see Government giving those persons who are willing to produce the necessary protection against foreign competition. In a country which can produce and be self-sufficient the people who produce are not protected. I am reminded of the pineapple industry. You were not here, Sir, but I remember in 1931. I went up the Demerara River and saw that canning plant in operation. I also saw the article produced on the market, but after a time it had to go out of existence because it was unable to compete against Singapore pineapple. If the policy of Government is to protect these pioneers, then whenever an industry is started in this country it should be Government's duty to see to it that similar imported articles are restricted in order that that industry can flourish.

Under this Head which we are discussing now, I see that although the Ten-Year Development Plan has been reviewed and the allocation revised, still the Head under which the Plan is to be administered has increased. I have no charge against the gentleman concerned. I, too, like other Members regard him as a very good man, but it is only unfortunate that he came here for the Control Department and the person whom he succeeded there has been sent back to that Department, and he is taken to another Department. If it is the wish of

Government, that that Department is to be strengthened by a man like Mr. Fletcher and yet he is to be supplanted by the present holder of the post and taken somewhere else, that worries me. That is why one wonders if it is not the policy of Government to put in the thin edge of the wedge by bringing him in here and after a few months transferring him to another Department to which, perhaps, he never anticipated he would go. I would like to see in the future development of this country that Government see to it that something is done whereby the livestock industry can be improved on our coastlands instead of our importing Australian meat into this country, despite the fact that British Guiana has similar advantages as Australia. Our crops are tropical in this country. We talk about the great potentialities of British Guiana, but there is no machinery set up whereby the people can be protected against outside competition. No country can improve if it has to compete against countries which, due to experience and protection, have been able to reach a standard of efficiency which that country is unable to reach in its infancy. If this Department is to remain and carry on its functions, Government should see to it that we improve our minor industries in order to reduce the importation of certain articles and find more avenues for our boys and girls and even those adults who are unemployed presently.

Another observation I would like to make is this: I think it is a mistake when we have highly paid officers on so many committees and the real work they are employed to do is overlooked. Under this Head I may observe that only yesterday I saw the Economic Adviser and Development Commissioner, is to be Chairman of a Committee to consider the reorganisation of our education system.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not understand the hon. Member. I think I informed the Council that the Chairman of that Committee is the Education Adviser to the Comptroller for Development and Welfare.

Mr. KENDALL: Thank you, Sir.

But he has to do with Atkinson Field and the Courentyne road scheme. However good these Departments are it is development I appreciate, but it is not the development we are thinking about, the development, I am satisfied, that can be handled by the people locally. When Colonel Spencer was appointed here, I think it was the hon. the Financial Secretary who told us he had too much to do and he would be very glad to have a man like Colonel Spencer to assist him, but I still agree with the hon. Member who said that the hon. the Financial Secretary and Treasurer has a knack of screening Heads of Departments. I agree that in Finance Committee few Heads of Departments to whom we pay large sums were able to give answers to questions we put to them, although they concerned their Departments and they should be conversant with them. We are paying them to look after their Departments and if we are to have the hon. the Financial Secretary protecting them in the manner he has done for the last three years since I have been in this Council, then I am afraid we are paying people for work they are unable to accomplish. Most of us are satisfied that the local men are conversant with the affairs of this country and, I think they are interested in its progress as they have nowhere else to go to by way of promotion, as it is not seen that people from here are often promoted to other places.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not think the hon. Member is right. I may refer him to Chief Justice Mr. Jackson and the Commissioner of Lands and Mines, Jamaica, who are Guianese. Those are only two I may quote.

Mr. KENDALL: I am glad you have touched that point. In the very Jamaica Mr. Bustamante said he did not want him.

The CHAIRMAN: That is one reason why I mentioned it! (Laughter)

Mr. KENDALL: Yes, Sir, that is why most of them are thinking nearer home. We would like our men to receive promotion here and to remain here and

develop the country because they do not have it easy abroad. The points I have advanced as regards the development of this country, especially where minor industries are concerned, are mainly on rice. Take for example the Courantyne. We are unable to carry on our livestock industry in a manner to bring about a balanced economy in that area, and for that reason everyone is forced to plant rice. There is not enough land for cattle, and we find that we have to depend on condensed milk and Australian meat. So I sincerely hope that if we are talking of the future development of British Guiana it would not be only talk, but that it would materialize in a manner which would help the country, and we expect Government to pursue a policy along those lines.

Mr. FERNANDES: I would like to support the hon. Member for New Amsterdam on two points — one is the recommendation for consideration of Government that local industries be protected whenever necessary, and the other is that, as far as possible, Government should try to avoid senior officers serving on too many committees. If I remember rightly, I think, the Director of Agriculture served on something like 22 to 23 committees at one time.

Dr. JAGAN: I, too, would like to join with the hon. Members in this issue of protective tariffs for local industries. I know that in these days the tendency is to remove all tariff barriers. In the West Indies, for instance, we are thinking of a Customs Union whereby tariffs would be eventually removed, and we are also thinking of being able to sell and buy from those areas very freely. But I want to point out to Members of this Council that if we study any country we find that at one stage or another in their development protective tariffs had a lot to do with it. I am thinking particularly of the U.S.A. When the United Kingdom was, perhaps, the chief industrial country in the world and the U.S.A. was a country just growing up, they used to resort to protective tariffs and very high tariff barriers, which in fact are still there up to the present time. But in these days we in the



Colonies do not have any protection. In the case of the United Kingdom there are preferential tariffs, and in the case of the other exporting countries there are tariff rates which are somewhat higher than the preferential rates. I think the time has come when we must think of our own development here and develop our local industries, especially the secondary industries, because I feel that is the direction in which our development will first take place in British Guiana.

I know there is always a clamour for heavy industries to be set up in most countries. I can see that that is very far away in British Guiana. Bills have been introduced already in this Council for aid to pioneering industries which are to be set up in this country, but in many of those we would find that not many persons are to be employed. I have the case of the C.D.C. which came here and certain concessions were given to them—free duty on the importation of equipment, costly duty remissions, and certain concessions in the interior with reference to large tracts of land, etc. But when we analyse the whole aspect of it, all we find is that the C.D.C. in the case of the timber industry has merely purchased from the former employers and really has not supplemented it. It has only supplanted those who were there before. What we have to keep in mind is the small people's dairy industry, leather industry, and even preserves industry, condiments, etc. Those are the things which can be developed in this country. We are spending a lot of money on cottage industries and we have a man specially trained who is Head of the Social Welfare Department at the present time. Unless we can have some protection for those things, so long will our industries not be developed and also possibly in the long run help to increase the cost of living to the people in this country.

It is no use merely trying to import cheaper goods into this country because if the people do not have the money to buy those goods it does not matter how cheap they are. They are not going to be able to purchase them in the long run, and attempts must be made to find employment and produce those things right here. I do not see the necessity for im-

porting milk, meat, cheese, butter and other items which are now being imported in abundant quantities in this country. If any realistic policy is to be pursued, at least those items should be first looked after, and let this Department, if it is to be retained, concentrate its efforts in that direction for the immediate period of four or five years and not the long term period we are thinking of for the big and heavy industries which would develop the country. In a short term do not think of concentrating on big projects but on small ones which would help to develop this country.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY & TREASURER: I am very grateful and, I think the Council ought to be very grateful too, to the hon. Member for New Amsterdam for having directed the debate to a higher level than the mere personal issue which was raised when it first began; that is as regards the holder of this particular post. By virtue of his own remarks, followed by the last two speakers, I think that the case has been proven for this particular office. The need has been emphatically shown for it. In fact what was just stated by the hon. Member for Central Demerara is something along the lines I had intended to convey to the Council in regard to some of the functions of this particular office. Hon. Members have forgotten that when Government first urged the appointment of an Economic Adviser and Development Commissioner care was taken to point out that his functions would first and necessarily have reference to our own internal development plan—the administrative schemes which we have put together in a development plan as it now exists. Also it was emphatically stated he would work along the lines of industries outside the work Government itself is doing. I can tell hon. Members that when Colonel Spencer was here a very great deal of his time was spent in the original negotiations with Anaconda. A very great amount of work was done in laying down conditions and agreements under which that organization came to operate in British Guiana. It is true that we have lost Anaconda, but nevertheless had we secured their permanent work in this country a lot would have been due to the early planning in regard to the

agreements put in by the Economic Advisor, Colonel Spencer. Similarly Colonel Spencer had a lot of work to do with other interests. I remember the African Selection Trust, a large organization, that we had hoped would go in for industrial diamonds on a large scale, and very many other applicants and enquirers after development in this country passed through his hands.

To come back to the point made by the hon. Member for Central Demerara, I feel quite sure that a Development Commissioner when settled down would have to direct his energies along those lines. I agree with him that we must have more milk, and it would be that officer's duty to make it possible for Government to do that and to make that development possible. We were talking yesterday or the day before on this question of aerated drinks and local fruits and mining. I think all those things would come within the functions of the Development Commissioner. Hon. Members cannot expect officers of the Administration, like the Colonial Secretary and myself, or even the Governor, to undertake the detailed functions necessary along those lines. The hon. Member for New Amsterdam referred to the effort which was made by the late Mr. Pires in trying to start a pineapple industry in British Guiana. As far as I remember the real cause of the failure of that venture was not so much due to the fact that there was no protection as to faulty agriculture. I believe he did not take at the outset expert agricultural advice as regards the soil and the type of fruit to be grown there. I am speaking subject to correction. Quite obviously, in a country like this to produce pineapples in tins for our own use it ought to need no protection at all. We should be able to grow them — and they do grow here well — without protection.

That brings me to the main point of the hon. Member's contention, and that is protection. That is a very difficult and contentious issue. It is clear that some industries in any country, especially those which desire to grow into an export industry, do need protection and must get it, but it may not always be to the country's advantage to indulge in wholesale protection of any industry that

has sprung up. How would hon. Members like our neighbours in Trinidad to start spending a lot of money on very expensive drainage and irrigation schemes, much more expensive than ours, and growing rice under a protective tariff against our rice when we can grow it more cheaply and economically? They would be wasting their substance on something that could be grown more economically elsewhere. Very many things have to be taken into account in an issue of that sort. We should have an officer who could give all those things his care and attention. I thank the hon. Member for having put up an argument which really strengthens, if it needs strengthening, the case for this particular office.

There were one or two other points mentioned in the course of the debate yesterday which I would like to touch on briefly. I would like to confirm what the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Raatgever, said. It is perfectly true that of his own choice Mr. Fletcher decided to remain in British Guiana. He had received a very tempting offer to go to some other place. It is most unfair for anyone to suggest that a job was being made for him here. He could have sailed at a moment's notice, but we are very glad indeed that he chose to remain here.

The next point is on the question of our Development Plan. I think I heard one Member say that it has been thrown overboard in view of certain remarks I have made, but if the hon. Member would read my Budget Statement carefully I am sure he would find that there is nothing whatever in that statement which justified such a remark. All I emphasized was that as conditions now indicate we need an immense amount of additional funds to carry out the Plan as it was first envisaged, and to carry out other schemes which we are aware are necessary and desirable, and consequently I put forward the view, which other Members have put before me, that we should have a system of priorities, and that we should make sure when we allocate money for a particular scheme that we have enough money left to carry it out.



I want to give a warning that we must not say there is no Plan, because if there is no Plan we cannot raise our \$10 million loan. The loan we propose to raise this year will be tied to the Plan we have put forward, and it is on that we go forward to get the approval of the Colonial Office and the capitalists in London to raise the money. If we have no Plan they would say we do not need the money. When we get the money we would be justified in selecting from time to time those schemes which seem to come first. That is all I tried to convey, and I again ask Members not to emphasize publicly that we do not have a Plan, or that we have thrown it overboard, because if that is so we would not get the money.

I had on my notes here a note to speak on the question of the necessity for the appointment of this officer, but I find I have covered the ground in dealing with the remarks of the hon. Member for New Amsterdam (Mr. Kendall). I only want to say that when I gave public evidence before the Constitution Commission the question put to me by Dr. Hinden with regard to this particular matter of development and how it should be achieved, was the one I found most difficult to answer, and I think I suggested to her that what I conceived as being very desirable was a sort of Standing Committee of the Cabinet, if we have a Cabinet, but with the Development Commissioner as its principal executive officer. She suggested to me that the Financial Secretary, from his very nature, was likely to be a person who would be too conservative and not willing to risk enough. I did say I was not that sort of person, but nevertheless the idea was quite sound that we should have someone who would take a broad view of the whole thing, who would take risks, perhaps, and who would not be tied to the activities of any particular Department and would thus look at the picture as a whole. I hope I have satisfied Members that this particular office is very important and one which we ought not to do without.

Mr. FERNANDES: I would just like to make a comment on one statement by

the hon. the Financial Secretary. I heard him say that the Development Commissioner would look into the possibilities of increasing the production of milk and dairy products. I thought that was the function of the Department of Agriculture and its Advisory Committee, but I find now it is the duty of the Development Commissioner.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY & TREASURER: Quite obviously each Department has its specialist function, and the Department of Agriculture must obviously take that matter up. What I was trying to convey was that the Development Commissioner must be the co-ordinator of all the functions. The production of milk might require much more than the work of one Department but the co-operation of three or four Departments. There should be at the top one man to guide the whole thing without interfering with the specialist.

Mr. DEBIDIN: I intended to comment in the same manner as the hon. Member for Central Demerara (Dr. Jagan) on the argument put forward by the hon. the Financial Secretary for the retention of not only the office but the officer in charge of this Department. I find his argument to be true to pattern. He makes out a case in which he emerges as a champion beggar. He has referred to the question of high level argument and used that in support of the need for this Department, but I wish to say in reply that we are dealing with the budget and trying to see where we could possibly make a saving, and that it is this very high level argument that is responsible for the low level standard of living of the people of this Colony. This high level argument has resulted in distress and over-taxation of our people.

He also said that the officer would co-ordinate the work of other Departments. It seems to me that the people do not know where to draw inspiration for development. There are so many Departments overlapping that we cannot attach responsibility to any particular Department for the development of our Colony. In this particular case I was at pains yesterday to point out that the officer in

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charge is no more qualified than I am or any other Member of this Council for that matter. I would like to see the Deputy President (Mr. C. V. Wight) in a position like that. He possesses legal qualifications and knowledge of the people, their needs, and the directions for development. It is extremely unfortunate that we have Departments manned by individuals who know so little of our Colony and who have to learn what is required for the advancement of British Guiana.

So far as development is concerned there are two statements I can make. One is that whatever development is being done up to the present seems to be only as regards agriculture. Other development is of such a nature that we can only wait and hope. While the hon. the Financial Secretary was speaking I glanced down the list of officers in the Department of Agriculture and I find that we have an Agricultural Economist. It seems to me that the post is going to be a sinecure, because whatever he has to do may be done by the Economic Adviser and Development Commissioner. Then we have a Chief Research Officer and a Livestock Officer who will take charge of what the hon. Member for Georgetown Central (Mr. Fernandes) has referred to — the development of the milk industry and the establishment of dairy farming. There is also a Marketing Officer, and there are other officers with technical ability. Some of them have been here very long. I am thinking of Mr. Cleare and others who have been here for several years, probably born here, and know much about the Colony and its development.

The point has been made that the Development Commissioner will be the officer who will try to negotiate with prospective companies for the development of industries in this Colony. All I know is that we have had this Department for many years, but I see no visible signs of development or any new industry. All we know of is the wooing of the Anaconda gold company, but whatever negotiations were made with the Anaconda Co. by the previous holder of the post, weren't the Financial Secretary, the Attorney-General and the Colonial Secretary together capable of carrying on those negotiations?

The CHAIRMAN: And the hon Member.

Mr. DEBIDIN: Perhaps. As a typical example of a mountain producing a mouse we recently had the Economic Adviser before the Finance Committee to put up argument for the erection of a drier at the Abary rice scheme. He produced figures and in the end the Director of Agriculture had to come to his rescue, because even if a drier may be necessary the mill has a limited capacity. What is required is additional boiling and drying facilities at the site of the mill which has a limited capacity. The Economic Adviser tried to convince us about something which he hardly did. It is true that some of our Heads of Departments are doing work other than what they should be doing, but if our Heads of Departments, most of whom are very technical men, were used in the capacity in which they are qualified I feel sure that the development of this Colony would be well taken care of, provided each Department is made responsible for the development in the particular field in which it functions.

I am thinking that what British Guiana needs at this moment for development is the encouragement of its population, which is fast becoming unemployed, to take up lands. As I have said before, we do not want to see Government in the role of a big landlord, but that lands should be sold to the people so as to provide an incentive to them to cultivate them on their own initiative. If there are 50 such people in one area there would very soon be a thriving village springing up, and a certain amount of prosperity in the country. There are vast areas of land on the banks of our rivers which are capable of being put into cultivation, but not the slightest thing is being done in that direction. It is no use saying that a few land settlement schemes have been established and that they are costing Government so much money. It will cost Government so much money if Government chooses to be a landlord. That is the nature of the land settlements. I strongly advocate, and I hope Government will realise the necessity for the substitution of a freehold type of land settlement for the present leasehold type.



Give the people the land and Government will see how much they would love to develop what they own. The land settlement schemes at Windsor Forest, Ver-  
genoegeen and Bush Lot have flourished because the people have been given the lands there, and they have had an incentive to develop them.

The CHAIRMAN: Then we have done something. The hon. Member says nothing has been done.

Mr. DEBIDIN: Those things were done 50 years ago and more. There was a report on land settlement which I have seen, and which was accepted as being an excellent report for the future development of our Colony, but within recent years Government has thrown that report overboard and introduced another in its place which advocated a leasehold type of land settlement. Government cannot therefore take credit for what has been done before. Let those who will form companies to develop wood pulp, cement and glass-making. Many industries have been sponsored by the C.D.C. in other countries where there are not, perhaps, as good facilities for development as there are in British Guiana. They have done so in Jamaica and Trinidad. Why has British Guiana been overlooked? British Guiana has been selected by the C.D.C. for the exploitation of those industries which our own people can look after themselves. What we want is development in the true sense. Let concerns which come in take up the triangular area of Torani—Canje—Berbice. Let them take up new lands and develop the rice industry in that area. It is one of the strongest reasons why there is no justification for this Department, that it is not based upon a realistic policy for the future development of this country, and for that reason I say that the post is a sinecure and a waste of public funds.

Dr. NICHOLSON. It is agreed on all sides that development is necessary, especially the development of agriculture and ancillary industries. But how are we going to develop our agricultural industries without a Development Commissioner? We have been hearing a lot about the advantages of dairy products, a cattle

industry, and things of that kind. We are all agreed about that, but how is it going to be done? First of all we must have a Soil Agronomist or Geologist to determine the suitability of the land for those agricultural pursuits. When that is done we have to bring in our Director of Public Works to look into the question of drainage and irrigation, and when that is done we bring in the Director of Agriculture. We must have all those things co-ordinated under one head. After all an agriculturist is a specialist. He may know how to produce beef cattle or cattle to produce milk, but he is not an economist. He would not be able to settle people on the land, which must be done by our Development Commissioner. It cannot properly be done by the Colonial Secretary or the Financial Secretary. All those ideas and activities must be co-ordinated under one head, and it seems to me that we cannot carry out our development programme in any particular without a Development Commissioner.

With respect to the officer in question, I have been associated with him from the time of his arrival in this country. I met him on the Central Commodity Control; I met him when we were examining profit margins, and I also met him last November when we were considering the question of cost of living allowances to the lowest paid Government employees. I have been struck by his wisdom and foresight, his impartiality and devotion to duty. I have always advocated that for any appointment local people should be first considered, provided they have the necessary qualifications. I am recommending this officer to Members of this Council as a man of sterling qualities. He has worked in Palestine; he is a legal man, and he has also worked as a Customs officer. He was associated with the development of minor industries in Palestine—just the sort of man we want, a man of many parts. He has carried our Commodity Control Department about which there were many complaints before he came to this Colony, and since his arrival the organization has worked smoothly with no less a body than the Chamber of Commerce. I really believe that we have the right sort of man for this office. We must have a Develop-



ment Commissioner, and I think we have got a truly wise and hard-working officer. That is my recommendation to fellow Members of this Council.

Mr. LEE: There is one point on which I would like to support the hon. Member for New Amsterdam (Mr. Kendall). It is that Heads of Departments have too many duties, and on that point the hon. Member was supported by the hon. Member for Georgetown Central (Mr. Fernandes). I would like to refer to the history of this office for the benefit of Members. When these Heads of Departments were Official Members of this Council the Elected Members preached that they should be kept in their offices to do the administrative work of their Departments so that progress can be seen in their administration. If the Head of this Department is being used on Committees that is not right and I ask you, Sir, to take note of that. The Heads of Departments should be kept in their offices in order that the policy of their Departments can be administered by them in such a manner as to be a credit to them, rather than having them put on Committees where, perhaps, their advice is the only requisite. May I ask that whenever it is possible and these Committees desire an officer from a Department that they make use of the Deputy Head or Principal Clerk of the Department as they are young men who will be learning and can report to the Head of their Department exactly what occurs. I ask you, Sir, to consider the question which has been raised and supported by Members of this Council.

Dr. JAGAN: This whole talk seems to have gone astray from the question of broad policy to the general question of development. I was told that when the Colonial Development and Welfare grants were being discussed in Great Britain the Government had a great deal of trouble to convince the Members in Parliament to vote those huge sums, because they were very reluctant to spend the money of the taxpayers of the United Kingdom on these various territories. Now that they have given the money of the taxpayers of the United Kingdom in Colonial Development and Welfare grants, I wonder if a true report has been given as to

the way in which those sums of money have been spent, and whether the people in Great Britain would be really satisfied if they knew the truth. I personally am not satisfied. We have a lot of people, a lot of Departments utilizing some of this money, and it is not going towards the real development of this country. The hon. the Financial Secretary mentioned a moment ago, and for which he was sharply criticized, about the Development Commissioner co-ordinating the activities of the Agricultural and other Departments on the question of milk production, cheese-making, etc. I know that when I was a student in the U.S.A. the Afghanistan Government used to give scholarships to students and the students went to the various Universities in the U.S.A. to study different aspects of agriculture and minor industries. Since the British have left India not too long ago the Indian Government has given hundreds of scholarships to students to go to Canada and the U.S.A. to study mining, refrigeration and all sorts of things. Apparently, so far as British Guiana is concerned all we need to do is to appoint a man to sit in an office and co-ordinate how butter and cheese are to be made, and how milk production is to be increased.

I would like Government to find out whether the services of the Agricultural Economist is really being utilized to the fullest extent. If we want to produce milk let us read the report of the Agricultural Economist on the cow-byre set-up at Windsor Forest. Let us set up such byres all over the country and put the Agricultural Officers in the various parts of the Colony to do some work instead of having them to walk around in collar and tie and write reports. We need people who are going to get down and do the job. We have had too many reports. Lately we had a Rice Commission from the U.S.A. Then we had the Manager of the Mahaicony-Abary Rice Scheme going to the U.S.A. Then we had to get two experts from the U.S.A. to advise us. Let Government study the report of those two gentlemen. It is only a rehash of the information already at the elbows of Government in the various files in the Agricultural Department. What does the Commission say? — You can

cultivate so many more hundreds of acres of rice at **Essequibo** provided irrigation and drainage is available. In other words, you can do so and so provided you have so and so. I can do that and any child coming out of school in the Sixth Standard can tell you that. We have had too many reports, too many advisers and too many experts. If we want to produce cheese, send someone to some place to study how to make cheese, and when he returns let Government set up a cheese factory, and let us give the product protection even if we have to protect our cheese against the cheese of the United Kingdom, New Zealand and Australia. I see the hon. the Financial Secretary is laughing about this, but I would like to see a man like Professor Arthur Lewis as Head of this Department. He is a practical man, a West Indian, and knows the problems and peculiarities of the people of the West Indies. He has written on the industrial development of the West Indies. I hope Government has a copy and will study it well. He suggests that we should copy the example of Puerto Rico

Mr. CHAIRMAN: He has just been put on the Colonial Development Corporation.

Dr. JAGAN: He is there but the C.D.C. here is run by Steel Bros., which is a different thing altogether.

The CHAIRMAN: That is not true.

Dr. JAGAN: Anyway I was mentioning the instance of Puerto Rico. There I can see the necessity of having a Development Commissioner, because they have taken a brilliant professor of the University to be at the head of the Development Department and given that Department \$20,000 odd. If the capitalist would not invest money in this country in the manufacture of cement or glass, then you should set about it and see how fast it can be done. What is the use of having this consolidating Department, and you have no money and no prospects for it. Is it mainly to co-ordinate work which should have been done by you, Sir, and other officers of Government? I do not see the necessity for it. We have too

much overlapping and too much waste of money in this Government. Mr. Huggins, who is now at the University College of the West Indies, was at one time Agricultural Economist of this country. He wrote a report saying about the people from Liliendaal to Bel Air that their chief means of livelihood, about 75 per cent. of it, came from dairy farming. But how do the people carry on dairy farming there? Those of us who drive along the East Coast road can imagine when there is a flood how those people have to take their cows on the Sea Wall, and when they stray they are impounded in Georgetown and the people have to pay \$4.00 per head to regain them. What is necessary is to give the people a communal byre. Give them facilities to improve themselves, to produce more milk and to make butter and cheese.

At the present time we are only talking about development, but as far as I can see, until we get a change of this Government, a change of the Constitution, which I hope will be very soon, we are not going to get any development of this country. All we are doing is to give sweet jobs to people, and these people are earning a good livelihood only to write a few reports and everything is satisfactory, but the people are not satisfied and will not be satisfied to see money being wasted, whether it is Colonial Development money or not. A lot of this money has been given to us as grants, and with these grants these Heads of various Departments have been set up, and the Colony is now saddled with these Departments. I think the time has come to call hal! and push them out.

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

For—Messrs. Luckhoo, Morrish, Carter, Smellie, Phang, Peters, Kendall, Fernandes, Farnum, Raatgever, Lee. Dr. Nicholson, the Financial Secretary and Treasurer, the Attorney-General and the Colonial Secretary—15.

Against—Mr. Debidin and Dr. Jagan—2.

Head passed as approved by the Finance Committee.



COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE --  
CONTROLLER OF CIVIL AVIATION.

Dr. JAGAN: Some time ago I asked a question in this Council and so far no reply has been given. That was in respect of the employees at the Base. I asked whether at the determination of the holding by the Americans of the Base, when the agreement was signed between this Government and the American Government for the taking over of the Base by this Government, there was a clause in the Agreement stating that the employees who were to be retained by this Government were to be paid at the same rate of pay to which they were accustomed before. That question has not been answered, and I do not know whether Government is willing to answer it now. I think it is unfair if an agreement was made and subsequently the conditions of that agreement are not carried out.

There was another issue with respect to a petition which I tabled in this Council with respect to the employees of the Base for what was called at the time "Back Pay." While they were employed by the Americans they were not paid the rates of wages to which they were entitled by American law and in respect of which the Supreme Court of the U.S.A. ruled that those people were covered by the Fair Wage Standard Act. I wonder whether Government did anything about that petition which had been placed by me in this Council. I remember the hon. Member for Georgetown South mentioned the case of a University student who is now pursuing a course in the United Kingdom and holds one of the posts in this Department. I am told that this person was a former civil servant and that he has been serving with the R.A.F. He is now getting a University degree and is seeking to come back to British Guiana and continue his employment with Government. In view of the fact that this person—his name is Hutton Griffith — has been getting training with the R.A.F. and has been specializing in Transport, I feel it would be a good gesture on the part of this Government to offer him one of the posts which, I am told, have become vacant

The CHAIRMAN: This Council

Chamber is not the place to advocate the claims of particular individuals in the Government Service. If that particular individual has the qualifications that the hon. Member referred to and desires to be employed in the Service the proper procedure is for him to apply for a job. I do suggest if hon. Members are going to stand up in this Council to advocate the cause of individuals for employment in the Service, it is quite improper. I quite agree that if the hon. Member is interested in this individual he can tell him what to do, but this Council is hardly the place to advocate such claims.

Dr. NICHOLSON: It is very unfortunate that the name has been mentioned, as the matter has been discussed with the hon. the Financial Secretary and the Colonial Secretary.

The CHAIRMAN: I am talking on the general principle. I hope the hon. Member appreciates that.

Dr. JAGAN: I have heard so much these days about employing local people that I thought of mentioning the fact, because we must keep it in mind. I am not trying to advocate this individual's cause. I am merely using it on the basis of the principle of the thing.

The CHAIRMAN: That principle is accepted by Government. I have said in this Council time and again that it is accepted by Government and has been acted on. Guianese have been appointed to the Public Service in greater numbers than ever since I have been here, and in many new offices. The hon. Member knows what the policy of Government is in this matter and there is no need to refer to individuals.

Dr. JAGAN: While the statement you have just made, Sir, is true, nevertheless we do find from day to day certain occurrences. When we come to the Medical Department I shall refer to one particular case where we see that. Even though it is said as a matter of policy that local persons would be given opportunity to be placed, we find one excuse or another always being given for not put-

ting these people in positions. In some cases people are placed in jobs—

THE CHAIRMAN: Would the hon. Member confine himself to the Head under discussion? We are getting away now on a general discussion. Would the hon. Member stick to the Head?

Dr. JAGAN: You raised the question of the principle of it and, therefore, I thought of speaking.

The CHAIRMAN: I was not opening a debate on the subject. I was just helping the hon. Member.

Head passed as printed.

#### CUSTOMS.

Mr. FERNANDES: Once again I would like to ask Government seriously to consider the redrafting of the Regulations of this Department. They were made since 1912, and quite a few of them are entirely out of date. I think the time has come when we should get them a little nearer to 1951.

The CHAIRMAN: I think the position was explained to the hon. Member. The Customs Union proposal will soon come along and, if this Council agrees to it, entirely new laws and regulations would be required. The matter will be discussed as soon as possible.

Head passed as approved by the Finance Committee.

#### EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

Mr. DEBIDIN: There are two matters particularly to which I would like to refer. The first of them is the question of adult illiteracy in this Colony. It is a matter of great alarm to me, as it is to a substantial percentage of the population of this Colony, that Government by its action recently will not do anything to liquidate illiteracy in the Colony. I only have to remind this Council, Sir, that the percentage of illiterates of this Colony is very high. It is around 40 per cent. and of a particular community, the East Indian community, there is about 44 per cent. This is not something of which British Guiana can be proud. It is not

something any right-thinking person in this enlightened and democratic age would like to see existing in a Colony which ranks as a first class Colony, or at least we hope it is so ranking among the Colonies of the British Empire. It is therefore a matter of concern not only of those affected, the illiterates themselves, but should be a matter of great concern to the Government of this Colony. Government seemed at one time to have been anxious to do something and a Literacy Officer was appointed. A certain gentleman came out here and started certain experiments. It is a great pity to my mind that the campaigner could not go throughout the country as his boast seemed to have suggested the liquidation of illiteracy. But rather what do we find, a pilot or test was set up at Pln. Ogle, something which finally was given its deathblow by no provision being made for further experiments, and so that particular experiment, or test, or pilot literacy work was closed down.

Subsequently there has been some effort at mass education, which is something entirely different, at Pln. Providence. From the facts at my disposal that was again doomed to failure. In some respects, directly or indirectly, influences were brought to bear which caused that experiment also to fail. What do we find further? We find that following the recommendation of the Advisory Committee on Education Government accepted the principle of not voting at least a token vote as they still think it is not important to take up the matter of illiteracy. They have wiped out the token vote and have transferred the man who was appointed to do the work. In the first place it was unfortunate that this particular individual was appointed. I told him so, and that is why I am privileged to say it in public. He is one who genuinely made a study of the subject of literacy work, and has actually put forward to Government plans for something to be done, something tangible to liquidate illiteracy. But this is the sad part of it. That man was put on a special footing in the Department of Education. He was given a specific designation; so far as the post was concerned he was given status. He has had post-graduate experience and



his position was established as an authority. After a while on this question, and it was only a matter of carrying out his recommendations. I happen to have had a peep at the recommendations, and it seems to me a flagrant disregard of the intentions of this individual to carry through the work of a literacy campaign in British Guiana, for his particular report and recommendations were shelved. He made an attempt to get some books printed. Part of them was printed at a cost of a few hundred dollars, but the main work which cost \$3,000 was denied him. His real production as the result of his experience, a book which required a higher class of printing was put aside. If those books were printed they would have been circulated among the illiterates who would have been able to carry on the phonetic system of adult education. It is a graduated form of study of the alphabet, a phonetic system by which they would have been able to study in their homes and within a short period become literate to some extent. That has not been done. He cried like a voice in the wilderness, just as I did on the Advisory Committee.

It is regrettable to find Members advancing the specious and sinful theory that because Indian girls and boys worked in the Creole Gangs on sugar estates and neglected their education so as to earn money, they must today find their own means of educating themselves — that Government must not use the taxpayers' money to help adult education at all. That view has been expressed, and it is a great pity that it has been accepted by the Committee. It is an indictment of our way of thinking and of the Colony's fair name. I speak very feelingly on this matter because we have increased the number of primary scholarships to be awarded at great expense to the Colony. We also have many educational institutions established at tremendous cost to Government. Who will benefit by those things? Not the present illiterates but those who are already 100 per cent. literate or nearly so. A Technical Institute is being established at great cost, but who will benefit from it? Only those who are sufficiently educated to secure places. It seems to me that nearly

50 per cent. of one community will be deprived of that opportunity.

On a large sugar estate like Enmore I found that only 80 young men and women were qualified to vote at the last general election. There were whole families including youngsters of 21 years, who could not vote. On the occasion of the disturbance on the estate, when there were mass arrests of 42 men between the ages of 18 and 45, only three were able to sign their bail bonds. At the enquiry into the shooting at Enmore young witnesses of 17 and 19 years said they could not read or write. So that it is true to say that of the 44 per cent. of illiterates among East Indians there is quite a large percentage of young people who are still capable of being educated. It would be a grand thing if those young people were able to make use of the libraries which are being established throughout the country, but only those who are literate can make use of those facilities. If people were able to read to some extent they might be kept away from the rum-shops, and strikes, rumours of strikes, and dislocation of labour would be avoided. The community would be more orderly and there would be greater progress in the Colony. I think British Guiana has incurred one of the greatest condemnations on itself by converting the Literacy Officer into an itinerant teacher in the interior. I feel that Government should re-consider this matter.

The next point I wish to touch on is one which has only recently cropped up. I speak as one who is deeply concerned about the education of our boys and girls in the rural districts. I refer to the necessity for the establishment of senior schools on a better footing throughout the Colony. I had the opportunity while in England in 1949 to be taken around by the Ministry of Education, and I visited not only the senior schools but the junior schools where technical and vocational training is given in various grades. Our system of education in this Colony needs drastic revision. I do not intend to say very much on this subject in view of Your Excellency's Message to this Coun-

cil and the appointment of a Committee to go into such matters, but I would say that there is need for greater provision being made for pre-vocational training in our schools for children between 14 and 17 years. I am referring particularly to the Technical Institute which is being erected. It is with regret I say again that the original plans have not been stuck to for the establishment of pre-vocational training. I find that an entirely different project is being established, in that the Institute will cater for young men of a limited class — those who are apprentices and require technical education. But while the Institute will be useful in that respect I think its usefulness will not be as great as if the original idea was carried out of providing pre-vocational training for boys and girls leaving school at the age of 14 years. We need to have included in the curriculum of primary schools some method by which the natural inclinations of pupils might be taken care of and encouraged by some form of technical training during the school course. This is an agricultural country, and in the school curriculum some attention should be given to training in those features of agriculture which would encourage a love for agriculture and a desire to stick to the land.

It is a matter for regret that the Technical Institute will absorb more than half of the money to be voted in the shadow allocation for education. It has been discovered that it will reduce the amount set aside originally for pre-vocational training by a considerable sum, and it is a matter for regret that the Institute has been erected. My only hope is that those who have the technical qualifications may be able to give assistance to the senior schools, if established on a different basis, in the shape of some better form of pre-vocational training.

In conclusion I would like to refer to the discussion which has taken place in Finance Committee on certain aspects of the position of Junior Masters at Queen's College who have qualified with some degree, and whose positions have not been sufficiently defined from the point of view of the salaries they are entitled to at Queen's College. I under-

stand that some undertaking has been given, and I trust that the matter will receive early attention from Government.

Dr. JAGAN: With respect to the matter of the literacy campaign I would have thought that it would have been a good investment on the part of Government, especially since some hon. Members are so much worried about the influence of a few persons on the illiterates. I think if those persons were made literate they would better be able to read the announcements by the B.P.I. in the three daily newspapers, and would not be misled by the agitators and trouble-makers in this country. (Mr. Roth: Hear, hear.) But Government has been smarter on this occasion and has decided to abandon the literacy campaign. From the very outset when Dr. Hohlfeldt was brought here I told the Council that he was not an expert, and it was subsequently proved that he was not. Nevertheless he and his wife came here and we provided them with a nice holiday trip and a good vacation in British Guiana. The Literacy Officer also had a break of two or three years from his daily routine as a schoolmaster and has now returned to his teaching profession. If we had self-government and the Cabinet system I am sure that on this particular issue the Government would have been defeated, because it has wasted the taxpayers' money as a result of not giving this matter serious consideration. It is true that Dr. Hohlfeldt was not an expert but, nevertheless, he came here and gave of whatever knowledge he possessed.

As the hon. Member for Eastern Demerara (Mr. Debidin) has pointed out, the Literacy Officer who was appointed was not the best possible selection, nevertheless he did put in a great deal of work and recommended something tangible which Government should have adopted. After all that has been done the matter has been shelved and the issue forgotten. This is an example of the waste of taxpayers' money which hits one straight in the eye. How many thousands of dollars have been spent in this direction I have not yet calculated, but I will add it up. I would appeal to the hon. Member for Eastern Demerara to forget



about this Government so far as adult education is concerned, and make his appeal directly to UNESCO, telling them of the very serious plight of the people of this country. I invite him to table a petition to be forwarded to the Secretary of State for the Colonies for transmission to the United Nations Organisation, as in that way we may possibly get some action in this country, because at the present moment we have a policy of drift.

There is one other point I would like to raise under this head, and that is the question of school buildings. Perhaps I should not go too much into it at the moment, because of the appointment of the Committee of which Your Excellency spoke yesterday, but I feel very strongly on that matter, and that is why I am going to speak about it now. Government is undertaking the building of schools at the present time, and we know that large numbers of schools are being built by Government. Having built those schools I do not see why they should be placed under the control of the various denominations. I know that it is a very controversial issue, and I think there was even a resolution passed by the Teachers' Association some time ago opposing denominational control. At one time the argument was put forward that the school buildings were owned by the denominations and therefore it would be very expensive to take over all those schools and place them under Government control.

There are also large sections of the community who are not Christians. I am a Hindu and I observe from Your Excellency's Message that in the proposed Committee you have included one representative of each of the three leading Christian denominations, but I think it is right that the other religious organizations in this country should also be consulted, because they represent a large segment of the population. **There are large numbers of Hindus and Muslims in this community and I feel that they should have been given some consideration in the appointment of this Committee.**

On the broad principle of the control of schools I think the time has come when control should be moved from the

religious denominations and placed in the hands of Government. The Churches can carry on their religious instructions outside of the schools. I hope that this matter will be given consideration by Government so that as the new schools are built they may be placed directly under Government control.

Mr. DEBIDIN: With regard to the hon. Member's suggestion I would prefer that we work out our own salvation if we can do so, but I think it would be a matter of interest to him and to this Council if I were permitted to read what has been done by the United Nations General Assembly. They appointed a Select Committee to go into this very question of illiteracy, and in its report the Committee states:

"(a) The eradication of illiteracy is a problem of the utmost urgency in the majority of the Non-Self-Governing Territories."

British Guiana is one of those non-self-governing territories. The report proceeds to state.

"(b) UNESCO should, in order that the campaign against illiteracy may be pursued effectively, seek to define the term "literacy" and suggest a uniform method for presenting statistics of percentages of illiteracy."

There are several other recommendations by this body where it seeks to tackle the problem of illiteracy, and I will use this information to draw attention to the great need for the eradication of illiteracy. I appeal to Government to remove what may be a black spot in its educational policy in not taking any active steps towards the eradication of illiteracy in this Colony.

Mr. THOMPSON: In Finance Committee it was moved that item (g) should go up to (d). Has nothing been done in that matter? As regards the question of illiteracy I do not know if it is too late for us to move a motion to continue the literacy campaign. It is a great pity that the campaign has been abandoned after so much has been spent in printing certain books, and if it is not too late I would suggest that a sum be voted to carry it on.

With regard to the question of the control of schools the position is that certain schools were built by the denominations, and no child is compelled to receive religious instruction in any school if it does not wish to take part in such instruction. Those schools which have been built from Government funds are Government schools, but where the denominations have built or subscribed towards the erection of schools it would not be reasonable for Government to take those schools away from them. There is a certain amount of control, but I can say that the religious side of the school is not interfered with. Going back to my point, the Building Officer has been doing a lot of successful work during the year. That is well known. To leave it there it means that he would remain for two years at one point. The matter was largely threshed out in Finance Committee and I do not know if there is any difficulty in it here.

Mr. LUCKHOO: There is just one observation I would like to make. I think it was Your Excellency who observed that in 1947 we spent \$1½ million on Education and this year the amount has gone up to \$2¼ million. There is no doubt about it that a large sum of money is being spent. The observation I wish to make is that quite recently in going through the rural areas and through the estates I made some notes of the youngsters there and made some enquiries, and I was rather alarmed to find a large number of children of school-going age were not attending school. At first blush I fancied they were isolated cases, but in most cases these youngsters, boys and girls, were helping the family income, either by working in the rice fields or somewhere, and evading the obligation of going to school. The point I am making is this: There are Inspectors and persons who are employed to see that the youngsters either attend school for a minimum period a week or their parents taken to the Courts to show cause why an order should not be made compelling them to send those children to school. I do not think that surveillance is rigid enough in this instance, because I personally observed that it is clear that no full investigation was made in those areas otherwise the parents would have

been compelled to send their children to school. In one respect it may be regarded as a bit unkind, as they are helping to sustain the family, making their contribution in labour, but I think we have to be unkind in order that we may benefit them in their future life, and in that respect I make the observation that I think greater surveillance should be exercised, especially in the rural areas and on the estates, to see that the children of school-going age are made to go to school.

Dr. JAGAN: May I make a point with reference to the one the hon. Nominated Member has just made. Some time ago in my constituency one of the Head Teachers told me to see what I could do because the same officers to whom the hon. Member referred, the Inspectors of Schools, were prosecuting the people for not sending their children to school, and in a good many cases those children would not go to school because the school was overcrowded. So you have the twin problems of enforcing the rigidity of the law and on the other hand if you do so you would be penalizing the parents wrongfully. The Head Teacher of Ptn. Ogle school asked me to see what I could do about it because the parents are being prosecuted and there is no place in the school for the children. That is the problem we have. Therefore the question of enforcing the law becomes a rather difficult one.

Mr. PETERS: In respect of the point made by my hon. friend, Mr. Thompson, in respect of item (g) on page 7, I too supported in Finance Committee that this officer who is certainly giving yeoman service to the Department, should be advanced one stage higher, and I recommend that steps be taken to implement that.

Mr. FERNANDES: I would just like to support the remarks made by the last hon. Member who spoke. I think this individual is doing a good job. The school buildings we see on the countryside are a credit to Government and I am sure largely answer the point made by the hon. Member for Central Demerara when he spoke of shortage of



accommodation in the schools in the rural areas.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY & TREASURER: Much of the ground has been covered already in discussion in Finance Committee and particularly the question of the Literacy Campaign. We must accept some finality in this matter. I believe it was very thoroughly and completely discussed in the Advisory Committee of the Department. The hon. Member who pressed his views on the Literacy Campaign did so with great vigour, I understand, and eventually a decision was come to that for the time being at least we should not take any steps in that particular measure. I do suggest that we should accept the decision of that Body.

There is only one point I want to touch on and that is the matter raised by the hon. Member for Central Demerara with regard to school buildings. I do not know if he recalls that the question of what is called "Dual Control of Schools" was the subject of very thorough investigation by a fully representative committee in 1945. The committee was even larger than the one you, Sir, have just appointed. It was headed by the Director of Education as Chairman and comprised in addition to the Director of Education and the Assistant Director of Education the then Hon. E. G. Woolford, the late Hon. J. W. Jackson, the Rt. Rev. Bishop Weld, the Ven. Archdeacon Rowe, the Very Rev. Dean Hughes, the Rev. Hawley Bryant, the Rev. James Boulton, the Rev. P. Magalea, Pundit Sukdeo Ojha, Mr. H. S. Jackson, Mr. C. A. Nestor, Mr. D. L. Simpson, Mr. A. A. Thorne and Mr. M. B. Khan. After very full investigation a report was presented to the Governor and submitted to this Council with a Message by Sir Gordon Lethem. After a very full debate a resolution of this Council was passed accepting the procedure with regard to school buildings which was put forward by that Body. In Sir Gordon Lethem's Message very great care was taken to emphasize that the question of taking over all the school buildings by Government had been given very full consideration and had been explored by

this Body and other Bodies, but it was considered impracticable. The Report of the Committee, which is the basis of the procedure now in force, is very full and sets out in greatest detail what takes place when the denominational buildings are repaired or rebuilt, when they are taken down and when new buildings are erected. It was remarkable that a unanimous decision was reached on that subject.

The point I am making is that the procedure is one in which this Council, though the Members have changed, has given its specific approval, and it cannot be changed merely by a suggestion being thrown out in this Committee. If you wish to change so fundamental a principle, it would have to be thoroughly explored by another Committee of equal weight and responsibility which would go into all the facts.

I greatly deplore the mention of the suggestion made by the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Thompson, and supported by two other Members, in regard to a particular officer. I hardly think it is fair to an officer of a Department of Government that these proposals for advancement should be pressed in open Council. Actually it is in some cases embarrassing in Finance Committee, but there, as I have often said, we have the greatest freedom and naturally these suggestions are allowed. But I think it does no good to anyone for Members of the Council to get up in this Council and openly recommend the advancement of particular individuals. I am quite sure it embarrasses the officer as well as Government when the suggestion is made here and is recorded in the reports of the Council. In the ordinary course a suggestion in Finance Committee is reproduced on the departmental files, the Head of the Department makes a comment on it and it comes back to the Colonial Secretariat and is given the fairest consideration. It would do no good for a point of that sort to be publicly raised in this Council.

Mr. DEBIDIN: What I would ask the hon. the Financial Secretary is the date of that report.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY & TREASURER: The Message covering the report is dated the 17th January, 1945 and signed by Sir Gordon Lethem. It is Message No. 14 of the 11th Session, 1945-46. The Committee was originally appointed in 1943. I have a copy here but it does not give the date of the report.

Mr. DEBIDIN: I ask that because at one time I raised this very question and referred to the Hammond Report, because it seems to me the Report of the Education Adviser to the Comptroller of Colonial Development and Welfare would be the one which should be given greater weight. It is by an impartial person of very high repute and certainly it is a report which should be accepted with its greater weight, because on that Body it may be suggested you have a majority of the Clergy and, therefore, it may be running towards one side. If I remember rightly the Hammond Report said whenever any school has been completely erected at Government's expense that is the time Government should take it over and run it as a Government School. It is a big principle which is involved. I do trust that a resolution on that principle will take place.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY & TREASURER: The report of the Committee to which I referred had as its subject Mr. Hammond's memorandum on the dual control of schools. It was a local Committee appointed to study the various proposals, suggestions and ideas put forward by Mr. Hammond, who was then Educational Adviser to the Comptroller for Development and Welfare in the West Indies, and dealt with matters covered by that report.

Head passed.

#### EDUCATION — SCHOOLS, INSTITUTIONS & MISCELLANEOUS.

Mr. FERNANDES: Relative to the Guiana Scholarship, I often wondered why, when lots of our scholars return to British Guiana after studying in Universities in the United Kingdom, they are so bitter and seem to bring back with them a hatred of the United Kingdom Govern-

ment, and perhaps to a lesser extent, the Government of British Guiana. It is a matter that has worried me considerably to see these Guiana Scholars coming back here and being not even left but left of the extreme left. I tried all I could to find out the reason. Now, Sir, I have a letter here that is dated February 21, which arrived in British Guiana from Birmingham on February 28 — two days ago. It comes from a Guiana Scholar who decided to use his good fortune of being successful in obtaining one of these scholarships to study Modern Languages with the intention of taking up teaching as a career. With that in view he proceeded to the University in Birmingham, but he was warned before he left British Guiana that he was going to meet in the Universities certain influences which were going to try to induce him to have a hatred of the two things I mentioned earlier. With your permission, Sir, I am going to read small sections of his letter to his mother. I am going to read the second part first, because that would show why, to a very large extent, these youngsters become easy prey to this undercurrent that is taking place in the Universities in the United Kingdom. I quote from the letter by Jocelyn D'Oliviera to his mother — he is from a very poor family, his father died while working at the Control Board; lots of Members know the family very well and know that they are poor. He writes:

"Perhaps you would see me earlier than you expect because I may at last be forced to cut out my fourth year. There are lots of expenses incidental to a six months' stay abroad and, of course, the cost of living in France is sky high. The Professor of French usually writes a letter for all holders of scholarships applying for extra grant in consideration of this trip to France, and special grants are made by the various education authorities in the United Kingdom. He wrote a letter to Mr. Ogle asking him to help me in this special consideration and Mr. Ogle gave him a curt reply saying, I am at liberty to arrange my scholarship as I like but not a cent extra would I get from the British Guiana Government, so "bang" goes my Education Diploma."

I speak very feelingly on this because this youngster, after taking his Honour's degree in Languages, of which French is the main and Spanish is subsi-



diary, would naturally have to take his Teacher's Diploma. That is where the fourth year comes in. If he does not take that Teacher's Diploma when he applies for a job he will be told, as others have been told, that he cannot be placed at a certain level at the time of employment as he has no teaching experience and no teaching qualification. We have been told in Finance Committee more than once that in case a man has the educational qualification to teach he should have a certain amount of training in teaching. In this case, if this matter had been allowed to rest where it is, this lad, because he is poor, would have to be denied the opportunity of spending his extra year and taking this Teacher's Diploma. When I got this letter it made me very bitter. I spoke to Mr. Ogle and I asked him if the boy was doing well and he said "Yes". I then said to him "Well, he applied for some assistance. Can you tell me why it was turned down?" He did not give me an answer but told me that since then further representation had been made and the matter was now in the hands of the Colonial Secretary. Now I have asked all the members of the Advisory Committee on Education I can think of whether they know anything about the matter, and they said "No". This is not a matter on which they advise the Government. This is a matter for the Head of the Department. This boy was, however, fortunate in that the Professor did not take the matter easily and say "There is nothing I can do as the Head of the Education Department says there is no assistance you can get".

This is something, I think, Government should take steps to prevent happening again, if there are any applications from Guiana Scholars or any students under a scholarship from this Government for assistance. That matter should either automatically go to the Advisory Committee on Education or, if Government chooses to ignore their opinion on such matters, the Director should be forced to send them to the Colonial Secretary with his recommendations. If he chooses to recommend that they be not granted he can put his facts up to the Colonial Secretary for you, Sir, and the Executive Council to arrive at a decision.

I am going to read a few more words from the letter which will show the kind of attitude which gets into a youngster's mind and which makes him fall an easy prey to the undercurrent work in the Universities. He says:

"Naturally, I am not altogether satisfied with my progress at the University. How can I be, when I am cold, sick and hungry".

I come now to the part about the undercurrent. In the beginning he says—I want you to bear in mind that this lad was warned about the possibility of the stirring up of hatred that is taking place in the Universities:

"I am glad to say I am fighting the insidious influences. This is the way we have to avoid their attention — to try and keep their attention away from being concentrated on us. I am glad to say I am fighting this insidious attitude by affecting an American accent, and I have just got a G.I. haircut."

This lad is a British Guianese and those people operating in the University know that he is a colonial and would concentrate on sending him back as they have done with lots of others. The last reference is one that helps to turn his mind into a condition ready to accept the kind of doctrine disseminated all the time. He says:

"I was asked to be a Brain in a Brians Trust recently on Colonial Affairs here at the University. It had to be cancelled as only one person turned up. That shows nobody cares about Colonials or their affairs."

With those remarks I would just sit down and would ask that whatever happens we should not allow this to happen again.

**THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY & TREASURER:** The hon. Member was good enough to speak to me privately about this matter before he spoke in this Council, and has thus given me the opportunity of getting the necessary papers dealing with this matter. I told him at the time he spoke to me that I recalled this Guiana Scholar had applied for an additional grant for the purpose of taking a course in France, and as far as I recalled it had been granted. I have just got the papers and I find that is so. I am completely struck by that letter the hon.

Members has just read, and I wish I can compare the dates because these papers in my hand contain a minute from the Director of Education, Mr. Ogle, which is dated 18th January, 1951, and it refers to a letter from Mr. D'Olivieira dated 9th January, 1951, in which he applied for this grant. Reading it through just now I tried to ascertain if this is a second letter or if one had preceded it. He does not refer in this letter to any previous letter, and since this matter was strongly emphasized by the hon. Member I ask permission to read it.

Mr. FERNANDES: I just want to correct the hon. the Financial Secretary. The first application, according to this letter, was made by the Professor of French at the University. The lad is distinct in that. He says: "Mr. Ogle gave him a curt reply saying that I am at liberty to arrange my scholarship as I like, but not a cent extra would I get from the British Guiana Government." That is the reply to the Professor. I do not know whether Mr. D'Olivieira applied since. That is the statement made in reply to the Professor, and Mr. Ogle in the course of conversation with me told me that since then further representations were made and the matter is now with the hon. the Colonial Secretary.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY & TREASURER: That is quite true. I now see that the letter to the Head of the Department refers to a letter which had been written by Professor Fraser-McKenzie in November, 1950, and Mr. D'Olivieira has said there that Mr. Fraser-McKenzie had told him that he, Mr. Ogle, regretted not being able to help. However, the point is, having got Mr. D'Olivieira's letter in which he stressed the necessity for him to have an additional allowance because his funds were not able to stretch to six months in France, and having asked in that letter for a small grant of £25, Mr. Ogle wrote to the Colonial Secretary and the final paragraph says this — "I strongly recommend a special grant of £25." That minute came to the Secretariat where it was strongly supported by me and others in the Department. It went to

the Executive Council where it was approved out of hand by circular, and the grant was communicated to England. I am glad to see that the lad has got his grant. It is conceivable that when the Professor wrote to the Director he may have said he could not find the money. The hon. Member says that he received a curt "No." It is conceivable that there was a refusal, but I think he is emphasizing the significance of it, considering that when the lad himself applied he did not put as much emphasis and as much seriousness on the question as the hon. Member seeks to do.

Mr. FERNANDES: I gave the hon. the Financial Secretary an opportunity of having the matter verified. I could easily have sprung it on him here. Even though he started off in his reply to suggest that there was a mixture of letters he had to admit that the first application was turned down. I would ask him if the first letter is not in that file. It is bound to be in that file. Will he please read the reply to it? We will then realize what happened. When the first application was turned down and this boy was inclined to go the wrong way there would have been somebody in the University to lend him the money, and he would not have had to come back and ask for what is a much smaller amount. When the first application was made it might have been for a much greater amount, but that was turned down. It was not even put up to Government. Of course the £25 will keep the lad, perhaps still hungry, until the end of the fourth year.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY & TREASURER: A copy of the letter which the Professor sent to the Director of Education is here. It is true that he asked for a grant of £150, and I think Mr. Ogle must have considered it high and suggested to the Professor that he could not recommend it. It is a very large sum.

The CHAIRMAN: I suggest that this Council is wasting a tremendous amount of time on a matter like this, and it is a pity that the hon. Member did not come to me or to Government and explain his case before ventilating it in open Council.



After he had had the facts then was the time to come to the Council and make justifiable complaint, or one he considered justifiable. Here we are talking about an individual case; the debate is descending to that level. I am not saying that there is not a great amount of truth in what he says, but in dealing with individual cases the hon. Member should ascertain what the facts are before he brings them before the Council, if he thinks an injustice has been done.

Mr. FERNANDES: I thank you very much for your remarks, but I regret to state that while I had to name the person in this case I am definite that there is a very serious principle involved — a principle of Heads of Departments turning down applications of this kind without referring them either to the Advisory Committee, the Colonial Secretary, or to you, Sir.

As regards your other remark that I should come to see you or the Colonial Secretary, I am very sorry. I have two years more to serve in this Council, and whenever anything involves a serious principle I am sorry to say that I am not going to see either Your Excellency or the Colonial Secretary. I have had one recent experience and it is enough for me.

The CHAIRMAN: I only suggest that the hon. Member should get all the facts and not depend entirely upon one version of the matter. I suggested that he should see me or the Colonial Secretary for no other reason than to get the facts.

Mr. FERNANDES: I maintain that my facts have been proved correct, and in every case I have brought before this Council my facts have been proved correct, and they will continue to be correct because I am going to move further.

The CHAIRMAN: That is all I ask.

Dr. JAGAN: In view of the insidious influences which are said to be operating in the United Kingdom I think we should seek some other institutions to send our Guiana scholars to.

Mr. LEE: With regard to scholarships I have recently been informed that the

grant of £1,200 to our Guiana scholars is insufficient to enable them to complete a five-year course. I am told that the cost per month in B.G. dollars is \$125, and I am wondering whether Government would not consider an increase of the grant to £1,500. I understand that in Jamaica the scholarship grant has been increased to £2,000, and that at the West Indies University the cost per month, including fees, is about \$120.

Total of Head XA — \$2,597,582, as printed, increased by \$46,553 to \$2,643,935.

#### QUEEN'S COLLEGE.

Dr. JAGAN: Sir I would like to find out whether the Committee, whose appointment you have recently announced, will look into the question of secondary education, with particular reference to Queen's College?

The CHAIRMAN: I had not intended that. It is essentially for primary education.

Dr. JAGAN: I would like to make a few remarks under this head. At the present time there are not many facilities available for students outside of the Government institutions to have a well balanced secondary education in order to secure entrance either to the University College of the West Indies or Universities in other parts of the world, for which it is necessary to have a very high standard of what I may call primary secondary education — the first phase of secondary education. There is, as we all realize, a shortage of places in a great many of the Universities, with the result that there is severe competition for those places, and only those students who have the most rounded secondary education are usually admitted. In British Guiana, with the exception of Queen's College and the Bishops' High School for Girls, there are only one or two other secondary schools equipped for giving Science training. There are large numbers of private secondary schools but they have no means to teach either Chemistry, Physics, Botany or subjects of that sort. I feel that now that we have a new and larger Queen's College some effort should be made to increase the number of students in that

institution by some system of rotation in order to make the facilities at Queen's College available to the private secondary schools. In the past I believe that private students who required Science training have had to take recourse to private tuition during the hours when Queen's College was closed. The Masters who taught at the College during the day gave private tuition in the evenings and charged fees which were really very high in comparison with the normal fees, the reason possibly being that it was overtime work. I consider that it was a great handicap to students who desired Science education but could not afford to pay those high fees.

Government would do well to give the matter serious consideration, because in these days if one wants to become a technician or agriculturist some elementary knowledge of Science is necessary for a correct understanding of the principles underlying industry or agriculture. Consequently I feel that Government should enlarge the facilities at Queen's College so as to give the benefit of a wider and better secondary education to the masses of children in this Colony. At the present time I would say that only a very small percentage of the students in high schools are being trained at Queen's College and B.H.S. I think they are also taught Science at St. Stanislaus, but those schools can only accommodate a very small percentage of the total number of high school students in this Colony, and Government would do well to consider this aspect of the situation. I understand that at present 400 students are receiving tuition at Queen's College, and that at the new Queen's College building it is proposed to accommodate 500 students. I feel sure that if we can get additional staff the new building could accommodate at least 1,000 students. I think this country would do well, now that we have embarked upon the establishment of a Technical Institute, to allow a larger proportion of the population to have recourse to proper secondary education, and I hope that Government will give this matter serious consideration.

Mr. DEBIDIN: There is one matter to which I would like to refer. In my

opinion a tragedy was committed in September last year, at the beginning of the school year at Queen's College, when 10 boys who had fully qualified at the Primary School Examination applied for admission to Queen's College. They had the necessary qualification, had come of good parentage, and everything to make them eligible, but only one or two of them were selected. Why? Because there was no space at Queen's College. I say it was a tragedy because it is a great pity to find that the Principal had to resort to a further examination to eliminate the majority of those applicants. They had already received training in primary schools, and the results of their examination had shown that they were qualified for entry into Queen's College. I look upon the further test as a farce and an excuse for depriving boys who were eligible for admission, of a chance of possibly winning the Guiana Scholarship one day, or of having a full education. That was done on the eve of the opening of the new Queen's College where more pupils will be accommodated. I asked the Principal whether some temporary arrangement could not be made for those boys who had been refused admission, and whether they would be admitted into the new College which was expected to be opened about the middle of this year. He said he did not think so, and that nothing could be done for those boys.

What makes the situation worse, to my mind, is the fact that there is existing at Queen's College a kindergarten school, which accommodates about 40 pupils. I do not know whether the number of places has been increased, but had there not been that kindergarten school those boys might have been admitted to the College. I have heard a lot of argument about this kindergarten school, and I have on a previous occasion referred to it as being a place where discrimination takes place, because it seems that only those parents who can afford to pay for their children for 3 or 9 years throughout their school life would be able to send their children, and they gain an advantage over others, because such children admitted at that age go right through the school without any bar. The kindergarten school provides the



same standard of education as the primary schools, because a teacher from the Teachers' Training College is in charge of it. It is wrong to deprive the College of 40 places which should go to strictly secondary education. It would mean that 40 more boys would be trained at the College. That is where the tragedy lies, and I am pained over the incident which has deprived about half a dozen or more boys of the opportunity of being trained during the present school year—boys who had everything to make them qualified for entrance to the College. I think something ought to be done for those boys. I think Government incurs a great deal of displeasure and no little criticism when things like that occur which can be avoided.

Dr. JAGAN: On the question of admissions to Queen's College I would like to make a comment here too. We have referred to this matter before. I think the hon. Member tabled a motion asking for the abolition of the Preparatory Form. When it is considered that Queen's College is being subsidized by Government it is an important point to keep in mind, because if there was no question of a subsidy there could be no objection to people taking their children to Queen's College from the time they begin to creep if they care to do so. But when we realize that the school is being heavily subsidized by the taxpayers, and that those children whose parents can afford to put them in the Preparatory Form automatically get entry into the College, we can say that the general taxpayers are subsidizing those children throughout their school career. Every year there are new entrants to the Preparatory Form, with the result that other students whose parents cannot afford to send them there are denied an opportunity later on when they apply for admission to the College. They are told that they are either too old, or they have not passed the entrance examination. I think the time has come when Government should abolish the Preparatory Form and make entrance to the College only on graduation from a primary school on some system of scholarship, possibly the Primary Scholarship standard. That should be the basis of admission to Queen's College. Selection

should be made on the results of an examination in the primary schools. I think it is definitely against the interests of the people of the country to reserve Queen's College and B.H.S. for a select few whose parents can afford to send their children there at a very early age. I hope this matter will receive serious attention from Government.

Mr. LUCKHOO: What strikes me as being somewhat disconcerting is that we have a magnificent building, maybe one of the most magnificent wooden structures in the world, which we are told will only accommodate 500 boys. If the reason for that is that there is an insufficiency of teachers then I say that that should be remedied, and as soon as that is done the doors of the new Queen's College should be thrown open, as the hon. Member has suggested, to another 500 students. In going over the floor space and making a general survey of the building it would seem that as long as there are teachers available 1,000 and not 500 pupils could be comfortably accommodated.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon Member knows that efforts have been made during the past 12 months to get Masters, but we simply cannot get them. That is the difficulty. We cannot talk about additional pupils until we get the teachers. I will take a note of what hon. Members have said.

Mr. ROTH: As regards the proposed increase of the fees at Queen's College I am not conversant with the machinery by which the fees are fixed and raised, but I should think that that matter would have been brought to the notice of the Board of Governors for their advice. That was not done. The first we heard of it was the announcement in the Budget Statement.

The Hon Member for Central Demerara (Dr. Jagan) referred to people being well able to afford to send their children to Queen's College. I want to assure the hon. Member that there are not a few parents who have to make very great sacrifices in order to keep their children at the College and at B.H.S. at the existing fees, and to increase them by 25 per cent.

will undoubtedly mean that some children will have to be turned away because their parents will not be able to pay the increased fees. I do not want to believe for a moment that the object of the proposed increase is to keep out undesirables, but on the face of it it would appear so in view of the small amount of increased revenue to be derived. If that is the purpose I think there are other ways by which that could be brought about.

The CHAIRMAN: Surely the hon. Member is not suggesting that that is the purpose.

Mr. ROTH: I say it could not be. I would suggest a 10 or 15 per cent. increase, and not 25 per cent.

Mr. FERNANDES: On the question of fees, surely the hon. Member should know

that an increase could not keep out undesirables, but only those whose parents cannot afford to pay, and it is because of those who cannot afford to pay the increase that I am appealing to Government not to increase the fees at this time when the cost of living is rising so rapidly. In view of the hon. Nominated Member's letter to the newspapers in connection with my resignation from Advisory Committees, I am surprised to hear from him that the Board of Governors of Queen's College, of which he is a member, was not consulted on this matter.

The CHAIRMAN: It would be better if we did not talk about newspapers.

Head passed as printed at \$103,985.

Council resumed and was adjourned until Wednesday, March 7, at 2 p.m.