

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

*(Constituted under the British Guiana
(Constitution) (Temporary Provisions)
Order in Council, 1953.)*

THURSDAY, 10TH FEBRUARY, 1955

The Council met at 2 p.m., His Honour the Speaker, Sir Eustace Gordon Woolford, O.B.E., Q.C., in the Chair.

PRESENT:

His Hon. the Speaker, Sir Eustace Gordon Woolford, O.B.E., Q.C.

Ex-Officio Members:—

The Hon. the Chief Secretary,
Mr. F. D. Jakeway, O.B.E. (Ag.).

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

The Hon. the Financial Secretary,
Mr. W. O. Fraser, O.B.E.

Nominated Members of Executive Council:—

The Hon. Sir Frank McDavid,
C.M.G., C.B.E. (Member for Agriculture, Forests, Lands and Mines).

The Hon. P. A. Cummings (Member for Labour, Health and Housing).

The Hon. W. O. R. Kendall (Member for Communications and Works).

The Hon. G. A. C. Farnum, O.B.E. (Member for Local Government, Social Welfare and Co-operative Development).

The Hon. G. H. Smellie.

The Hon. R. B. Gajraj.

The Hon. R. C. Tello.

Deputy Speaker:—

Mr. W. J. Raatgever, C.B.E.

Nominated Officials:—

Mr. W. T. Lord, I.S.O.

Mr. J. I. Ramphal.

Nominated Unofficials:—

Mr. T. Lee.

Mr. W. A. Phang.

Mr. W. A. Macnie, C.M.G., O.B.E.

Mr. C. A. Carter.

Mr. H. Rahaman.

Miss Gertie H. Collins.

Mrs. Esther E. Dey.

Dr. H. A. Fraser.

Lt. Col. E. J. Haywood, M.B.E., T.D.

Mr. R. B. Jailal.

Mr. Sugrim Singh.

Clerk of the Legislature—

Mr. I. Crum Ewing.

Assistant Clerk of the Legislature—

Mr. E. V. Viapree (acting).

Absent:—

Mr. L. A. Luckhoo, Q.C. — on leave

Mr. E. F. Correia—on leave.

Rev. D. C. J. Bobb — on leave

The Speaker read prayers.

CONFIRMATION OF
MINUTES DEFERRED

Mr. Speaker: For reasons which the Clerk will mention to hon. Members, I do not propose to confirm the minutes of Tuesday's meeting this afternoon. I hope we will be able to meet tomorrow, and then we shall do so.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

LATE SITTING PROPOSED

Mr. Speaker: I should like to state that the debate on the motion for the second reading of the Appropriation Bill will probably be concluded by tomorrow. I propose then to adjourn until tomorrow, and to sit later, if necessary, to meet the convenience of those Members who may wish to speak. I know that the hon. Mr. Carter is desirous of speaking, and that one or both of the ladies would like to do the same thing. I know also that the hon. Mr. Smellie desires to speak to the motion.

I should like to know whether the hon. Miss Collins desires to speak also, because she is entitled to have her remarks recorded if she desires to do so. I am sorry to say that I, like others, find it very difficult to hear her. I have frequently asked that some special arrangement be made whereby her remarks would be heard by the Reporters, and I would ask the Reporter now on duty to go nearer to her, if necessary. I cannot say that there is the same difficulty with respect to the hon. Mrs. Dey; we all hear her quite distinctly. I do not know whether the hon. Miss Collins would like to speak now.

Miss Collins: No, Your Honour; I will do so later.

Mr. Speaker: Does the hon. Mr. Gajraj propose to speak on the motion?

Mr. Gajraj: I do not propose to do so, Your Honour.

Mr. Speaker: We will now proceed to the Order of the Day.

ORDER OF THE DAY

TEACHERS PENSIONS (AMENDMENT)
BILL, 1955.

The Chief Secretary: I beg to move the first reading of a Bill intituled:

"An Ordinance further to amend the Teachers Pensions Ordinance with respect to the rate of pension."

The Attorney General: I beg to second.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

PENSION (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1955

The Chief Secretary: I beg to move the first reading of the Bill intituled:

"An Ordinance further to amend the Pensions Ordinance, 1953, with respect to the gratuities payable to officers on retirement."

The Attorney General: I beg to second.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

APPROPRIATION BILL
BUDGET DEBATE

Council resumed the debate on the motion for the second reading of the Bill intituled:

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

Mrs. Dey: I rise to add my quota of congratulations to the hon. the Finan-

cial Secretary on his Budget and his Budget Statement. His was a most arduous task in framing this Budget, in view of the large increase in the Colony's expenditure, and the fact that revenue, although buoyant within the last four years, will not sustain this happy position this year. Heads of Departments submitted estimates for items which they considered necessary for the efficient running of their Departments, but I can assure you, Sir, that those figures were not passed as printed in Finance Committee. We appreciate the courtesy and tolerance shown us by the hon. the Financial Secretary in Finance Committee. He may not be a man of stature but he is endowed with an abundance of ability enhanced by his obvious integrity. In his Budget Statement the Financial Secretary states:

"You, Sir, have seen fit publicly to call attention to the volume of work which was being transacted in Finance Committee. This service is, I think, a symbol of the determination which impels Members to do all that can be done to rehabilitate the spiritual, political and economic foundations on which the fortunes and future of the Colony rest."

Such words as those, coming from our Financial Secretary, are proof of the confidence he has in each and every one of us. Therefore, let us not abuse that confidence by pulling down the walls of the structure we are trying to build, because we find in our possession a few headless nails.

I wish to congratulate my hon. friend on my right (Lt-Col. Haywood) on his most constructive and statesman-like speech on the Budget. I am deeply interested in matters that concern our villages. I am a village councillor and have held office longer than any of my female predecessors. In his speech the hon. gentleman asked, "Are the Hutchinson drainage schemes vital to British Guiana?" As a social worker I say most emphatically "Yes, they are." I say that because I realise and

appreciate what the implementation of those schemes would mean to our rural population and to the colony as a whole. Loss of crops, cattle and poultry by the people in the rural areas has been colossal during the past years. In the Canals Polder loss by farmers through drought and floods has been an annual affair but as a result of the partial implementation of Mr. Hutchinson's scheme there has been no flooding and no loss of crops in spite of the heavy rainfall last year. This simply demonstrates that the implementation of those drainage schemes would put an end to losses through floods.

I appreciate that the implementation of those schemes must necessarily involve the expenditure of large sums of money, far beyond our resources. I seriously suggest that the Imperial Government be asked to give us a loan to undertake this most urgent work, and that the loan be made free of interest for 10 years, repayment of the loan to commence some years after it has been made. I submit that the economic condition of this country would be so much improved by the implementation of the Hutchinson schemes that we would be able to pay reasonable instalments on the loan without any difficulty.

In speaking of reports I am sorry that I should have to change my note. Committees sit and submit their reports which are afterwards referred to as the "X" report. We would certainly like to see more of those reports implemented. On this point I would like to have it noted that the members of the Committee, of which Dr. Clark was Chairman, were completely satisfied with the qualities of that gentleman whom I would style as an investigator of no mean calibre. He certainly burned the midnight oil and made us follow where he led. As a member of that Committee I am anxiously looking forward to its report being tabled. I was at the Georgetown Public Hospital on Saturday morning

last and I am certain that when that report is tabled—

Mr. Speaker: I hope the hon. Member will not make any reference to the report of the Committee from which any inference may be drawn.

Mrs. Dey: I am saying that when that report is implemented the conditions at the Public Hospital will be 100 per cent, better than they are at present.

With regard to the distribution of milk and tablets to school children I would like to say that the motto of our Colony is "We give and take in return." That is my personal angle on the distribution to our children.

Mr. Speaker: It may be of interest to remind the hon. Member that the author of that motto has not yet been discovered. I am sorry to interrupt but I wanted to give that fact publicity. I know that Mr. St. Aubyn, who was on a visit to this Colony recently, did his best to find out who was the author, but without success.

Mrs. Dey: Let us not play politics. Sir. The year 1958 is not yet on the horizon. We, the Members of this Interim Government, are representing British Guiana as a whole. That is our constituency, and every member of the population expects each and every one of us to give of our best. When 1958 comes we will be able to take care of ourselves at the elections. I regard it as a tug-of-war, and unless the weights are equally distributed we will be playing a losing game, and we will never reach the goal we hoped to achieve when we started in 1954.

I would like to refer to the speech by the hon. Mr. Macnie in which he made reference to the overlapping of Government services. It is most distressing when persons approach one as a Member of this Council to find that one does not know where to send them, owing to the overlapping of Departments.

I refer particularly to the Social Welfare Division of the Local Government and the Housing Department. A line of demarcation is needed somewhere. Social welfare work embraces community development, house management, social assistance, handicraft, child welfare, youth work, etc. Surely we should know where housing ends and social welfare begins. It certainly does seem to me like a shoemaker trying to make a frock coat.

With regard to land settlement I am proud of my fellow Guianese who happens to be the head of the Department. I know that he was borrowed some time ago, but he is fully capable of making up the ground lost while he was giving service elsewhere. But when people have been placed on well laid out lands and in beautiful and comfortable homes I would like to know where the daily loaf will come from while they are waiting for their crops to grow? This gentleman is doing a good job, but what guarantee have we that those to whom he will hand this torch will keep it blazing instead of handing it down without a flame? That Settlement is surely in need of a little more attention from Government than the hon. gentleman is striving to give. He needs assistance. By this I mean, he can do no more than he is at present doing as regards what has been already allocated to him. He needs more assistants.

I will not attempt to speak on duty free gasoline or on the limit for insurance. I consider myself the female of the specie, and where I am concerned I have not sufficient knowledge to attempt to say one thing or the other on that phase of the Budget. But after listening to my hon. friend on my right (Lt. Col. Haywood) who, I know, has some experience in the matter, I would merely at this stage say "I assent to all that has been said by him."

And now, I must go on to something of a more serious nature — the

youths of our Colony. I am very much concerned about this growing evil — juvenile delinquency. This, Sir, is a meningitis to every local Guianese within and without these walls. What have we to offer the hon. Member concerned as a constructive programme for them? During last week no less than three youths, among them a girl, were found guilty of the capital offence. One boy was 13 years of age. I speak very feelingly on this matter. The decision of the learned trial Judge was that he be sent to a place of detention. I am sure that every Member of this Council will agree that the proper institution to which he should be sent should not be any of the existing institutions. Sir, the one that deals with adults is out of the question. The other deals with juvenile delinquents who go there for reasons unknown to me, and come out—most of them—with the set purpose of doing something wrong so as to get back there. He must not go to gaol. Then must he be placed among juvenile recidivists? Is not this food for thought?

This is an age-old crying demand that I have been hearing throughout my womanhood — the need for a Borstal institution in British Guiana. I would like to know, after Onderneeming what? After the Belfield School what? Let us stop for one moment and consider the economic condition of the Colony which led those few unfortunate girls to become residents of the Belfield School. Is it humanly possible that any housewife, knowing the life those girls were forced to live before they were placed in the Belfield Home, would open their arms and receive them within their walls as a domestic? It is asking too much of human nature. If, however, there was an institution that would give these lads and these girls a vocational training whereby they could obtain for themselves a means of livelihood, then and only then would delinquency lessen. I am appealing to my fellow social worker across the

table. (Miss Collins.) Let us get down to this matter. Let us assist the Minister over there. It is an easier task for us, women, than for him. Let us get among them and try and find what is the root of the evil, and having found that out, let us co-operate with him in providing the remedy. Again I repeat, it seems that a proper Borstal institution is long overdue in this Colony, and I feel that something should be done this year about it.

In addition to a Borstal institution I would like to ask the hon. Member for Communications and Works (Mr. Kendall) if he would be so good as to try and see how he can help us with electricity in the rural districts. That may be—and I think it will be, too—one of the factors to keep our youths within their homes in the villages. It is not everyone whose parents would be able to purchase a battery radio, and so electricity would be a means of parents in the villages obtaining a cheap radio for the entertainment of their children rather than allowing them to rush to the City for their destruction. I hope, Sir, I have not offended by what I have said about the Onderneeming School or the Belfield School. But many years ago, there was an instance of a young girl, 15 years of age, who found herself in the same position as this 13 year old boy. She was not brought in guilty and the Court said she must be released. A social worker in the ordinary circumstances of life took that girl from the Supreme Court that afternoon to her home. That girl was cared and nurtured and made a Christian. She was taught to read and write, and today she is happily married and is the mother of five children and she can sew for all those children. If an individual can achieve that with little or no financial backing, how much more can an institution properly staffed not achieve for our girls.

With regards to the very many social organisations in our midst, it does seem that of late these organisations are

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springing up with leaps and bounds. I may not be around this table at that time, but it does seem that at some future date we may have a Budget with pages of organisations asking for grants from Government. I would much prefer to see a pooling of the existing social organisations, as thereby Government would be able to allocate one amount for social work. At present every now and then there is a new organisation cropping up, and in some cases—not all of them but a few—they are competing against each other for recognition and the size of the Government grant. To my mind, Sir, that is not good enough. I feel that a Federation of Social Organisations would serve the purpose better.

I do not know if I would be permitted to ask the hon. the Attorney General—I speak subject to correction—if the time is not ripe for our jury system to be reviewed and the other sex therein included. I do feel, and I have so felt long before coming to this Council, that some step should be taken to introduce women as jurors, I do not ask for a majority number, nor do I ask for a fifty-fifty basis. But being a mere woman and knowing our women, I think that perhaps three of us on a panel of jurors would save many a headache that one gets at present.

I come now personally to the hon. Member for Local Government, Social Welfare and Co-operative Development. (Mr. Farnum) I am wondering how many of the Members here present had the privilege of enjoying at Christmas time a piece of ham that was made by their wives. I see the gentlemen are looking around. Perhaps they think I am going "nuts", but I am not. It has been quite a craze in British Guiana during last Christmas—and the hon. Member knows it—among the housewives to make their own ham, and I can assure you that it was very delectable. In addition to that, there is an

organisation where one lady has stepped out from the crowd and has made at Christmas time Marzipans. She made them in accordance with the size and shape of our local fruits. They were delightful to look at and delicious to taste. The hon. Member has seen them and he knows all about it. I know he is now using it as a means of developing this talent to provide further employment for our unemployed girls. I have brought this matter to this Council because neither of these two enterprises came from any organisation with which I am associated or interested in, but I do think that honour should be given where it is due. Not because I have little honour to come to me in respect of it, I should not mention it.

With regard to the Credit Corporation, Sir, I have known and I have prof as late as Sunday gone of the valuable work that is being done. But, Sir, on the other hand when we consider the grumbling and complaints that are brought to our attention, there seems to be something wrong. It does not mean that because you are doing a good on one side that you cannot err on the other, and it would seem, and it has been suggested, that if this Corporation would set up three distinct offices—one to deal with agricultural loans, another to deal with housing loans and the last to deal with industrial loans—we would not get the complaints we are getting now. The people say "We have to wait, 6, 7 or 8 months after we have been told that we have been recommended for a loan. We feel we would never be called for the loan." But the Corporation can do no more. As Dr. Duthie has said, an increase of staff would lower his lending power. Let us join together in supporting it. It is our business; it concerns us. The people come to us. I do not know if they go to the folks on the higher level, as they do us on this side who are the salt below the salt, and I am proud to be below the salt. If this Interim Government salt loses its savour, I would like to know how we would ever

accomplish in the next three years what we have set out to do.

Sir Frank McDavid : I think it might be well if one of us who is a Member of the Government speak at this stage, and I propose to do so now. I had not intended, when the debate started, to speak at all, but having regard to the nature of some of the speeches and their content, I think it is my duty to do so.

I would like to join in paying tribute to my colleague, the hon. the Financial Secretary. Before I do so, however, I want to say that this is the motion on the Appropriations Bill dealing with the Budget, and so far I have not heard anyone deal with it in its broader and wider aspects. I myself feel that the main feature of this Budget is its indication of financial and economic stability. I myself have on previous occasions last year dealt with the grave problems which face this Colony: problems which make it incumbent upon us to get on as fast as we can with their solutions. I refer to the rapidly increasing population and the need to find work and subsistence for them. There is obviously a growing unemployment problem. However, the point I am trying to make now is that this Budget does indicate a satisfactory economic and financial position.

One illustration of this is a comment in the Financial Secretary's address in which he referred to the increase in our National Income, which he placed at some \$185 million, or one-third higher than the tabulated figure for the year 1951. That is an indication of economic growth. A further good feature is, of course, the ability to sustain the heavy increase in recurrent expenditure over revenue without any very serious disturbance in our fiscal system. The increase in recurrent expenditure embodies not only the provision for the substantial rise in salaries and wages, but also the capital contribution of over \$1 million to our Development Pro-

gramme. Consequently, I again repeat that the general picture presented by this Budget is one which causes all some satisfaction.

Now, I do compliment my colleague, the hon. the Financial Secretary—from personal knowledge I appreciate the immense strain which the preparation and presentation of a Budget and Estimates of this character demands. I know, too, that the Financial Secretary has been working without adequate assistance, and he has had an extremely difficult time. Consequently I do feel pleased, very pleased indeed that he has earned the high commendation which I have heard from the lips of many hon. Members who have already spoken.

I referred to the fact that the measure of increase in taxation was not a serious disturbance of the fiscal system. There is one item of taxation included in this Budget which has been the subject of criticism by Members, and I refer to the proposed removal of the rebates on gasoline—that is to say the abolition of the concession of duty-free and partly duty-free gasoline—which has been in force for some time. Now, I was deeply disappointed to hear one hon. Member who, for the moment, will be nameless, speak of this item of the Budget proposals as “a grabbing measure in an effort to wring the life blood from the people.” I submit that remarks of that sort might not even be suitable at Bourda Green, and that they are out of place in this Council. In point of fact all hon. Members know that the reason for this proposal is to check a flagrant and scandalous abuse of concessions which were made for the benefit of agriculture and industry; and that fact is common knowledge. It is something which has been troubling the minds of Revenue Officers for some years, and when, two or three years ago, it reached a stage where the officer in charge—the Comptroller of Customs—felt it his duty to bring the matter very

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forcibly to the notice of Government it was decided that something should be done.

It is not only, of course, that revenue is lost in that way, but it is the fact that the law is being flouted—disgracefully flouted—and no Government should permit a situation like that to develop; consequently methods were sought to check and correct the abuse. Several methods were considered but eventually it came to the notice of the Financial Secretary that a similar situation, to some extent had existed in the United Kingdom, and there it had been corrected by the procedure by which a fuel, power kerosene, was substituted for use in industrial machinery. It is supposed not to be usable in ordinary motor vehicles but very suitable for certain types of industrial and agricultural machinery.

Be that as it may, the Financial Secretary sought the advice of the Chief Engineer of the Mahaicony-Abary Rice Development Scheme and invited him to make a test. To my mind, that test was not really necessary, because we all know that power kerosene is used extensively in the United Kingdom. A report was made that the test was favourable. Consequently the Financial Secretary devised the proposals which are in the Budget.

I do want to digress for a moment and make the position of the Rice Development Company quite clear. I did say that one of its officers had been invited to make that test, and that the test was successful, that is to say, it demonstrated that power kerosene could be used in agricultural machines. Nevertheless I must say that the Management of the Rice Development Company are not in favour of it. They definitely consider it to be an uneconomic move in this country, not only for their own organisation but for the rice producers generally. I think it is my duty, on their behalf, to correct any impression that these pro-

posals have been asked for or submitted by the Rice Development Company and its officers, or the Mahaicony-Abary Rice Development Scheme.

The whole truth of this matter is that—and there is no doubt about it—in an undeveloped country like British Guiana one of the chief needs is cheap power, and in this country, quite obviously, gasolene is a most important fuel; therefore, it ought to be made as cheap as it can be made. I think in most countries gasolene is taken as an important revenue-earning source. You cannot have it both ways; you cannot have a desire for cheap power on one side, and on the other, try to use it as a means of getting revenue. The two things are quite inconsistent. I am extremely glad that a Committee has been appointed to re-examine the matter. I am a member of it and I have every reason to hope, now that all the difficulties have been put before us — particularly those difficulties which must be obvious to us, the fact that our own operators are not as skilled as those in England and other facts brought before us—that a solution will be found to this particular problem.

I do want to say again that it was a little unfair for some Members of this Council to characterise that measure as something designed to grab money out of the unwilling hands of the producers of this country. That was not in the mind of the Financial Secretary, and it was not in my mind as a Member of the Government. We do not wish to do anything which would in any way hamper an industry like rice.

I am very glad reference was made in the Budget address to Interior potentialities. I might say that the subject is one very near and dear to my heart. At the moment there is a projected development in the North West District in manganese mining, and I am pleased to be able to say that senior executives of the principals of the new Company,

the North West Guiana, Limited, have arrived in the country this week. Their purpose is to finalise the lease of the area and, I am also very glad to say, to discuss the possibility of an even greater expansion of the undertaking than had been contemplated. I am beginning to feel that that project will be a very substantial industry indeed, and I am looking forward to the day, not too far away, when this concern and the people will get to work. As hon. Members know, the project involves the construction of a small railway of probably 50 miles, and I am hoping that this development will mean the employment of a large number of artisans, and also employment for people in the North West District.

When I was speaking just now I deliberately omitted to mention the name of a certain Member whose remarks I was criticising. I must now say that the hon. Member, Mr. Jailal, made what, to me, was a somewhat disappointing speech. But before I comment on it I want to say that I do sincerely congratulate him on his new appointment to a senior executive position in the Rice Marketing Board. I know that Mr. Jailal has done an immense amount of very valuable work as General Secretary of the Rice Producers Association. I have myself had dealings with him in that capacity, and must say that he has tremendous zeal and enthusiasm. I feel sure that in his new position he will bring to bear all those qualities of hard work and enthusiasm, and thus help to create the desirable conditions and improvements he would like to see. I am sure also that Mr. Jailal is one of our coming men in this Council—he is a younger man than I am—and I hope that nothing I shall say will tend to discourage him in that direction.

Having said so much I would like to say again that I felt disappointed at the general tenor of his speech. One

Member who is not here this afternoon referred to it as having been born of a spirit of pessimism. I go further and say that there was a spirit of pessimism and defeatism about Mr. Jailal's speech. I feel that it does not pay Members of this Council the tribute they deserve. I have spoken on this theme before. British Guiana is an extraordinarily difficult country—it is one of the most difficult in the world—and I think that what we ought to do is to go on congratulating and commending our people for what they have accomplished in the past, and for the amount of patience they have shown in the face of those tremendous difficulties.

Mr. Jailal burdened his speech with references to the Government—references in which he used the word "Government" nearly as many times as he used the pronoun "I". He could not really deal with all the things which, he said, required to be done or should be done by the Government. Having regard to the agricultural position that exists in this Colony, more should and could be done by the people themselves rather than criticize and expect everything to be done by Government. People should not take up the position that they should be engaged only in the industries that bring them the quickest and the most returns.

The rice industry was started through no conscious acts of the Government, but by the efforts of the people themselves, and even though the industry has been helped by Government it was through those efforts that rice has become the most popular crop. I make bold to say that the reason why dairy farming and pig rearing have not attained greater popularity is because they are not, at the moment, among the most profitable industries, and do not bring the quickest returns. I do not want to go into the details of the comprehensive agricultural plan by Government, but I do want to say that Mr.

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Jailal's complaint that Government had no agricultural policy — that the Department of Agriculture had no policy—is most unfair. The Development Programme, which I had the honour to move in this Council, was based on the Report of the International Bank Mission, and Government's policy very largely represents the expansion and the quickening of the programme which the Mission recommended.

With regard to agricultural policy, Members will forgive me for reading from the general summary in the Mission's report, because the words used are very relevant to the present position. It says:

"In Agriculture: The programme recommended for agriculture represents, in its main features, an investment programme already planned by the Government. There are, however, a number of modifications and additions to the programme, which the mission believes to be essential to an effective long-range programme for development of the colony's agriculture. Public and private investment should provide sufficient additional food crops to meet the needs of a growing population as well as a moderate increase in sugar production and a substantial rise in rice production. Some increase in beef and dairy cattle production can also be anticipated."

Then, a little later in the report comes this:

"The programme suggested by the mission includes a substantial expansion in research and experimentation to be undertaken by the Department of Agriculture, in order to:

1. Diversify the cropping system, intensify cultivation, and improve yields of existing crops,
2. Improve the beef and dairy cattle industries,
3. Improve the inland and coastal fisheries."

The programme suggested includes a substantial expansion of the activities to be undertaken by the Department of Agriculture with regard to existing crops; secondly, improvements in the

rice industry; and, thirdly, the introduction of more modern methods in dairy farming and so on. That is a very general summary of the policy we are following.

On the day after Mr. Jailal spoke in this Council the debate was reported in the Press, and there also appeared a news item that day of a Press Conference held by the Development Secretary, in which he was expatiating on the policy of the Department, and I guess he was trying to make it clear that the improvement of dairy farming and of the coastal industries was the chief plank in the programme. I do submit that it is grossly unfair at this stage—when we have this bold Development Programme for the Colony based on the report of the World Bank Mission—to say that we have no plan and no programme, and that the Department does not know where it is going.

I think I should, like the hon. Member (Mr. Jailal) himself, spare a little time to touch upon one or two of the details, because I would hate to think that he should create the impression that very little indeed has been done for the rice industry. That is not so. There are many directions in which the rice industry has received financial assistance from Government, especially as regards drainage and irrigation, in which rice does not pay its full share.

In the agricultural field plans have also gone forward, and there is record of the work the Department has done in endeavouring to provide padi seed of a high yield, and it has been extraordinarily successful in doing so. The Geneticists are now embarking on the production of a strain of padi entirely suitable for mechanized rice cultivation. The production of a high grade hybrid rice is an extremely difficult business. I am told that it takes about 10 years. I am sure that when the new agricultural station is set up they will do even better than they are doing now.

As regards cattle-rearing, we all know what has happened; most of the most suitable land is being used for rice, and that has diminished the acreage for the cattle industry and made it most necessary for modern methods of dairy farming to be introduced into this Colony. We must concentrate on good cattle and, particularly, on a proper system of feeding.

I shall omit the reference which I intended to make about pigs, but I cannot omit some reference to poultry. It has been a tremendous disappointment to me and to my colleague, the Financial Secretary, that the importation of cheap poultry meat from abroad has had so adverse an effect on the budding industry which has sprung up during the last two years. The reason, of course, should be known. We are part of the Sterling Area, and the policy in connection with the Sterling Area at the moment is changing very rapidly. I do not know whether convertibility is indeed taking place, but there is no doubt that whereas we have been using artificial means to restrict importation from non-sterling countries, those means are now not as favourable as they were. Consequently, when the time came that poultry meat and other things were placed under free licence this year — that is to say, were freely importable — it coincided with a surplus in a large country, and I firmly believe myself that what we have been exposed to recently is nothing less than dumping and unfair competition with our budding poultry industry.

It is most unfortunate that that should have happened, but we cannot go on relying on the artificial procedure which was only enforced as a war-time measure. We have to set about to put our house in order and try to do something else. One of the things is to improve our feeds. Here again there is a

Committee which is working on that, and I hope that Committee will produce not only a short-term solution for the immediate difficulty but also a long-term solution which would help to expand this new poultry industry that has been undertaken by a few venturesome persons in British Guiana.

Under "Agriculture" I want to ask Members if they realise the immense struggle that has gone on and is going on in connection with the foot and mouth disease. We have been exposed to a terrible risk from this disease which is now rampant in the Rio Branco district of Brazil, and I hope Members will join with me in paying tribute to the Department of Agriculture, particularly to the Veterinary officers, Dr. Callear, Dr. McWatt and two other officers who have come to us on loan from Jamaica and Trinidad; to those officers of the British Guiana Airways, Ltd., Colonel "Art" Williams and his Assistants, and to all those other people who have put in an enormous amount of work in trying to keep our territory free from the scourge of this disease, and have so far succeeded in doing so. I think we all owe those people a deep debt of gratitude, and I hope this disease will be kept out of British Guiana. If it is not it would practically ruin our cattle industry, should it come to the coast.

I want to pass on to something else. I have been saying that we have a plan based on the International Bank Mission's Report. We are frightfully handicapped by the lack of professional and technical assistance in the higher spheres of our work. That is why I think we ought to be grateful to the United States Foreign Operations Administration who have now set up office in British Guiana and are playing a most important part in supplying some of our needs. I think that we owe a debt of gratitude to Mr. Macaulay and his assistants, Dr. Vaughn, Dr. Kerr, Mr. Mackey, Dr. Kemp, whom we have all come to know so well, and also to Mr. Laflin.

[Sir Frank McDavid]

They have taken British Guiana to their hearts just as we have taken them to our hearts.

I do not know if Members realize the large number of schemes which are now proceeding under the aegis of the F.O.A. I refer to technical assistance schemes, and I have in my hand a list—I shall not go through it but in so far as agriculture is concerned I would like to lay some emphasis on the soil survey scheme which is now proceeding. We are very fortunate indeed that the F.O.A. have agreed to supply two soil surveyors who, with our own people, will undertake a comprehensive survey of our two land reclamation schemes, or water control schemes—the Boerasirie scheme and the Blocks I and II schemes on the Corentyne.

Indeed it was probably a mistake on our part in proceeding as far as we have gone with those schemes before having carried out detailed soil surveys, and it is a matter of great gratification to me that we have received the necessary technical assistance from the F.O.A. in order to carry out those two particularly important soil surveys. I know they are going to do the work in the best possible manner and in the quickest possible time — which gives me an opportunity to tell the hon. Member, Mr. Jailal, that the F.O.A. propose, if they can, to use helicopters to expedite and facilitate their work on those surveys, and I hope Mr. Jailal himself, when those machines come, will investigate the possibility of using them for bringing milk into Georgetown. I am sure he would find, if he did that, that the milk would become too costly and precious a liquid for human consumption. That is part of Mr. Jailal's vision which I would regard as a nightmare if I had to plan for the use of helicopters to transport milk to Georgetown for human consumption.

Among the other items in this list dealing with Agriculture there is the post of Agronomist which is filled by Dr. Kemp. There is also provision for an Animal Geneticist who has not yet come. We have deferred his appointment until we get on with the work of making up our nutritional deficiencies in this Colony. There is also a specialist in swine husbandry, and I do not know if Mr. Jailal knew, when he was speaking about pigs, that there was an Animal Husbandry Specialist post which has not yet been filled, but we hope to get someone who will stay with us for at least one year.

I do not know if I mentioned it in Finance Committee, but the British American Tobacco Co., through our local Company, have offered the services of a specialist who will stay with us for a period of two years and assist us in finding out definitely whether or not tobacco can be grown in the Rupununi district which can be used in the commercial manufacture of cigarettes. I look forward to the arrival of that specialist. This list of F.O.A. projects is extremely long, but I feel sure that Members will agree with me that the officers of the F.O.A. are doing a fine job, and we owe them our thanks.

There was one element in the speech of Mr. Jailal and, I think, those of certain other Members, which surprised me — the almost complete lack of appreciation of the extent of the work that has been accomplished in the year 1954. There has been laid on the table this afternoon a summary of the Development activities, and I know it is the intention of the Government Information Services to present a record in perhaps a more readable form. But this illustrates the fact that we tend to forget so easily what we are actually doing and accomplishing. In so far as those criticisms apply, personally I think it is only fair to say that we have all been hard working, and we all know that His Excellency the Governor almost

wore himself out last year. Speaking for myself and my colleagues I am quite sure no one will deny that we have all put our best into the job. I speak too for most of the Heads of the Departments which come within my portfolio. One and all have exhibited a tremendous amount of zeal during 1954. I was very glad to hear from our new Director of Agriculture, Mr. Mackenzie, of certain proposals to revolutionize our practical agriculture in British Guiana. I find that he is an extremely able man, and I am very glad to be associated with him.

A great deal of hard work has been put in, and I feel particularly disappointed with the implication of some of those speeches—that there has been a lack of zeal and enthusiasm. Even Members of the Legislature who have been described as “floor Members” are all doing hard work. Let us take some credit for what we have all done. The Hutchinson water control schemes formed part of the text of the speech of my hon. and gallant friend, Lt.-Col. Haywood, and also that of the hon. lady (Mrs. Dey) who spoke just after him. It is extremely difficult to speak about these schemes. Mr. Hutchinson was an extremely eminent engineer who put before us what was a new thesis. He explained that our method of water control in British Guiana had long since ceased to be valuable; indeed it was becoming harmful. I am referring to the method by which we empoldered certain areas of land, leaving those areas outside the empolder more exposed to floods than ever. He outlined a series of large-scale water control schemes for the coastlands of British Guiana. Their main feature was the damming up of the main rivers which cause those floods at the source. He suggested the construction of huge dams at the far reaches of the Mahaica, Mahaicony and Abary.

That, in non-technical language, is what Mr. Hutchinson planned. He produced a series of reports which are

merely blueprints of very comprehensive large-scale schemes. The only one that reached the stage where one could consider it practical at all was the one for the Corentyne. That was a formidable scheme. I forget the amount of money involved, but it could not be less than 50 to 60 million dollars. It would have taken years and years to bring that scheme to fruition. In the meanwhile we have been going on with the scheme known as the Torani scheme which, we hope, will bring into beneficial occupation the area known as Blocks I, II and III. It was after an enormous amount of consideration, both in this Colony and in London—I took part in the discussion in London—that we decided to leave the Hutchinson schemes and get on with the immediate task of doing what we were doing, and that was the Torani scheme. Perhaps, 15 years after it may be good time for the much more comprehensive schemes of Mr. Hutchinson.

As regards the other ones, there is a blueprint for a scheme for the area between the Mahaicony, Abary and Berbice Rivers. There was not the slightest detail, no survey, no estimate of the cost, although there was a rough guess of something between \$40 million to \$50 million for that scheme. Then there was the Mahaica scheme. That scheme had a little more detail, but it was quite seriously condemned by another eminent engineer, Mr. Lacey. Then there is the Tapacooma scheme. That is a more practical scheme, and we were actually engaged on the surveys for it, although many of the engineers of this Colony are still not satisfied about it. But that Tapacooma scheme is the one we hope to get on with immediately after or concurrently with the Boerasirie scheme. The present Boerasirie scheme may be regarded as a Hutchinson scheme, inasmuch as Mr. Hutchinson came and corrected some of the errors made before his time, and he expanded it into the large-scale project as we know it today.

[Sir Frank McDavid]

But I do feel that hon. Members should be careful in speaking about these Hutchinson schemes, and even disseminating the idea that they could be put into construction soon. Even if we had the money or could see the money in prospect, it would be an extremely difficult thing to carry on more than we are doing at the present time. This is what the International Bank Mission has to say about it on page 27 of its Report :

“The Mission believes that preparation for further drainage and irrigation schemes, to be undertaken after 1958, will require five years of study and preparation.”

That is true. We must not believe that Mr. Hutchinson has prepared complete schemes which can be worked out and started on. There is a tremendous amount of work and study and investigation to be done, before those very comprehensive schemes can even reach the stage of financial provision.

I just want to touch very lightly on Land Settlement because my colleague, the hon. Member, Mr. Lord, would, I am sure, wish to say a few words on that. I do feel that Land Settlement is now becoming, perhaps the most important feature of Government's policy. Indeed, my hon. friend, Mr. Raatgever, has said it was always so. I accept that too. But when I say “now,” I am referring to the fact that Land Settlement has got off to a bad start in the race. My colleague, the hon. Member for Housing (Mr. Cummings) successfully secured to himself the services of an officer appointed to be Director of Land Settlement until November last, and quite obviously until we had the Head of that Department very little could be done. I feel myself that Land Settlement has two facets—one is short term and the other long term. The latter relates to the concerted schemes of modern land settlement which we hope to introduce. But at the same time, there is now this tremendous immediate

hunger for land. There are lots of land-hungry people, while to our own sorrow we know that there are at the moment large settlement areas of unused land that can be beneficially occupied by those people. That is the short-term aspect and is, I should say, one of the matters which the Land Settlement Department must, and indeed will, undertake at once. There are areas lying aback of freehold lands and on the river banks, which undoubtedly can be thrown open back to beneficial occupation at comparatively little cost. That is, as I said, the short-term facet, and I feel sure the Department will get on with this as rapidly as possible.

As regards the North West District I must confess myself completely humiliated in regards to the remarks of the hon. Member, Mr. Phang, about the Report of the Roth Committee. There was that Committee that investigated the whole situation of the North West District, and it made some recommendations. I remember, while I was Financial Secretary, going through that Report. It is the case that various Departments were involved, and many of the problems are almost insoluble, but nevertheless something could have been done. It seems that in the interim, when the new Government took over, the particular paper got lost. I heard that they were sub-divided into various departmental files, some going to the Agricultural Department. There was no co-ordination of the whole business, and, consequently, I am sorry to say, nothing has been done about the Report of Mr. Roth's Committee. The hon. Member, Mr. Phang, has the consolation of the remarks I made earlier on, that perhaps the North West District may come into its own in another way, and may well become the envy of less favoured districts in a few years.

Sir, there is a comment in the hon. the Financial Secretary's Budget Statement, which has struck me with some force. It appears curiously enough

under the sub-head "Currency". The hon. the Financial Secretary made this cryptic remark :

"I now come to Currency—one of the services at present unifying the greater part of the Caribbean into a single monetary area and a factor which should greatly help to pave the way to a federal set-up."

I have not the slightest idea of what was in the hon. the Financial Secretary's mind in making that remark, but I do want to say this, and before I say it I would like to emphasize that what I say is my personal view. It is not an official statement from the Government or a Member of the Government. I feel I am entitled to say it, because I have reached in my career a certain situation of personal independence. I say with all modesty that I am entitled to say what I feel is for the good of this country and its people. I feel that the time has come when we in this country must have a second thought about Caribbean Federation. I feel that we in British Guiana will be just as important to Federation as Federation is to us.

The hon. Member, Mr. Jailal, spoke of vision. I have long had a vision about this. You will remember, Sir, we both had the honour of representing this country in Jamaica when Her Majesty the Queen visited that Island. On the night that the Queen left Jamaica we were guests at a banquet at the University College on the occasion of the opening of the new Senate House. I had the most distinguished honour of giving the toast of the evening — The University College—and I must say I drew very largely on my imagination and my visionary power. You will remember, Sir, that I spoke then of the vision of a great Dominion, a new Dominion based on British Guiana and extending through the arc of the West Indian Islands right up to British Honduras in the North-West. That is not only a vision. It is something that I feel that we in this country should join and make a

practical reality. I feel that even on selfish grounds, the grounds of our economy, it is essential that we should get moving about it. We must realize that it would become almost impossible when there is Federation with a Customs Union for us to get the same privileges with regard to our products, notably rice, as we enjoy today.

There is another thing. Is it not a paradox that literally thousands of inhabitants of the Caribbean area should be trekking northwards to the United Kingdom and—this is a strange fact which has recently come to my notice — among those migrants the number of Guianese, or people of Guianese descent, appears to be only second to the number of those from Jamaica? It seems incredible, but I got that from an official source. Here in British Guiana we have a very large territory, as big as England and Scotland. Here we have room for everyone. With the kind of schemes we are talking of — major schemes—there is room for all Guianese — the Indians who have spent their lives in developing the coastland and the people of African descent who spent their lives as pioneers of the interior. Given large-scale development—I am talking now about development where really large sums of capital would have to be spent in this country —there is room in British Guiana for our own people, and for the surplus people of the West Indian Islands as well.

What I am trying to say is that a union of that nature would probably present us with the opportunity for getting investment capital of the magnitude which is required for the development of British Guiana. I would hope to see a vote, not of this size for the economic development of this country, but a much larger amount for the economic development of the whole of British Guiana under Federation. That is as far as I would like to take this subject today, and I would only add that if I were going to join a political party I would coin for it another special

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slogan. I have already made one in my speech on the Budget—"Time is not on our side." My new slogan would be "Federation and Development Now." That is what I would urge on my political party, if I had one.

I have already taken up far too much time in this debate, and probably added not very much to its value, but I hope I have submitted something first to the thoughts of hon. Members. We have listened to the speech of the Financial Secretary in moving the second reading of the Appropriation Bill on the 17th of December, we have spent three weeks in Finance Committee. Today is the 10th day of February and the Estimates are not formally approved yet. The Appropriation Bill is still to be passed, and someone has already said that that is a grave handicap. We have had a discussion on this Budget which has certainly followed a line I myself never expected; it is too much to ask Members that when we get into Committee on the Bill, and when the Financial Secretary moves the Schedule of Expenditure for the Bill, that we agree not to discuss it any further, and that the Financial Secretary merely moves that the Schedule in the Bill be replaced by the Schedule which has been approved by the Finance Committee? I quite appreciate that that would limit discussion on details of some expenditure, but Members could still speak, because it does not mean that individual Heads would not be called. Time is getting on. We must give authority for the appropriations of the year. We have a job to do—let us get on with the job.

Mr. Speaker : The hon. Member made a suggestion on procedure and I did not want to interrupt. The hon. Member and I have been Members in this Council Chamber when the Estimates were not approved until mid-June of the following year. When the

hon. Member refers to the fact that time is marching on, he will recall that we have marched on a good deal since we are not now under Treasury control. That was the situation in this Colony many years ago. But I am speaking now with a desire to get the Estimates approved within a reasonable time. I am waiting to hear Lt-Colonel Haywood, if he can, propose the substitution of a better procedure than we are having now. I cannot quite see how we can have some previous discussion concerning the Budget. How are we to know what the Estimates are? A preview of that nature does not occur—though I do not speak with the knowledge of a financial man. I would like the hon. Member to make some more reference to it—it is an important point.

Another comment I would like to make it that we are considering the preparation of two Estimates — practically two Budgets—and I am glad to be able to add my meed of appreciation of the work of the Financial Secretary in this regard in the time at his disposal.

I am just at the moment not disposed to limit the criticism on any detail relating to any Head in the Estimates when it comes under discussion. I have always felt that this is an important item of the Colony's legislation and it is highly desirable that the greatest latitude of discretion should be given to Members, particularly where we have a Government composed as we are. It is never good to come into this Council with an agreed policy. If any Member still wishes to speak on some detail—I do not mean an over-range discussion—I would prefer him to do so now, than at some future time. I do not think an hour or so would matter very much.

Sir Frank McDavid : Since you refer to our mutual experience in the

past, with great respect, Sir, may I submit that the procedure in the past is not the one in force today. In the days to which you refer we were dealing with the Estimates on a specific motion "That this Council approves of the Estimates of Expenditure" and Head by Head the Estimates were gone through in full Council. Sir, a new procedure took its place a few years ago, and we are now in Council on a Bill—the Appropriation Bill—and before the Committee stage one is permitted an opportunity to go through it in great detail. Consequently, when the Committee stage on the Bill is reached there is no compelling necessity to speak at all. It is entirely a matter for the Council to accept the Schedule as amended.

Mr. Speaker: At the request of the Financial Secretary I was going to put the Schedule as a whole. But again I say, if any Member wishes to make any remarks in respect of the increase or decrease of any expenditure I am not disposed to prevent him from doing so. The hon. Member has not followed my criticism. This Schedule, as I see it, was laid on the table in January, 1955, and the Estimates on the 17th December 1954. We have not been such a long time in examining the two Budgets.

The Attorney General: But, Sir, who says there has been undue delay? It is the democratic right of Members to give expression to their views on matters of this sort. This Council is of a different structure, and by the nature of that, it is essential they should make their comments, though I am not saying they should make them at considerable length. It is in the interest of the Colony that this Legislature should make itself felt in so far as matters of this sort are concerned. I have refrained from making any comment, but I have been in this Legislature from 1945, and previous to that

I had been an elected Member in another place, from 1930.

The Financial Secretary: I think all my hon. friend meant was that the Report of the Finance Committee was 99.9 per cent. unanimous, and we should not seek a time like the Committee stage to do things we ought to do in open Council, but if there is any point which any hon. Member would like to make in Committee stage, he is quite at liberty to do so.

In Finance Committee I have never endeavoured to stifle the expression of any Member's views, and certainly I do not think it would be a right thing to stifle any Member in Council. But we have gone into Finance Committee and we have made a unanimous Report, and all that is being asked is that when we go into Committee we should not go over the things we have already done.

Mr. Speaker: One hon. Member has already said that he is reserving his remarks for the Schedule.

Mr. Lord: I should like to join in paying tribute to the hon. the Financial Secretary for his presentation of the Budget and for the time and care he must have taken to prepare it. I think also that Members will be highly gratified at the manner in which he conducted the proceedings in Finance Committee. I think also in examining his Budget Statement one must, like the hon. Member, Sir Frank McDavid express gratification at the fact that the National Income has risen to a sum of approximately \$185 million.

With regard to our natural assets I would like to refer to Forests. In the Budget Statement the erection of the 2.8 million dollar sawmill of British Guiana Timbers Limited was mentioned. But that sawmill cannot be an economical project unless it is worked to

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full capacity, and I think every encouragement should be given to the loggers to provide means for that mill to work at full capacity. The Conservator of Forests has advocated the use of seasoned secondary timbers. To some extent his advice is being followed up by the Housing Department, but unless the Public Works Department makes use of his advice in using these timbers for the construction of Government buildings the flow will be insufficient. At the present time, among our timbers greenheart is our greatest revenue-earner and it is getting farther and farther so. Extraction costs are going up, and it is necessary to draw attention to our properly seasoned secondary timbers.

I have read with interest of the attempt by the Forest Department to initiate a forest plantation of imported pine, and I would like to feel that in doing so they have gone into the question of the regeneration of our own forest. So far as I am aware, there has been no project of that nature by the Forest Department.

As regards interior potentialities, I am not, perhaps, one who is familiar with the problems of the interior, but I do not think the interior could be properly developed unless we are provided with better transport and communication. I think it is a waste of time going on as we have done in the past. The one road in the interior—the Bartica-Potaro-Issano road—has remained practically the same way as when it was established 20 years ago. There has been no improvement in the road surface. In other countries methods have been employed of excavating the sand down to a depth of about 18 inches and using a sand-cement mixture which has stood up to heavy traffic and also carried a very satisfactory surface. The P.W.D., I believe, had a laboratory set

up some years ago for soil stabilisation purposes, and I think that is one of the items we can possibly investigate. The wear and tear, according to the figures produced by the Transport Department in connection with the interior road, has been something enormous, and I think the time has come when we must do something about it.

Mention has also been made in the Budget about hydro-electric development, and I was glad to see that a licence has been granted to those for whom it is being carried on. It is all very well to have gauging stations at the various falls in the rivers, but that is only half the picture. That information has to be supplemented and, simultaneous with the gauging of these rivers, surveys should be carried out and the topography of the country studied to establish whether or not the Colony lends itself to the establishment of the necessary reservoirs and other storage facilities to maintain a constant head of water. I feel that this is a matter which should be tackled with the utmost urgency. It is no good learning in a few years' time that the Potaro river would be dry, and that it would be necessary to have a reservoir in order to keep the river up to a certain level.

With regard to the question of oil exploration, I feel that the action taken by H.M. Government in proclaiming sovereignty over the territorial waters of the Colony to the limits of the Continental shelf is most timely, as only last night I heard that there has been some difference of opinion between fishermen of this Colony and their Dutch counterparts over a certain fishing bank. I have also read with great interest of the arrival in this country of an expert petroleum technologist, now that there is the possibility of drilling for oil being started. I think that we will now solve the very debatable question as to

whether or not there is oil in this Colony in commercial quantities, and I think every effort should be made to decide it now.

With regard to the Development Estimates, I have been concerned over the amount expended under this head during last year—a sum of nearly \$14 million—and I trust that, as His Excellency pointed out in a speech he made when he returned from England, every penny of it has been properly brought into account. The previous speaker has referred to the alleged dishonesty which appears to be so prevalent in the Colony today but, be that as it may, I would certainly urge the Administration to adopt the sternest possible measures in order to stamp out any tendency towards dishonesty in the Public Service. The reason for it can, possibly, be attributed not so much to the high cost of living but, as I have heard it said, the cost of high living.

The Development Estimates for 1955 call for the expenditure of over \$19 million. This is without any request for funds for land settlement, but in a short while estimates for this important phase of the Development Programme will be placed before this Council. The hon. Mr. Macnie has expressed concern at the delay in settling people on the land, but he can be assured that the preparatory work is being actively carried out, and special means adopted to ensure that the lands will be allotted to farmers who are landless; who have not had enough lands to maintain their families, or who have to rent lands at exorbitant charges. There has been no public statement with respect to the Pilot Scheme, but the Pilot Scheme is just to carry out the recommendations of Mr. Brown, the Land settlement expert who visited the Colony over a year ago, but it may be of interest to Members to learn that there are several other projects which are be-

ing actively considered by the Land Settlement Department, both on Crown land and on land that is private property which has to be acquired from the owners, to the extent of some 10,000 acres.

Members may have also read with interest a recent Press release in which it was stated that the Directors of the B.G. Rice Development Company had decided to hand over Pln. Onverwagt to the Land Settlement Department, the estate having an area of about 6,000 areas. As Sir Frank McDavid (Member for Agriculture, Forests, Lands and Mines) has stated, there are two settlement schemes, one on a long-term basis and the other in which settlers would be able to carry on agricultural cultivation on a rental basis. Estimates are being drawn up in these respects, and the Land Settlement Department hopes, within a few weeks, to start putting people on the land.

It should be emphasized that care has to be taken in selecting these settlers. It has to be realized that the previous land settlements in places like Cane Grove, Vergenoegen and Anna Regina, were taken on by Government more or less as welfare measures. Today we are hoping—and this is the aim of the Department—that any land settlement project undertaken should be an economic project whereby people would be employed throughout the year at a rewarding level of employment. That being so, we can only improve a settlement by moving all the people to an internal area, whereby land which was formerly of little or no value would become of immense value to the community.

I was very glad to hear reference made to the F.O.A. officials in our midst, and I would also like to pay a tribute to the service they are rendering this Colony. From my association with certain officials of the Housing Department I am satisfied that there is a

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great deal to be learnt from the work and the good example they are setting in this Colony. I should like to see our own public officers evincing the same spirit of sacrifice and co-operation that they have shown. Finally, Mr. Speaker, I should like to feel that this interim Government has earned the confidence of the community, as it is only by our own actions that we will eventually be judged.

Mr. Carter: Much ground has been covered by previous speakers and their addresses merit congratulation, but I was particularly enamoured of the speeches made by the hon. Mr. Jallal and the hon. Dr. Fraser. They not only touched the subjects with which I wanted to deal, but they dealt with them in exactly the same manner as I would have handled them. Since I have shared their views, however, I guess I will have to share the criticism levelled at the hon. Mr. Jallal.

I think very little more need to be said on the Budget Statement, but there are one or two points I would like to make further mention of. First of all, I agree that the hon. the Financial Secretary has performed a very good job in presenting us with this Budget. I know that his has been a very arduous task, but it has won the unanimous praise of this Council. At the same time I would like to ask, like my friend, Mr. Jallal, where is the vision or the planning for the future? I know that the hon. the Financial Secretary is not responsible for the vision or the planning. He depends, I believe, on the Heads of Departments in submitting their estimates, but thereafter the job is to find the money to meet the expenditure.

This year's Estimates call for an expenditure of \$5,811,000 in excess of the approved estimates for 1954. The question is: from what source this excess is to come? Taxation of course, but who will be paying this added taxation? Is it not the same few industries that we

have and the 400,000 inhabitants who have been paying it all the time? Regardless of what happens, the small man will feel the pinch, for it eventually falls on his shoulders as the beast of burden he has always been.

There is one other congratulation I would like to offer, and it is to the hon. Mr. Tello who has given this Council and the general public a progress report on all that Government has accomplished during the past year. But there were in his speech some mis-statements and some omissions which I will try to rectify if I can remember them as I go along. The first mis-statement he made was that all the measures brought before this Council were brought on the initiative of the Executive Council, and that the "floor" Members sat complacently for 12 months, waiting until now, Budget time, to criticise. I would like the hon. Member to bear in mind that the Standing Orders give priority to Government measures, and that there have been several motions of which notice has been given by "floor" Members, but it takes nearly 12 months before a Member's motion appears on the Order Paper. If we have to harass this Council to get our motions brought forward early I could do so very successfully, but I understand that such matters are left to the discretion or decision of the Executive Council. I say that subject to correction. I know that every one of those motions was of a progressive and/or developmental nature. It is known that I gave notice of two motions some time ago — one for the establishment of a pilot agricultural farm school on the Demerara River, and another for an investigation of the possibilities of establishing a plywood industry in this country.

I have before me a list of commodities imported into this country to the value of about \$10 million, every item of which could have been successfully produced and/or manufactured in this country. Looking at the list I sometimes

ask myself whether the Department of Agriculture wilfully discourages the farmers from producing those things so as to enable the Financial Secretary to obtain revenue, because I find that the Customs Department is the largest revenue collecting Department in this country. This year it is expected to collect about \$12 million in revenue.

Mr. Speaker: Would it be convenient to the hon. Member to mention those items to which he refers?

Mr. Carter: I should be very happy to do so, Sir. Firstly I have here 1,277,797 lbs. of lard, margarine, and lard substitutes imported to the value of \$505,157. I lived in Barbados for a few years and I do not remember seeing many coconut trees on the island, yet this Colony has imported lard substitutes manufactured in Barbados, for which purpose I believe they use British Guiana copra. Next I see that we imported 5,405,572 lbs of condensed milk, powdered milk and evaporated milk to the value of \$2,431,483. Then there are peanuts—776,312 lbs to the value of \$221,174, and peas, beans and lentils, 4,822,511 lbs. to the value of \$654,443, and so on.

The most hurtful part of it all is that we have a Co-operative Development Organisation in this country. I do not know whether that Department accepts advice from outsiders, but I think its job should be to initiate ideas which could be successfully used in the co-operative movement. We have hundreds of shoemakers in British Guiana and yet the figures I have here show an importation of 29,661 dozen pairs of leather shoes valued at \$1,318,545. I think it would be a wonderful thing if the Co-operative Organisation could encourage some of the more progressive of our shoemakers to form a co-operative for the manufacture of shoes locally, because I have seen shoes manufactured in this Colony which were second to none of the imported shoes.

In 1951 two Ordinances were passed by the Legislature — one to encourage

the establishment of new industries by exemption from Customs duties of imported capital equipment, and the other to provide a five-year tax holiday for acceptable new industries. So that apart from what money would be spent in wages, licences, leases and local purchases, even if new industries are established we have no hope of collecting taxes for five years. I would strongly advise that whatever hindrances there have been in the past to the establishment of new industries they should cease now. I agree with what Sir Frank McDavid said just now about Federation. I think the earlier Federation is accepted by this Colony the earlier will be the salvation of British Guiana.

It might be a little bit off the line if I reminded the hon. Mr. Tello, who referred to the improvements made in our hospitals, that he forgot to mention that the doctors and nurses have not changed their inhuman attitude towards the patients in those institutions. I refer particularly to the Best Hospital where the patients suffer greatly. I have a petition in my hand from the patients, on which I will work as vigorously as I can.

Mr. Speaker: Does the hon. Member mean that he is going to lay it on the table?

Mr. Carter: No, Sir. I do not intend to do that. To return to the Department of Agriculture, I think Sir Frank McDavid has clarified the air somewhat by outlining to us some of the plans for improvement, but when we passed the item with respect to the remuneration of 32 Agricultural Instructors I wanted to know where they were located, and what were their duties. In the United Kingdom, and as near to us as Jamaica, the Agriculture Instructors instruct the farmers as to what to cultivate, and see that they do it. In this country that group of Government employees seem to have more of a holiday than a job. I am thinking of a particular officer in a certain district where the farmers see him pass on his motor cycle

[Mr. Carter]

at 8 o'clock in the morning and return at 4 o'clock in the afternoon, but no one can say where he goes. That instructor was stopped by a farmer on several occasions and asked for some advice with respect to a certain plant disease that was affecting two of his crops, but his reply was that he did not know what to do about it.

I would like the Agricultural Instructors of British Guiana first to be located in each and every agricultural area, and their job should be to discourage the people whom we call farmers, from the cultivation of uneconomic crops, like plantains for instance. I have studied the scientific side of that cultivation. You would find that if the same area in plantains was put under tomatoes, the farmer would be able to produce two crops per year at about 600 per cent. more profits than he could ever get from plantains. The farmers are not on the whole to be blamed. They are just doing what their fathers did. If that can happen once and they are satisfied that that type of agriculture is more profitable to them than the one they are accustomed to, I am certain they would cultivate the more economical crops and thereby raise their standard of living. The farmer of today is no incentive to his son ever becoming a farmer, because since he has been seeing his father farming he has been doing so with an old fork, hoe and shovel. I would therefore strongly advise the Department of Agriculture to become more worthy of its name.

We have been sending agricultural students to various institutions abroad at this country's expense, and on returning some of them are placed in occupations of which they know absolutely nothing. For instance, a Veterinary Surgeon returned to this country and was placed to do the work of a Plant Pathologist. The money paid to him is wasted as he cannot honestly say he works for it. The Agricultural Department should be the backbone

of a country, and particularly this one that has been acclaimed from time immemorial to be an agricultural country. We cannot depend entirely on sugar and rice alone for our agricultural economy. The Reports of the Department of Agriculture are most discouraging to any person who knows anything about agriculture or animal culture.

This question of duty-free gasoline seems to be a sore one. Duty-free gasoline was introduced to enable the timber industry and the rice industry to get some benefit from their efforts. Although I am not in favour of anything free because it never encourages one to become independent, and further anything that is obtained free is always abused, nevertheless I do not feel, even if it is the desire of Government to withdraw this duty-free gasoline, that it should be done so suddenly. I would prefer that a year's notice be given to the people who depend on it. Suddenly cutting it off would rupture their economy completely. With regard to the timber industry, the timber has to be hauled from 10 to 15 miles inland, and if gasoline has to be purchased at the regular price the industry would go out of existence. I understand that a Committee is now in session studying whether it should be withdrawn or not. I personally hope that it will not be withdrawn at least now, even if it has to be withdrawn at some future date. I do say that sufficient notice should have been given those people affected. I, as an engineer, do not believe they will be able to convert their gasoline engines to accommodate the use of kerosene. It will not be a profitable experiment. As regards the diesel trucks, apart from being expensive the spare parts are not easily obtainable.

There are two other sore questions that worry me. One is the retrenchment of a number of employees of the Commodity Control Board. I understand that when they are retrenched, it is only then they would

get their gratuity, but if they are allowed to resign they would not get it. In the first place I feel that as employees of Government, whether quasi or not, they should be absorbed in some of the development projects. To retrench them only means that you are going to swell the ranks of the unemployed. The development projects are searching for employees. Rather than employ someone new, I think, those men should be given that opportunity for employment.

The other burning question where I am concerned is the appointment of persons from abroad to subordinate posts in the Civil Service. As far as I can remember, the immediate appointments are about four. Whoever or whatever organisation locally is responsible for engineering those appointments at the Colonial Office, I do not know, but I blame the people, the Civil Service and particularly those who are members of the Civil Service Association. From time immemorial I can remember many letters appeared in the Press, and many petitions were sent to the Governor from the Civil Service Association, and after waiting for a lapse of a year or more the reply has always been unsatisfactory. It may be very unbecoming for me to use this Legislative Council Chamber as a Trade Union rostrum, but I must say that if those men had the ambition over a number of years to climb to the top of their Department and, after having arrived there even in an acting position, others are appointed to take those places, then I call upon the members of the Civil Service Association to assert themselves as trade unionists for once in their existence, because if we in this Council cannot stop such a practice, they as workers would have to do it.

The hon. Member, Sir Frank, came to the rescue by giving us a better picture of the progress that took place in 1954, and he has encouraged me thereby to see a little his way. It is unfortunate that the progress report has not got into our hands before. If Government had assisted us we would not have

earned the criticism that we have sat here for twelve months and allowed the Members of the Executive Council to do all the work. I tried to get Government early in 1954 to assist Members of the Interim Government in getting around to all these development schemes, but failed. I need say no more, Sir, because I feel that every phase of the Budget has been touched on in some form or other. The balance I shall leave to the Committee stage. Before I sit down I would like again to congratulate the hon. the Financial Secretary for presenting us with his Budget Statement and the Draft Estimates for 1955.

Miss Collins: It is fitting on this occasion to take stock during the Budget debate. We are faced on the one hand with the high cost of administration, and on the other hand with economic industrialisation, and with the task of making them work together. I wish to draw attention to the growing population of the Colony and the fact that in the face of widespread unemployment we cannot depend altogether on our three major industries—rice, sugar and bauxite. I would like to urge that we immediately try to establish one or two new industries.

A few days ago I was at the Employment Exchange and I saw crowds of men seeking work. I sympathised with these men and I learned from some of them that for months they have been without employment, and the Exchange had none to offer them. Some of them report to the Exchange week after week, month after month, day after day. His Excellency the Governor has urged that we should build up new industries and I am quite sure we have not succeeded. We can only have the confidence of the people when we can find work for them. I humbly submit to this Council that whatever we may do, we should see that these men do not suffer like this, because they are entitled to certain living conditions provided they are prepared to work. I hope that the time is not too far distant when the appeals to this

[Miss Collins]

Council to provide more employment and new industries will bear fruit. I am tired of reading mere reports year after year. I am one who has been complaining for 12 years that other West Indian Colonies, like Trinidad and Barbados, do not only talk about plans on paper but actually carry out those plans.

As regards the Commodity Control Organisation, people working there were served with a notice of retrenchment. If we can find it possible to absorb those people in some department of Government, it would be a very good thing.

With regard to the Social Welfare Department I would like to say that I look forward to the day when social welfare work will not be done entirely behind a desk. I would like our Social Welfare Officers to go out more among the people. We would like to know boys and girls before they become delinquents. Perhaps we will be able to find employment for them, and I believe that in that way we can help solve some of the problems that face us. There have been cases in which responsible officers have been sent away for training, and when they returned they were seconded to some other department. Officers who are trained in social welfare work should remain and serve in that department. There is a lot to be done in this field, and I am quite sure the Member for Local Government needs their co-operation. I would like strongly to say to this Council that the policy is bad.

I am not prepared to burden this Council with, a long speech, because I believe in action. We cannot retain the confidence of people by simply talking, but by trying to implement schemes that would relieve the situation.

As regards efforts toward better housing, they are in the form of an expansion—not a new plan. We must congratulate the Central Housing and Planning Authority as well as the Member for Labour, Health and Housing (Mr.

Cummings) on their work. This is one of the problems we are trying to solve.

As regards Education, I am quite sure that everybody in the Colony is satisfied that we are developing the educational standards of our people.

I am much worried over the question of the appointment of qualified Guianese to senior posts in the Civil Service. I am saying this, that if we have Guianese who are qualified to fill certain positions, then I respectfully submit to this Council that they should be appointed to those positions. In the past there has been a lot of dissatisfaction in the Civil Service on this question, and we do not want to return to the old order. If we do not have men or women who are qualified to fill certain positions, then I say we must have them brought from abroad, and there could be no objection.

I have one or two more recommendations to make, but I do not think this is the proper time to proceed with them, so I reserve further comments for later on.

Mr. Cummings: I rise to associate myself with the congratulatory remarks made in favour of the hon. the Financial Secretary by my colleagues. It is very easy to criticize a Budget. To destroy is simple, but I am sure that everyone who listened will agree that to construct is very difficult. Speaking as a Member of the Executive Council I know the care and pains with which the Financial Secretary prepared this Budget. Many aspects of it were discussed with us at various stages of its preparation, and I can fully appreciate the great effort he made in presenting it.

Now, I feel a little disappointed this afternoon, due to the fact that I was not in any way attacked, as I hoped I would

have been; hon. Members have been very generous to me. I feel I should take this opportunity of saying publicly that whatever measure of success we have achieved in the Departments falling within the ambit of my portfolio were achieved through the co-operation and team-work of the Heads of Departments concerned, and their staffs. In particular, I wish to record Government's appreciation of the invaluable assistance given by the hon. Member, Mr. W. T. Lord, during the time he acted as Commissioner for Housing. I had to lean very much on his tremendous experience, and I feel that much that has been accomplished was due to the fact that we had an administrator of his calibre in our Department.

I would like to bring up to date the statement which was made by the hon. Member the Financial Secretary in his Budget Speech. It was correct at the time he made it. I refer to his remark that the Housing target was not likely to be reached in 1954. But actually, we were two above the target at the 30th of December, 1954. We had planned for 800 houses being either completed, under construction or out on contract by that date. On the 30th we had 802.

In reply to what the hon. Member, Miss Collins, was saying a moment ago I remember in my speech on the 1954 Budget I indicated in this Council that I proposed to recommend that Government seek the assistance of the International Labour Office for the purpose of conducting an unemployment and under-employment survey, and also a cost-of-living survey which would result in a revision of the present cost-of-living index, which seems to be the root of much trouble. I am pleased to say that the I.L.O. has responded to that request and only last evening Dr. Livchen, a senior official of the I.L.O. arrived, and with the Commissioner of Labour, the Registrar General and my-

self had talks, upon the basis of which the surveys will be conducted. We are to have two experts and Dr. Livchen thinks we can have them by the first of July. I think that will go a long way in assisting us to plan and to appreciate what the real problem is in regard to unemployment.

I do not think any useful purpose will be served by attempting to repeat what so many of my colleagues have so ably said about progress made, generally in 1954, but I will hazard a statement which, I feel sure, will have the support of informed opinion. It is not intended to be a boast—I do not think we have reached the stage where we should endeavour to do that — but I venture to say that this Interim Government has achieved more in one year than any other Government has done in a similar period.

Mr. Ramphal: Sir, I will say a few words, unless you are going to adjourn now.

Mr. Speaker: Not if you are prepared to say them in a few minutes.

Mr. Ramphal: I merely want to say that I noted with considerable satisfaction the reference made in the Budget Statement, on page 17, in respect of a Public Accounts Committee. A Financial Secretary less honest than our Financial Secretary would have introduced a Public Accounts Committee without a public acknowledgement of it, as he has done. I wish personally to thank him for his boldness in giving expression to the fact that that for which some Members of this Council were slated on the last occasion is now to be adopted as a policy of Government. Again, I wish to thank him for his boldness and honesty in this matter. I feel sure he will have absolutely no regrets in the days to come that he has assisted in setting up this Committee.

[Mr. Ramphal]

May I take this opportunity, Sir, on behalf of the Labour Department to thank the hon. Member Mr. Tello for his very kind references to the Resident Tutor of the University College of the West Indies Extra-Mural Department? The Resident Tutor is one with whom we have worked in very close contact in educational matters for trade unions. I have been asked to say "thank you" Mr. Tello, and, on my own behalf also, I do so.

The fact that I have been successful during the short period I have had ment, appears to me, in some respects, to be a beginner's luck. I have embarked on the leadership of the Department with a considerable amount of goodwill from employers, employees and the general public, and I shall myself endeavour to maintain that goodwill. As a Labour Department we are back-room boys as it were—our failures must be publicised, our successes must be kept in secret. We cannot, like the cock, crow about the yard when we have had success. I accept any mead of praise for the Labour Department on behalf of the officers who have worked with me.

I desire also to thank the hon. Mr. Tello for referring to the very valuable work that has been done by the Labour Welfare and Housing Committee. The Committee has undertaken a tremendous amount of work within the short time that it has been functioning, and it is one of only three members, these being the Commissioner of Labour, the hon. Mr. Macnie and Mr. Shakoor. In the space of a year the Committee has met many times—sitting three times a week—and it has already seen the erection of over 3,000 houses for sugar workers in various parts of the Colony. I say that only as a matter of observation, however, because I have only been in office for a short time, but I want to pay a tribute to Mr. Bissell, my predecessor, for the work he has done, and also to the hon. Mr. Macnie and Mr. Shakoor for the interest taken in the Committee and in the Labour Department as a whole. Little do the workers know how very much these gentlemen have worked in their interest. I wish again to express my thanks to the hon. Mr. Tello for his very kind remarks.

Mr. Speaker : Council will now adjourn until 2 p.m. tomorrow.