

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

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

WEDNESDAY, 16TH MARCH, 1955.

The Council met at 2 p.m.

PRESENT :

His Honour 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.

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 (Mem-
ber for Labour, Health and Housing).

The Hon. W. O. R. Kendall (Mem-
ber for Communications and Works).

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

The Hon. G. H. Smellie.

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. L. A. Luckhoo, Q.C.

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

Mr. C. A. Carter.

Mr. E. F. Correia.

Rev. D. C. J. Bobb.

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 :

The Hon R. B. Gajraj —on leave

The Hon. R. C. Tello —on leave

The Speaker read prayers.

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Tuesday, 15th March, 1955, as printed and circulated, were taken as read and confirmed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

LEAVE TO MR. TELLO

Mr. Speaker: I have to announce that the hon. Member, Mr. Tello, has been granted leave from the 18th to the 21st of March.

PRESENTATION OF REPORTS AND DOCUMENTS

The Financial Secretary (Mr. Fraser): I beg to lay on the table:

The Report of the Trade Commissioner in the United Kingdom for the British West Indies, British Guiana and British Honduras for the period 1st July, 1954 to 31st December, 1954.

Sir Frank McDavid (Member for Agriculture, Forest, Lands and Mines): I beg to lay on the table:

The Annual Report and Financial Statement of the East Demerara Water Conservancy Board for the year ended 31st December, 1954.

INACCURATE PRESS REPORT

Sir Frank McDavid: Mr. Speaker, before we take the Order of the Day I crave your permission to make a statement on a point of privilege. Arising out of yesterday's debate there appears in today's issue of the "Daily Argosy" a most **inaccurate report** of some remarks I made yesterday. It is not often that reporters of that newspaper are guilty of gross inaccuracy, but in this case the inaccuracy is so serious that I feel compelled to take notice and to endeavour to have it corrected.

On page 4 there appears this:

"Sir Frank McDavid, Member for Agriculture, interrupting, asked "Where does

the speaker get that idea from? The mechanism of the Rance Report does not say the basis of federation will be adult suffrage. Nowhere in the constitution of Australia, the pattern of which we have taken, is there any mention of adult suffrage."

Those were the words attributed to me. In the first place I never referred to Australia at all, and I do not think I used the words "adult suffrage". What I did was to intervene at a time when Mr. Sugrim Singh was developing a particular point. He was deavouring—and I am sure he will agree with me—to make a point, that if and when a general election is held in British Guiana for seats in a Federal House of Representatives, that election will take place in a single unitary constituency, and he argued from that point on, that there was a possibility of a certain Party—indeed, he did use the word "subversive"—gaining all the seats and thereby representing British Guiana in the Federal Parliament.

That was the point Mr. Sugrim Singh was endeavouring to make, and I intervened to explain that he was not accurate. I took the trouble to read from the White Paper containing the Federal Plan, and I read from page 9—

"The Governor in Council or equivalent authority in each Unit to which more than one seat has been allocated should be empowered after consultation with the Unit Legislature by regulation to divide the Unit into as many constituencies as there are seats to be filled."

That was all I was trying to explain; that in the election of a Federal House of Representatives there would in British Guiana be a sub-division in constituencies equivalent to the number of seats to which he referred.

Now, this report in the "Daily Argosy" implies that I said that the Rance Report does not base the Federal structure on adult suffrage. Of course, most people who have read the Rance

Report know full well that the whole basis of the Federal structure is adult suffrage. No one, and least of all myself, would quarrel about that, because I myself was a strong advocate of adult suffrage. I feel embarrassed as a result of this particular paragraph, since it makes it appear that I am not in full agreement with adult suffrage, not only for British Guiana but for the whole area. I believe there is a reporter of the "Daily Argosy" here, and I hope he has taken a careful note of what I have said, and will endeavour to correct the mistake that has been made. I shall be available to him if he wishes, at the end of this meeting, to explain further what I have said.

Mr. Sugrim Singh: I would like to say that what the Member for Agriculture has said is perfectly true. That is exactly what he said. There was no question of Australia, or of any election in Australia.

Sir Frank McDavid: Thank you, Mr. Singh.

Mr. Speaker: I feel sorry myself that this has happened, because any inaccuracy appearing in a public newspaper would be analysed accordingly by the public. I have already pointed out that newspaper reporters should endeavour to be very accurate, and quite recently a Member complained to me that the report reproduced in a certain newspaper was only half of his speech. I have ceased to make complaints about my own remarks. The complaint is that reporters cannot hear me. I accept that view. I have had to suffer in silence, but whatever my imperfections might be, I think it should be expected that my voice would reach people sitting a few feet away. I feel very strongly on this subject.

It is very important that the proceedings of this Council should have the benefit of reports by capable and

competent reporters. I am speaking now of those who comprise the Official Reporters, and not only of those who represent the newspapers. I happen to know, as a result of very careful enquiry, that the material is not there; it simply is not there. That is the view of those who control the newspapers, and it is a matter which not only I have mentioned. I think it is going to be very difficult to effect a remedy, but I must say that I myself do not like reports that are not quite accurate.

I think the Members of this Legislature are entitled to have the best reporting material in the Colony, and pay for it. I do not know why conditions should be as they are at present, since there is now a much wider scope for reporters, as compared with the days when reporters attached to the newspapers complained that there was nothing they could look forward to. Members will agree with me that it is from seats like theirs that many prominent politicians have risen and reached the positions they occupy. There is room for some of these men in the Law Courts, and I can tell this Council that I tried to investigate how far improved the channels had become for recruiting men for the vacancies which have not yet been filled. I have found that there has been no improvement in the situation, and I do not know what to do. I would have liked to have a selection made in Government's interest, although I do not know what Government's test is, but I know that mine would have been a little more formal and exacting than what exists now. I am quite convinced that the material at our disposal is not of the best. We want more and more capable people to serve as reporters.

Opportunity has been taken to mention that they are pensionable posts, and I have been told by those who administer the newspapers, that they are willing and ready to pay very hand-

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some salaries so as to attract the best qualified persons. I sympathise with the hon. Member (Sir Frank McDavid) and I know that there have been complaints by other Members, but I am aware that in the present circumstances Members are not willing to take matters into their own hands and do something about the matter. I am very sorry that the hon. Member has been so pained. There is no doubt that reports of the proceedings in this Council should be accurate and extensive. As far as members of the Press are concerned, they are given every facility in order to be able to carry out their duties. I am not blaming anybody particularly, but the matter referred to is an important one, and I do not know exactly how this mistake has occurred. I do not wish to blame any particular reporter, but I know most of these young men and am aware of the nature of the difficulties they have to face. I am confident that most of the difficulties they experience are associated with the question of training, and the ability to appreciate matters discussed here.

I have already given a ruling on this question of the coverage given by reporters to debates in this Council—their names, time spent and so on—and I do not know if any Member wishes that we should go beyond that ruling. I could not put the matter any clearer and how the situation can be corrected I do not know. I have already spoken about the inaccuracy of newspaper reports, and if the newspapers will not take any notice of it, well something will have to be done. This much I would say: The first time I called attention to the matter the persons responsible for the publication of the "Guiana Graphic" suggested that some form of punishment should fall on my head if I prevented the Press from getting information that they should have. Members will remember that I did not com-

plain of any inaccuracy. All that I said—what I wanted to complain about—was that the reporters were responsible for the inaccuracy or otherwise of speeches published in the Press. When I was speaking I was not thinking of the Editor or the reporter of any particular newspaper. The Legislature, however, has control of the reporters who serve here from time to time. There is a special rule on that subject, and we can refuse to admit to any meeting reporters who are persistent offenders, or otherwise table reforms. I think the proprietors of the various newspapers should know that, but reporters could be dealt with apart from that.

As I have said, they have my sympathy when it comes to acoustics and certain other things, but I do not think the majority have had sufficient training for a job like that. Of course, all these newspapers will only get whatever they are prepared to pay for. I do not know why in this Colony certain ladies—I mean those who have the ability—should shy away from positions like that. I have spoken over and over about it, but those who are capable will not come forward. I know also that abroad, and in the West Indies, there are some very competent reporters. There are also some very eligible people who are not very anxious, some of them, to leave their jobs. Some of them attend civil ceremonies and so on, but I think they can be found.

I shall direct the Clerk to call the attention of the proprietors and the Editor of the "Daily Argosy" to this erroneous column.

Sir Frank McDavid: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

CONTINUANCE OF PART IX OF HOUSING ORDINANCE

Mr. Speaker: Before proceeding with the Order of the Day, I should

state that there is an item on the Order Paper. Does the hon. Member wish to move his motion? He can move the suspension of the Standing Orders.

Mr. Cummings (Member for Labour, Health and Housing): I know that I did not like to impinge on such an important debate which is in progress, but it is taking such a long time.

Mr. Speaker: I suggest that you move the suspension of the Standing Orders in order to deal with it now.

Mr. Cummings: Very well, Sir, I will do that now. I beg to move the suspension of the Standing Orders in order that I may proceed with the motion standing in my name on the Order Paper.

Sir Frank McDavid: I beg to second the motion.

Question put, and agreed to.

Relevant Standing Order suspended.

Mr. Cummings: I beg to move the following motion standing in my name on the Order Paper as item 12—

"Whereas by Resolution No. III of the Legislative Council passed on the 25th day of March, 1954, Part IX of the Housing Ordinance, 1946 (No. 24 of 1946) was continued in force up to the 31st day of March, 1955;

"And whereas it is desirable that the said part of the Ordinance shall continue in force for a further period;

"Now, therefore, be it resolved that Part IX of the Housing Ordinance, 1946 (No. 24 of 1946), shall continue in force for a further period of one year from the 1st of April, 1955"

Part IX of the Housing Ordinance (No. 24 of 1946) deals with the speedy remedying of insanitary conditions in some areas, and with over-crowding in dwelling-houses. It is therein set out that this part of the Ordinance shall continue in force for a period of five

years from the day of commencement of the Ordinance, and shall expire unless extended from time to time by resolution of this Legislative Council. This Council has been continuing this Ordinance from time to time by resolution. The time has now come when the Ordinance expires, as can be seen from the motion, unless this Council passes a resolution for its continuance. I do not think I need dilate on the necessity for this motion, but briefly to state that the provisions of that part of the Ordinance are to assist us with speedy slum clearance, and in particular to empower us to obtain Demolition Orders. The conditions that necessitated the continuance of the Ordinance from time to time still exist, and consequently I move that this Council resolve the continuation of this legislation.

Sir Frank McDavid: I beg to second the motion.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion adopted.

ITEMS DEFERRED

The Attorney General: I ask leave to defer consideration of the Bill standing in my name.

Mr. Speaker: The Member for Agriculture and the Member for Local Government also desire that consideration of the Bills they are concerned with should be postponed. With the consent of Members, items 1 to 5 will be deferred.

Items 1 to 5 deferred.

ORDER OF THE DAY

British Caribbean Federation

Council then resumed the debate on the following motion by the

Rev. Mr. Bobb:

"That this Council, having noted the steps which are being taken by other

Caribbean Governments and by Her Majesty's Government towards the creation of a British Caribbean Federation, and the statement of the Secretary of State for the Colonies in Parliament to the effect that the constitutional instruments will provide that British Guiana and other territories which might care to do so will be quite free to join the Federation, is of the opinion that British Guiana should join the Federation, and that the question of this country's participation therein should be re-examined.

This Council further prays His Excellency the Governor to take such steps as he may deem fit to keep British Guiana in close touch with the action now proceeding towards the setting up of the Federation, and to ascertain the state of public opinion in this country towards participation in the Federation."

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member, Mr. Sugrim Singh! You had intimated to us that you have a great deal more to say.

Mr. Sugrim Singh: Yes, Your Honour, more in the sense of quite a few facts left to be said, but less on the question of time.

Mr. Speaker: *Multum in parvo!*

Mr. Sugrim Singh: Yes, Your Honour's Latin has not deserted you.

Mr. Speaker: No, not altogether.

Mr. Sugrim Singh: Yesterday afternoon when this debate was temporarily ended, I was developing the point based on Dicey, that the ultimate aim of all Federation is to bring about what can be described as one nation. I was trying to show marked and patent differences in the respective units of this proposed Federation, and I was specifically referring to a national event in the "Land of the Humming Bird" called "Carnival", when the Government spokesmen in one voice asked "Why should it be removed?" I am very glad for that answer. The point

I wish to make is that certain things which have got a religious background and which are deep-rooted seem to take a very long time before they can be eradicated. I am not prepared to say they will never be eradicated, but the point I want to make is that no Legislature, Federal or autonomous, can bring about the desired result or the desire of the Federal Government to shut down tendencies that are marked and deep-rooted. I leave that point there because it seems to have a sociological background. It is my view that time and time alone can bring about that equilibrium which is desired.

I move on to the question of existing closer association between British Guiana and the West Indies. There is no doubt that there are several instances very well known to the hon. Members of this Council. I would be carrying coal to Newcastle to enumerate them, and time is against me. What I want to establish is that it is felt in certain quarters that if British Guiana decides not to participate in this proposed Federation it would either put an end to any closer association or affect, to a substantial degree, the present closer association which exists between British Guiana and the West Indies. I share the opposite view. I say that whether or not there is Federation, the principle of closer association is inevitable, and no Federal Government can put an end to it. Some people may feel that the Islands would say: "Since you have not joined the Federation, we are going to put some sanctions on you. We are not going to have your rice, for instance."

That will never happen. Only a week ago the Manager of the Rice Marketing Board announced the discovery of new markets for our rice. We do not want to encourage it, but our rice industry would not suffer by any such threat. We have a rice official sitting on my right in this Chamber. (Mr. Jailal). I hope he will say some-

thing about this. There will be pastures new in Martinique and Guadeloupe for our rice. Those islands, I have heard someone say, will take 12,000 bags of our rice.

Sir Frank McDavid: Bad rice!

Mr. Sugrim Singh: Those are places that will take our rice. I was going to refer to Venezuela, but I leave that strategically alone. My point is that this rice industry of ours will not suffer by our not entering this proposed Federation, but we cannot get away from closer association. We have distinguished West Indians in our Public Service in this Colony. Similarly, we have Guianese serving in the West Indies. This will go on all the time. At the present time four of the Judges of our Supreme Court are West Indians, and so is the Attorney General who has filled that post with dignity and decorum for many years. That state of affairs will go on, and no Federal Government or Law will stop that. The point I wish to make is that there can be no fear as regards our not entering this Federation. I said yesterday, and I do not wish to repeat it, that Her Majesty's Government was quoted as saying that we would not suffer by not participating in this Federation.

I move on to this point: Who in this Colony and outside of this Colony are clamouring for Federation, and why are they doing so? Chamber of Commerce in their wisdom have declared that they want Federation. They have every right to say so, just the same as every other burial society in this Colony has the right to say so.

Mr. Ramphal: "Every other"?

Mr. Sugrim Singh: That statement was deliberate. What I intended to convey was that every small society in

the rural areas has a right to meet, discuss and pass a resolution saying that hon. Members are patently pro-Federationists.

Mr. Speaker: But you said "every other burial society."

Mr. Sugrim Singh: Some of these statements are deliberately intended to keep Government Members awake. In this Report on Customs Union in the Caribbean you see clearly that Commerce is interested in importation and exportation, comparison of quotas and tariffs. Federation will provide free trade within the region. There is no question of having to make representations and checking up records of what the imports and exports were over a number of years. Commercial people are interested in profits, but our business in this Legislature is the welfare of the entire Colony. That is the important thing.

I move on. A very important local firm, Bookers—according to the statement of one of its officials — wants Federation. We know the conditions which obtain in Japan. Labour is cheap there. China is the most densely populated country in the world. China and India have two-thirds of the world's population, and so labour is cheap in those countries. Should we have Jamaicans, and possibly Barbadians, flocking into this country, as would happen if we consent to join this Federation? It takes only a schoolboy to see that we would have an excess of labour on all the sugar estates of this country. Already there is unemployment in this country, and in the event of a strike those who represent big interests would be able to get other people to work. My point is that this Council must not think of a particular business concern but of the welfare of the Colony as a whole. It is not that I would not like to see Capital and the Chamber of Commerce

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doing good business. To use the words of Julius Caesar, it is not that I love Caesar less, but that I love British Guiana more.

Let me move on to the Civil Service. Under the proposed Federation we are to have two distinct Civil Services—a Federal Civil Service and our local Civil Service. I am glad that the President of our Civil Service Association is a Member of this Council.

Mr. Ramphal: Ex-President.

Mr. Sugrim Singh: I am very glad to be corrected. The ex-President of the Civil Service Association is still a Member of this Council. How often have we not heard him, with all the vehemence at his command, and in his rich sonorous voice, exclaim in this Council: "We want a Guianisation of the Civil Service"? He is not singular in that respect; I too want it. We want to see our own people, wherever possible, occupying high positions in our Civil Service. It is a very desirable thing, but how is the principle of Guianisation of our Civil Service going to be reconciled with the Federal Civil Service? We are going to have top-ranking West Indians being dumped down on us again in this Colony. Where is the idea of Guianisation going to take us? If there is to be a Federal Civil Service it is idle to talk of Guianisation of our Civil Service. I hold in my hand a copy of the widely circulated "Guiana Diary" for the period February 22 to 25, issued by the Government Information Services. Under the heading "Government's Policy of Guianising Civil Service" it states:

"To ensure that qualified Guianese become available for appointment to senior posts in the Public Service, it has been the policy of the British Guiana Government for a number of years, to

provide training facilities by way of scholarships and courses."

In another paragraph it says :

"For 1955, the Legislative Council has voted \$115,000 which will enable 13 scholarships to be offered for university courses leading to degrees in Engineering, Geology, Forestry, Science and Mathematics, and 4 scholarships for primary school teachers to take University Institute Certificate courses. A further \$20,000 has been provided to allow officers to take approved courses overseas."

That is an official report by this Government. At the moment we cannot fill certain posts in the Civil Service, but we are well on the way to training our own people to fill them. My point is: what category of experts are we going to need that we have to join the proposed Federation in order to get them? We are well on the way to having our own people trained and qualified for posts in every conceivable Department, so as to avoid the awkward position of having to advertise for experts to come here on contract and shake the dust of this Colony off their feet after they have completed their contracts. In view of all this, it is justifiable that this Colony should throw all this aside and jump into a West Indian Federation?

I am anxious and eager to hear from the protagonists of Federation what this Colony of ours has to gain from Federation with the West Indies. I want to hear economic facts, cold logic and reasoning. It is all well and good to say that some eminent authority thinks it has something to gain, but there are also authorities who think otherwise. Even a former Governor of this Colony, and a very able Administrator, has told us that this Colony should not join a West Indian Federation. We have that on record. If we have nothing to gain but all to lose I ask the simple question: why should we join this Federation and surrender and put an end to our Development

Plan? The finances of the small islands have reached the major road stop; they are unable to balance their budgets out of their resources. We cannot blame them for desiring Federation. I have cited the authority of Professor Wheare, that in a Federation it is the duty of the stronger units to support and guarantee the national income of the weaker units.

This proposed Federation of the West Indies is an experiment in conditions which are completely different from those of the other Federations in the British Commonwealth, and I suggest caution. I have faith in this Colony. I was born here and I firmly believe that this country of ours is on the way to improvement, and to the ultimate destination we all hope to arrive at some day. We have suffered a set-back, but is there any country in the world, or even in the British Commonwealth of Nations, that has not had upsets in its political evolution? This Colony is not going to remain in the quagmire and be looked upon as a country infested with Communists. The time is coming when reason will dethrone sentiment, and when those subversive people will be removed from the political scene. There will then emerge a country with experience, able to take its proper place in the world.

I have tried my best to put as cogently and as logically as I can the case for the opposition as I see it. I have endeavoured to support the points I have made by reference to accepted authorities and reports. I have an open mind on this most difficult subject. Let us pool our knowledge and experience in deciding this question. It is not proper for us to approach the subject of Federation with preconceived ideas, and throw in our lot with the mover of the motion because we know that perhaps the Colonial Office or the Administration wants British Guiana to join the Federation. Although the inter-

vention of the hon. the Chief Secretary, the spokesman of the Government, to make a statement early in the debate is significant, I have to treat this motion as that of a private Member of this Council. The motion itself bristles with difficulties and contradictions. It is badly worded.

I have made it clear that while this Interim Government — a creature of statute — can do everything it considers necessary for the Colony, there being no limitation of its functions under the law, it should not assume the responsibility to lead this Colony into Federation with the West Indies. I gave as my reason the fact that a decision must come from the people by way of universal adult suffrage or plebiscite. I quoted the views of Lord Halifax, Professor K. C. Wheare, and even Lord Lloyd. I gave my view that if economic stability and financial solvency are the necessary foundations of political independence, as referred to in paragraph 12 of the Rance Report, then this Colony will quicker attain them on its own, rather than joining a Federation in which it will have to share the financial burdens of other units of the Federation. I referred to our natural resources, our enormous development schemes, our rice industry, our bauxite industry, our potential manganese, columbite and tantalite industries, our prospects of oil being found, and our financial reserve.

I have tried to show this Council that every effort is being made to bring us into this Federation because (1) our land space is necessary for the excess population of the Islands, and (2) we will provide a lucrative market for their produce. I gave my view that Federation will not bring about one nation, nor will laws, but it should be left to time, and the operation of sociological principles. I said that I felt that the people who want Federation are motivated by personal reasons calculated to

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benefit a particular section or category of people, and that we must think of the entire Colony.

I referred to the mover's silence on the most important point: what will this Colony get from Federation? To my mind, this proposed Federation is a great experiment, but one in which this Colony should not participate, as it would run the risk of being left in the well. I am of the view that we should find lucrative employment for the many unemployed persons here, and that it would be unfair to flood this country with unemployed people from the West Indies to lower our standards of living, and destroy our peasantry. In the words of Oliver Goldsmith—

"A peasantry once destroyed
can never be supplied."

There can be no Federation without freedom of trade and freedom of movement within the area. Immigration from the West Indian Islands would swamp us out and affect the small industries now coming up.

I have faith in this Colony of ours. Here, Sir, let me quote the words of Adam Lindsay Gordon —

"Question not but live and labour
Till your goal be won,
Helping every feeble neighbour,
Seeking keep from none;
Life is mostly froth and bubble,
Two things stand like stone:
Kindness in another's trouble,
Courage in your own."

We must have courage in our own. We are willing to help the small Islands by closer association, but not political Federation. All through my speech I have made that clear.

British Guiana is bound to win her respected place in the Commonwealth. Her political status whose set-back was undoubtedly regrettable, will soon be restored. Political ideologies and fanaticisms will drift into decadence,

clearing the way for sober thinking. Subversive thinking will be eradicated from our hitherto peaceful country. Destructive political bantams and their disciples and satellites will find no audience in the future. "God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform" —with due respect to the hon. mover, the Rev. Mr. Bobb.

From this humiliated state in which this Colony finds herself in the eyes of the world, she will rise to be—and I hope I am not resorting to hyperbole—what she is expected to be, and that is, the South American jewel in Her Majesty's Crown.

Passing through this stage of our political evolution we were fortunate to have the timely action of the Governor, Sir Alfred Savage, or we would have been crippled for many years to come. He is a God-send, and I say that in all seriousness. I trust he will remain with us to lead us to a restoration of our political equilibrium.

I must take leave of the Council as I now do, hoping that my contribution will assist in deciding this important subject. I have faith in my country. "England, with all thy faults, I love thee." British Guiana, with all thy faults I still, as thy son, love thee. I shall not desert thee in thine hour of need. Even if British Guiana is a veritable hell, I would, like John Milton, cling tenaciously to her, and ask all true Guianese to have it enshrined in their hearts that

"It is better to reign in hell
Than to serve in heaven."

Sir Frank McDavid: (Member for Agriculture, Forests, Lands and Mines): Mr. Speaker, in speaking to this motion I shall endeavour to present and develop my arguments in a logical sequence and structure. I shall also try to be as concise as the complexity of the subject will allow. I shall try to avoid repetitious argument. Wisdom does not necessarily lie in a multiplicity of words.

While, Mr. Speaker, I agree with what you have just said, that having regard to the importance of this matter it is undesirable to limit the full freedom of debate, I think we should be careful not to infringe the proprieties of our legislative procedure, or to abuse them. But if every Member were to address this Council at the inordinate length of the last speaker, this debate would not conclude for one month.

During the debate on the last Budget I gave an indication of my personal views on this question of the participation of British Guiana in the proposed British Caribbean Federation. I said then, and I say again with all the emphasis that I can command, that it is time for British Guiana to have second thoughts on this matter. I believe that this issue transcends in importance any of the issues with which this country is faced at the present time. I believe, moreover, that it is far more important and more significant to the future welfare of the people of this country than even the solution of the vexatious internal political problems and the difficulties with which we have been beset since April, 1953. Consequently, I welcome the motion which has been introduced and so ably argued by the Rev. Mr. Bobb, and I am indeed very glad to be in a position to support the motion, not only as a Member of the Government which is prepared to accept it, but also because of my own firm personal conviction.

I have always been an ardent supporter of complete regional unity between the British Caribbean territories, including the mainland territories of British Guiana and British Honduras. During my official career as a public officer, which came to an end in 1953, I endeavoured to promote the growth of this idea by every means open to me. I was fortunate to go to Jamaica to attend the Montego Bay Conference in

your company, Mr. Speaker, as an adviser, and I took part in the Committee work which went on behind the scenes, and which led to two of the important results of that Conference. I may also say without immodesty, because it has been mentioned here before, that I played a prominent part in establishing the unified currency of the Eastern Group of the British Caribbean territories, the notes of which still bear my signature as the inaugural Chairman of the Board of Commissioners, and I am very glad that at long last my personal efforts to bring Jamaica into the fold of this unified currency system is achieving results. I make these somewhat personal reflections as a prelude to explaining why I said just now that I was very glad to be in a position to support this motion.

When Dr. Nicholson's motion was introduced into the Legislative Council in November, 1951, I, together with my colleague, Mr. Holder, the Attorney General, was in England on leave of absence. I returned to British Guiana just in time to be present in this Chamber during the closing stages of that debate. I was extremely disgusted, disappointed and enragined to find that it had been agreed that the three Official Members, of whom I was then one, should not participate in that debate and should not vote, thereby abrogating their constitutional rights. At the same time the nominated unofficial Members exercised the full weight of their considerable influence, dominated the debate, and played a most decisive role in the voting result. A great deal of capital has been made out of the result of that debate on Dr. Nicholson's motion in 1951 which ended in January, 1952, but I wonder how many people have taken the trouble to analyse the result and ascertain what really happened. I propose to do so now. Dr. Nicholson's motion was a very simple one. It read :

"That, this Council accepts in principle the proposed Federation of the British

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Caribbean Colonies and agrees to consider in a Committee of all the unofficial Members of the Council the recommendations in the Closer Association Report."

I am emphasising some of those words—"the Council accepts in principle." There were two amendments to that motion but only one of them I am concerned with at the moment. They were put to the vote after the substantive motion. After the debate Dr. Nicholson's substantive motion was put and, on a division, the result was 4 for, 15 against. The four Members who voted "For" were all elected Members. They were Messrs. John Carter, Kendall, Dr. Gonsalves and Dr. Nicholson. The 15 Members who voted "Against" comprised eight elected Members, who were Messrs. Phang, Peters, Fernandes, Debidin, Coghlan, Lee, Dr. Jagan and Dr. Singh. The remaining seven who voted "Against" were all nominated Unofficial Members. I am going to name them too. They were Messrs. Macnie, Luckhoo, Smellie, Farnum, Thompson, Roth and Raatgever. The result again is eight elected Members and seven nominated Unofficial Members (15) against, and four elected Members for the motion.

Now I will come to my point. The second of the two amendments which were put to a division read in this wise:

"That this Council accepts in principle Federation of the British Caribbean Colonies with Dominion status."

That amendment was put and it was lost, but this is what happened: There voted for the amendment eight elected Members, and they were Messrs. Carter, Kendall, Fernandes, Lee, Dr. Jagan, Dr. Gonsalves, Dr. Nicholson and Dr. Singh. Against the amendment were eleven Members, of whom four were elected Members, and the same seven Nominated Members. The four elected Members were Messrs. Phang, Peters, Debidin and Coghlan.

The deduction which must be made from those votes is this: that is so far as the principle of British Guiana's participation in a British Caribbean Federation was concerned, and on that principle alone, the division of opinion between the elected Members was eight in favour and four against, because it was quite obvious that Messrs. Fernandes, Lee, Dr. Jagan and Dr. Singh wanted Federation but wanted as a rider attached to it an assurance of Dominion status at once. Consequently, I go back to my point that on the principle of British Guiana's participation in a British Caribbean Federation, on that occasion the division of opinion between the elected Members was eight in favour and four against. Also, that the decisive factor against were the nominated Unofficial Members. In those circumstances, Mr. Speaker, I ask: What justification has there been for the declaration which has been so widely publicised, that the elected Members of British Guiana were opposed, and determinedly opposed to the principles of participation in Federation? They were not. What justification is there for the statement that the people of British Guiana were opposed to Federation? They were not, because their opinions had not actually been ascertained.

On that point I want the Council to bear with me just a little bit while I make some analysis of the opinions of the four elected Members who were opposed altogether to the principle of Federation. They were first our good friend, Mr. Phang, who is here now. I want to say at once that I fully appreciate and sympathise with the views which he expressed on that occasion. Mr. Phang was then the representative of the North West District. It is his "beloved Province," and he argued that the North West District had been, and still was, a neglected area of the country; that its trade with Venezuela, which had sprung up in the early years,

had declined, and he argued that he preferred the present state rather than risk the future under Caribbean Federation for the North West District. In short, he preferred the evils he knew of in so far as that was concerned, to those he did not. I do not agree with him, but anyway it was a fair position to take up.

Mr. Peters is a man whom I respect, but on that occasion he introduced a most curious argument. It seems to me that he was suffering from severe inferiority complex in so far as the West Indies were concerned. He coined a remarkable phrase as the theme of his speech. He used it at the beginning and at the end—"Affiliation—Yes: Assimilation—No." He began that way and ended that way, and it seems to me that Mr. Peters was visualising the West Indies as a sort of fierce dragon which was going to assimilate and devour us, British Guianese. So I found his ideas quite irreconcilable.

I hesitate to speak about Mr. Debidin; he is an honoured guest in the Council today, and it would not be fair to him to make mention of what he said critically, as he is not now, unfortunately, in a position to answer back. All I will say is that his speech appeared to follow the traditional lines which we gathered from Mr. Sugrim Singh's contribution.

Lastly, Captain Coghlan. He is an Irishman and traditionally 'agin' the Government and 'agin' Federation. If Ireland had been federated to the United Kingdom that country would have been much better off economically today, but Eire gradually and courageously (to use the hon. Member, Mr. Sugrim Singh's words) stood out and suffered as a result. That was not, however, what Capt. Coghlan based his objection on. He quite frankly said:

"I am not taking the responsibility to decide. I have not approached my elect-

orate, and until I do, and until I get some guidance from them I will not vote in favour of this motion."

So that if I wanted to lay on this argument much heavier I could easily say that of the four elected Members who opposed the principle of Federation one had an open mind, so that there were only three. Let us look at it another way. Supposing the Official Members had insisted, as they should have done, in exercising their constitutional rights, the division of opinion on the subject of Federation would have been 11-11. That was no decision at all.

Mr. Lee: May I remind the hon. Member—

Sir Frank McDavid: I have no intention to give way to anybody. I am quite willing to hear interjected remarks, but I am not going to give way and allow anyone to make a speech.

Mr. Speaker: Three Members rose almost simultaneously. Mr. Macnie first. I also saw Mr. Lee, but I was looking at Mr. Raatgever who apparently rose to correct that statement. Did the hon. Member wish to correct that statement?

Mr. Raatgever: Yes, Sir, I rose to a point of correction and I think I am entitled to that right.

Mr. Speaker: Correction, yes.

Sir Frank McDavid. Mr. Speaker, I am not going to allow any Member to correct what I said. I was not making a statement of fact. If the hon. Member wishes to draw a different conclusion he can do so.

Mr. Speaker: I asked if there was a correction—perhaps of the figures you gave in respect of the votings—that the hon. Member wished to make.

Sir Frank McDavid: I said the "division of opinion" on the principle of Federation would have been 11-11, on the ground that the three Official

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Members were notoriously both personally and officially in favour.

Mr. Raatgever: I am saying that that is incorrect, Sir.

Sir Frank McDavid: Let me pass on, please, to another point.

Mr. Speaker: Mr. Macnie, what is your point?

Mr. Lee: The hon. Member was on the Executive Council then. Let him state what happened there.

Mr. Speaker: When a Member rises to a point of order or correction the Member speaking should resume his seat. I must know what is the hon. Member's objection.

Mr. Macnie: I will only speak now that the hon. Member has taken his seat. I would never remain standing if another Member rose to raise some objection, as no two Members can stand at the same time. I was merely questioning the correctness of the hon. Member's assumption of how people who did not vote would have voted.

Sir Frank McDavid: I was not talking about voting, but of the division of opinion. I am saying now categorically that I, as Financial Secretary at the time, and Mr. Holder, as Attorney General at the time, were notoriously in favour of Federation, and so was our respected Colonial Secretary, Mr. Gutch, both officially and personally. I know that some persons will not like this argument at all, because it completely cuts from under their feet this declaration which has been going on both in this Colony and out of the Colony, that the elected Members of the Legislature were completely against the principle of Federation. It is not correct. I am going to refer to this point again. The

hon. Member will have another occasion to interrupt me.

Mr. Speaker: You are giving your own view.

Sir Frank McDavid: Yes. I was bitterly disappointed at the result of that debate in 1951, and I confess now that I took a step which, as it turned out to be, was a grave error of tactics, in order to save something out of the wreck and to demonstrate to the people of the West Indies that we in British Guiana, notwithstanding this unfortunate result, were still interested in the preliminaries of Federation. I persuaded the Governor to permit me to introduce in the Council a motion having for its object the securing of the approval of the Legislative Council of a Customs Union of the British Caribbean territories. The McLagan Report, from which Mr. Sugrim Singh quoted some figures yesterday, had just been issued. I introduced that motion in February, 1952, and I spoke on it for about half an hour. It was seconded by my colleague, the then Colonial Secretary, and thereafter only one Member spoke—Mr. Ferreira. He spoke for about five minutes and the motion was put and carried unanimously. I was disappointed in that debate, because I expected and hoped that it would have stimulated Members to say some words indicating their interest in what was going on.

In the course of my remarks on that motion I made use of some phrases which, quite contrary to what Mr. Sugrim Singh said, caused a certain amount of suspicion in the minds of West Indians. I pointed out the fact that in a Customs Union, a free trade area of this region of British Guiana and of the West Indian Islands, we in British Guiana had most to gain by reason of the fact that our visible trade was greatly in our favour. I am glad that the hon. Member, Mr. Sugrim Singh, quoted all those figures about

our rice exports yesterday, because that bears out the point. That volume of trade from British Guiana was mainly on account of the huge quantity of rice sold in the West Indies. Mr. Sugrim Singh quoted it at \$9 million. That volume of trade far exceeded in value the import trade. Mr. Sugrim Singh referred to the "odds and ends" that come in here. Apart from gasoline and kerosene oil, the only substantial imports,—all the others were odds and ends—were a little soap, margarine, spices, etc.

Mr. Lee: Do you object to a Customs Union ?

Sir Frank McDavid: At the present time new trade in cement manufactured in Trinidad has developed in the West Indies. But certainly the position still is, that in a Customs Union we in British Guiana have the most advantageous position, because we have a favourable trade balance compared with all the others.

Mr. Sugrim Singh: Why should we federate then ?

Sir Frank McDavid: The reason is, we would not get our exports out. That is a fair answer. Let me continue. It was on account of the emphasis which I laid on this fact (for local consumption altogether) that our friends in the West Indies became extremely suspicious of our attitude, and eventually they felt that British Guiana wanted to get in at the back door and to have all the advantages of a regional union without the obligations of the union. That attitude was aggravated by the hon. Member, Mr. Raatgever, who at that time was our representative on several Committees, including the Regional Economic Committee. He moved around the West Indian Islands declaiming about our "Magnificent Province" and its "Continental Destiny." I do not blame the West Indies for being completely suspicious of this attitude of British Guiana, and so was born in the

West Indies what became a slogan — "No Federation, no Customs Union." Throughout the West Indies one heard that. That was directed at us, because they felt we were trying to gain the benefits of an economic union without the obligations which followed.

Mr. Lee: You did not hear that Federation without British Guiana is no Federation? That is the slogan now.

Sir Frank McDavid: Fortunately we are now retrieving some of the lost goodwill. Mr. Sugrim Singh referred rather scathingly to our participation in the West Indies Shipping Service, and said that the West Indies did not condescend to send the ship here. The ship does not come here by arrangement. We in British Guiana told the West Indies that we had several small ships of our own quite capable to take our produce to Trinidad, but we recognised fully the right and the desire of the West Indies to have a ship of their own, and we were prepared to support it. We supported it with a token contribution of \$4,800 a year. If the ship was coming to British Guiana that contribution would have had to be increased. One of the reasons why the West Indies accepted that suggestion was because they felt that in the initial stages of the shipping service the ship should not spend more than 23 days on a round trip. If British Guiana came into it, that round trip would be unnecessarily extended.

I have so far dealt with history, though not very far back. I think I will come down now to the present. In speaking about Federation I want to expatiate on the advantages and disadvantages, the credits and debits. I am going to adopt the rather unusual procedure of speaking first about the disadvantages, and then later on deal with the advantages of Federation. Fortunately, in speaking about the disadvantages I do not have to draw on my own thoughts. We have listened for seven long hours to Mr. Sugrim Singh

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stating the case against Federation. If there are any points which Mr. Sugrim Singh has not covered, then obviously they cannot be good ones. Secondly, we have had the advantage of Mr. Raatgever's published statement in anticipation of this debate. This is a technique Mr. Raatgever has used before—write out his speech, issue it to the Press, and get his favourite newspaper to publish it with his photograph above it.

Mr. Raatgever: I must take exception to this. I am not going to sit here and let the hon. Member speak in that way. I expect you, Sir, to call him to order. You are here to protect Members.

Mr. Speaker: I must ask the hon. Member (Sir Frank McDavid) to resume his seat. What is the hon. Member's objection?

Mr. Raatgever: My objection is to the personal remarks the hon. Member is making. I will say that they are uncalled for.

Mr. Speaker: I do not think the hon. Member ought to have said that an hon. Member published his speech and got the newspaper to publish his photograph.

Mr. Raatgever: Further than that, when I gave the interview to the Press it was a Thursday. I did not then know anything about the Rev. Mr. Bobb's motion. I did not then know that we were sending a representative to Trinidad. That came out in the newspapers on the Saturday. The Rev. Mr. Bobb's motion was given to me on the Saturday morning after I had already sent in my statement to the Press. So that the hon. Member is making a statement which is totally incorrect. It is like him to make statements of that kind.

Mr. Speaker: I am sure the hon. Member for Agriculture would like to qualify the words he used.

Sir Frank McDavid: The hon. Member is unduly sensitive. I am dealing with Mr. Raatgever as a political person and disregarding him as a private individual. Therefore he ought not to be so sensitive. The statement of which I am talking begins in a curious way. It begins by saying:

"Federation is in the air again. A third and concerted attempt is being made to force our people to sell their birthright for a mess of pottage....."

It is quite obvious that anyone would draw the conclusion that he suspected, even if he did not know, that a motion was going to be introduced. However, I accept the hon. Member's explanation that he did not know a motion was going to be introduced; that he just decided to grant an interview to the Press, and to publish this statement in advance of anything that might take place in this Legislative Council.

To resume my story. Mr. Raatgever's statement, plus Mr. Sugrim Singh's speech, provide me with the basis of the case against Federation, and I do not propose to draw on my own imagination or my own thoughts for the arguments against Federation. Mr. Sugrim Singh's speech was very long, and if I try to cover all the points that he made I shall be speaking for seven hours as he did. But, fortunately for me, I have certain colleagues who will deal with the points I omit. I shall only take what I consider to be the main objections which seem to arise out of his speech. The first point, of course, is the constitutional one. I am not going to go over that ground again as I am quite sure the hon. the Attorney General will deal with it more capably than I can, and it has been the subject of your ruling, Mr. Speaker. The hon. Member, Mr. Sugrim Singh, did try to draw some analogy between the doctrine which is practised in the Law Courts—once a matter is settled and decided it cannot be raised again. I believe in true case of a criminal charge it is called *autrefois acquit*, or something like that.

Mr. Sugrim Singh : *Res judicata.*

Mr. Speaker : The hon. Member used the term *res judicata* which means the same thing in some respects. When the same issues are before a Civil Court between the same litigants, and a decision has been given, it is not open to have the same issues argued all over again. The matter is then said to be *res judicata*. In a criminal trial, if a person has once been charged for the same offence as that in respect of which he is again brought before a Court, a plea of *autrefois acquit* may be properly raised. It means that he has been acquitted of the offence and cannot be tried again for it.

Sir Frank McDavid : The point he was trying to make was that that doctrine should apply in this Legislature because the voting in 1952 was decisive. I have already tried to analyse that view, and have indicated that there was nothing decisive in it.

Mr. Sugrim Singh : I rise to a point of correction. I did use the term *res judicata*, but I put it in a hypothetical form. I said that if this Council were a Court of Law, when a matter is discussed and decided the principal of *res judicata* might have applied. It was not a categorical statement. Mr. Speaker, I went on further to say it was legal for this Interim Government to do anything, but I went on to say that it ought not. I was not drawing any analogy to place this Council on the same basis as a Court of Law. It was introduced as a hypothetical proposition.

Sir Frank McDavid : I thank the hon. Member for that explanation and I will not pursue it. I may have been confused, having heard so many words. I remember also having on the previous Sunday listened-in while the hon. Member was vociferously debating on the radio the academic question of whether

or not this Council is competent to commit British Guiana to Federation. I believe he was almost angry on that occasion.

The next point to which I would draw attention is Mr. Sugrim Singh's strong assurance, based on his interpretation of the voting on an amendment in the Trinidad Legislature that Trinidad does not want us. Mr. Sugrim Singh spent a lot of time developing that argument, and he read and re-read part of the amendment which was moved in the Trinidad Legislature in December, 1954.

Mr. Sugrim Singh : Again I must rise to a point of correction. I read the whole motion and the entire amendments at the request of the hon. mover of the motion—not part of it, but the whole motion.

Sir Frank McDavid : I know that, but I am dealing with only one section, and the particular section to which I am referring is Condition No. 4. That is the point on which the hon. Member based his conclusion. Condition No. 4 was :

"That every effort be made to include British Guiana in the Federation (but by democratic process, i.e. by the expressed wish of the people either through elected representatives or by plebiscite) so that the economic resources and land space of British Guiana be also available to the federated nation, and British Guiana be enabled to take its place at an early date in a democratic system."

Mr. Sugrim Singh drew from the fact that the amendment was negated in Trinidad by 7—13, that there was a trend of opinion in the Trinidad Legislature that they did not want us. Am I right? That is what he did. I want to tell him that the amendment which was moved in the Trinidad Legislature, consisting of six conditions which were attached to the acceptance of Federation (here I am going to be categorical) was nothing more than a ruse, a trick to delay, obstruct and

[Sir Frank McDavid] finally to kill Federation. I would have liked the hon. Member to have read the debate in Trinidad in full, as those Members who opposed that amendment explained that completely and fully. It was, shall I say, a low trick. Let me explain again what the first condition of that amendment was—that before Trinidad accepts Federation H.M. Government were to get Parliament to pass legislation granting \$240 million to the Federation to be spent over five years in developing the backward colonies. Also an Act of Parliament was to be passed to grant the Federation another \$24 million to help it establish its capital. Another condition was what I have just said—that British Guiana was to be invited to express its agreement with Federation by democratic process. All of that would have taken, not one year but five years. Before those conditions could be fulfilled, Federation, which is now right around the corner, would be indefinitely delayed, if not destroyed. Consequently I do describe it, as it was described in Trinidad, as a ruse and a trick, and so we must not draw any conclusion from that.

Mr. Lee : I do not know whether the language attributed by my friend to the Trinidad Legislature is correct.

Sir Frank McDavid : If the hon. Member would read the report he would see the words “ruse” and “trick” and other language which would appal him. I am hoping that the hon. Member, Mr. Sugrim Singh, will accept what I say, and that is that his conclusion is wrong that British Guiana was not wanted. British Guiana was wanted and is wanted by Trinidad. I have too much respect for Mr. Sugrim Singh, and too much liking for him, to accuse him of using his argument as a trick, but I am going to warn him that others are not going to be so generous. If we want to find out what is the attitude of the West Indies towards British

Guiana's participation in Federation, there are several publications of speeches in all of the islands which will bear out the fact that they want us.

As an illustration I would like, if I can find it, just to quote for one moment a passage in the “Barbados Advocate” reporting speeches there in the Federation debate in the House of Assembly where Mr. Mottley used these very significant words :—

“With British Guiana and British Honduras not coming in, a serious blow is given to our efforts. A very serious blow indeed.”

I can hear Mr. Sugrim Singh say “That is what I have been saying myself. They think it is a serious blow if we do not join in.” The hon. Member contradicted himself so many times, but his most serious contradiction was that while with one breath he was saying that the amendment showed that Trinidad did not want British Guiana, in the next breath he said that Trinidad wants our land and our wealth. Which does he mean? Does Trinidad want us or not? If the hon. Member reads the record of his speech he will see that the contradiction stands out. I do not know on which side he stands.

Mr. Sugrim Singh : I must rise to a point of correction. The trend of the hon. Member's logic is completely off the track. What I intended to convey was that the amendment was lost. I was even asked to mention the names of the members who voted. The point is that in the result of the voting they have shown that they do not want British Guiana in the Federation. That was my point, but in the very amendment they mentioned about land space. The hon. Member has not read the amendment. If I may refresh his memory, this is what it says:

“That every effort be made to include British Guiana in the Federation (but by democratic process, i.e. by the expressed wish of the people either through elected representatives or by plebiscite) so that the economic resources and land space of British Guiana be also available to the

federated nation, and British Guiana be enabled to take its place at an early date in a democratic system."

Sir Frank McDavid: I think I have allowed the hon. Member enough time to intervene. How can he argue both ways? In one breath he argued that by the fact that the amendment was lost it was clear that they did not want us, while in the next breath he argued that by reason of the last portion of the amendment they wanted our land space.

Mr. Sugrim Singh: They were two completely different things.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member is quite right in saying that the amendment expresses some desire to have British Guiana in the Federation. It is the only inference one can draw.

Sir Frank McDavid: I will pass on to my next point with respect to Mr. Sugrim Singh's argument—the point he laboured so much about the constitution of the Federal Government representing a surrender of control by the unit Governments, and particularly by British Guiana. Of course it is a surrender. What is wrong with that? Indeed every process in a democratic institution is a surrender of control in one form or another. The people, when they elect Mr. Sugrim Singh, surrender to him a certain amount of control, and he in turn surrenders some control to the Members of the Executive Council. The point is that the control must not be in the hands of an alien body. In this respect Mr. Sugrim Singh forgets that the central organisation, the Federal Government which is set up, will be composed of a family. It is, Trinidad, Barbados, Jamaica and the other Colonies acting together to establish that control. It is not an alien control.

While I am on that point I want to touch on a curious misconception about what might happen in the Federal

Parliament. Most of the people who speak in opposition to Federation conceive the idea that in the Federal House of Representatives the Members representing each territory are going to sit in groups, watching each other like cats and dogs and trying to out-vote one another. They seem to conceive the idea that British Guiana is always going to be fighting for her rights against a combination of Island territories; and that Jamaica and Trinidad are going to combine against all the rest, or that Barbados and the smaller Islands will combine against Jamaica, Trinidad and British Guiana.

It is quite conceivable that the division in the Federal Parliament will not be along territorial lines at all, but along party lines. I do not know if Mr. Sugrim Singh is a member of a political party any more. It is quite conceivable that the United Democratic Party might ally themselves closely with their friends in Jamaica — the People's National Party — and they might form another Party and call it, say, the Caribbean National Party. It is quite conceivable that a Caribbean Labour Party may be launched, and there may also be a Conservative Party. I do not want to prophesy but I put it to Members that what may well happen is the formation of separate Parties running through the whole region, and that the division in the Federal Parliament will not be along territorial lines at all, but that each Party will endeavour to do what we want them to do. We may find the Parties may have on their election platform one great thing — "Develop British Guiana".

Mr. Sugrim Singh: You are very optimistic!

Sir Frank McDavid: I am always optimistic, and what I have just said is perfectly logical. I think that having put it to Members, they will think it reasonable, and that they will not con-

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tinue with the idea that we would be out-voted by the other units.

The next point is very simple. Mr. Sugrim Singh laboured over and over again the question of distance, and he stressed "1,500 miles" as if that was a terrifying distance. I would ask him not to let his children hear that story, because his own children are probably thinking of space travel—not a mere 1,500 miles. The distance between Victoria, the capital of British Columbia, and, let us say, Halifax, is about 4,000 miles—land all the way—and yet the greatest barrier of all is a land barrier of mountains. Mr. Macnie and I have both had the privilege of travelling more than once across the Rocky Mountains, and I can assure the hon. Member that it is a greater barrier to transport than 1,500 miles of ocean.

We all know that the day of the aeroplane has come, and I can assert confidently that a distance of 1,500 miles is nothing at all now. I can prophesy that within 10 years there will be a land-air service between British Guiana and Jamaica, and we will be able to leave British Guiana in the morning, have lunch in Jamaica and return here to sleep in the night. I remember that at the last meeting of the R.E.C. Mr. Albert Gomes did this more than once. He attended the R.E.C. meeting at Barbados and in the afternoon he left to have dinner in Trinidad. The next morning he returned to attend the meeting. That is a commonplace. The territories are separated by sea which is no barrier at all; it is rather a link. I do not wish to labour the point, but to talk about distance between the territories as an objection to Federation is to weaken the argument.

Mr. Sugrim Singh made a point about freedom of movement, allied with his proposition that British Guiana was going to be the dumping ground not only for produce but for people—all the un-

employed, the sick, the blind of those other territories would be dumped in British Guiana. He also went to great trouble to explain that Trinidad was trying hard to stop that, and that Barbados was taking exactly the opposite attitude — wishing to push their surplus people into Trinidad — and that if we joined the Federation the same thing would happen to us. This question of freedom of movement is undoubtedly a very serious one, and that is exactly what the conference which is now taking place in Trinidad is all about. West Indian leaders have gathered there because they believe a solution of it must be found, and there must be compromise on both sides.

I want, if I may, for the first time since I began speaking, to read, because I have come across in this *Hansard* of the debate in Trinidad a significant quotation by the hon. Mr. Hannays. We all know him as a most distinguished legislator. On page 657 of the *Hansard* report Mr. Hannays, in order to explain this question of freedom of movement and its implications, did something that he does not often do, and that is to read an article from the "Barbados Advocate" which was so significant, so well written, that I entirely agree with him that it covered the whole ground adequately. Therefore I am asking your permission, Sir, to read what Mr. Hannays read in the Trinidad Legislature. Said Mr. Hannays:

"...I believe it is well known that the leading newspaper in Barbados is the *ADVOCATE*, and I have before me (some anonymous gentleman sent it to me) the *ADVOCATE* of Sunday, 19th September, 1954, in which there is an article on page 8, headed "Freedom of Movement", and this is what it says:-

"One of the most outstanding issues concerning the proposed Federation of the British Caribbean Territories, as far as Barbados is concerned, involves agreement with all the other territories of the British West Indies for the inclusion of the principle of freedom of movement within the Federation. It is a basic principle of great importance and value for any such

Federation and for its people, yet there is prevalent a high degree of confusion over the meaning and scope of the term. Until that confusion is removed, sure progress towards Federation may be impeded.

"Several guideposts in a consideration of this issue may be usefully spotlighted.

"Firstly, the proposed Federation is not a union of territories with a centralised form of government and the assumption by that government of responsibility for local political organisation and for the primary social and welfare needs of the people of all the territories. Each territory under such Federation will remain responsible for its own self-government and for the welfare of its own people. The separate nature of these entities will remain forever buttressed by their status as Islands surrounded by a water barrier.

"Secondly, it is certainly not a part of the planning for the British Caribbean Federation that Barbados, for instance, should assume responsibility for the employment of Trinidadians or that Trinidad should assume responsibility for the welfare of St. Lucians, together with the maintenance of hospitals, asylums" (that would be necessary!) "and systems of social security or relief for such non-natives. Each Island entity must continue to be responsible for the problems of its own people, and conversely it cannot justly be expected to assume similar responsibility for the welfare of the people of other Islands whether without or within its territorial boundaries.

"Accordingly, it is entirely right that each Island should insist that such employment, as is available within its boundaries, or as may be later developed therein, should be first reserved for the native people of that Island, and those who have by due process of law been accepted as "citizens" (and there are many thousands here!) and have established a recognised domicile therein. Equally, it is entirely right that such facilities and such resources as are available in each Island for the relief of unemployed or the care of the sick and infirm should be first reserved for its own people.

"Barbados no less than Trinidad, should be concerned about a possible

influx of natives of other Islands, who under changed conditions might pour into this Island to seek employment—with the always present possibility that some of them at least might subsequently become public charges upon the Island or upon Parish or private charitable funds. The laws of this Island and agreements entered into with other Islands should foresee such possibilities and guard against them.

"In similar manner, the Premier of Barbados was entirely correct when he spoke in the debate in the House of Assembly on this issue and said that the principle of freedom of movement of persons needed certain qualifications—that no Island, for instance, should be expected to accept persons from another Island who were suffering from infectious or contagious disease, or who were habitual criminals.

"As a basic principle, the right of the citizens of the Federation to leave their native shores and proceed to other parts of the Federation should be guaranteed. Yet this principal clearly should not mean that persons in one part of the Federation should have an unrestricted right to employment or to welfare in another part of the Federation.

"Barbados with its great problem of over-population is attracted, naturally enough, by the possibility that a considerable portion of its surplus population might find a place of residence and livelihood in some other, underpopulated, part of the Federation. But surely this must depend upon the desire and even the request of that other part of the Federation to receive such immigrants, and to welcome them under such terms and conditions as it might find desirable to stipulate. Barbados no less than Trinidad should insist on the same safeguards as regards its own future.

"Hence, it is necessary to distinguish carefully in one's thoughts between "freedom of movement" as movement, and as unrestricted rights to employment, livelihood or physical care which belong in the first instance to other people.

"The task which faces the political leaders of the West Indies is to agree on the best means of protecting their native populations while aiming for a long-term gradual abolition of such protective measures. The method which

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most readily springs to mind is the operation of a system similar to that now in practice in the United States. Any person desiring to take up permanent residence in another unit of the Federation would have to satisfy the Government of that unit either that he had a job to go to or that there was some person in that unit of sufficient means who was willing to be his bondsman and who accepted the liability of maintaining him should he become a charge upon the State. If he should lose his job then the Government of that unit could repatriate him at the expense of the Government of his native Island who could then try to get back from him the cost of his repatriation."

I think I have read enough to give the key to what this article in the "Barbados Advocate" meant, and what Mr. Hannays, who read it in the Trinidad Legislature, also meant. Put in simple language, he means this: There is great confusion of thought about freedom of movement. Naturally, in a Federation there must be the inherent right of every citizen to move from one place to another, but that does not mean that the right to move from one country to another and secure employment at the expense of the citizens of that other country must also be guaranteed.

Mr. Sugrim Singh: I wish to rise to a point of correction!

Sir Frank McDavid: I am afraid I cannot allow the hon. Member to interrupt me.

Mr. Speaker: What is the form of correction?

Mr. Sugrim Singh: I would like the hon. Member to continue to read from that report of the debate. I would like him to read Mr. Hannays' speech on page 656 of the *Hansard*.

Sir Frank McDavid: I am afraid I am not going to read that; I have not read it myself. I have read the quotation by Mr. Hannays of an article.

The hon. Member can hand it to another Member of the Opposition and let him read it.

The point I am making is that with that freedom of movement, which must be guaranteed, there must be the necessary concomitant which will safeguard the employment rights of the citizens of each unit, and that is entirely what the conference in Trinidad is about; and let us hope that the correct formula will be found. I know a formula will be found. It is a difficult problem in the sense of framing in words, in constitutional language, what we mean, but at the same time it is not difficult for anyone to construe what I have been trying to put across. So I hope that no other Member who is going to speak in opposition, will continue along the strain of the hon. Mr. Sugrim Singh—to talk about dumping their surplus unwanted population on British Guiana. If we have Federation I am perfectly sure that is not going to happen, and that when the movements of surplus population do take place they will take place on plans and schemes formulated by the Federal Government at the expense of the Federal Government and with the agreement of the unit Government. That is a matter which I will develop later when I develop the opposite argument in favour of Federation.

Mr. Sugrim Singh went on to talk about dumping of produce. I do not know which he was more afraid of—whether it was dumping of people or produce—but I know that there are colleagues of mine who may prefer to deal with this particular aspect of the question, and I will not steal their thunder, but I want to ask him one question. If he were a Trinidadian growing padi and getting it sold at a price higher in Trinidad than the East Indian farmer here gets for his padi, and if British Guiana came into the Federation in a way which would prevent him from continuing to do that, what would he say? I can easily

hear the Trinidadian or Jamaican rice farmers who are being subsidised now and growing padi under uneconomic conditions, and getting away with it, saying: "These British Guianese are dumping here their millions of gallons of rice; we must stop it."

Dumping is a two-way traffic. What we are trying to do is to frame a convention, a system, by which British Guiana and the other territories of the Caribbean will become one regional free trade area, so that our rice will continue to enter that area on favourable terms. If we do not belong to that free trade area having around it a Customs wall, we shall be open again to competition on equal terms with places like Burma. That is the danger that we face. There again, that is a point which I can develop at great length, but I am perfectly certain there are other Members who can and will do so.

Mr. Sugrim Singh: How would the hon. Member reconcile the Caribbean Customs Union Report on the question of reciprocity of trade? I made reference to our shirt factory, but let us take rice which is now being subsidised in Trinidad for their own consumption. We are exporting rice. Would Trinidad stop planting rice under this reciprocity as set out in paragraph 4 of the Customs Union Report so as to allow our rice to go in?

Sir Frank McDavid: That is an easy question to answer. The only way Trinidad would be able to keep that up is by continuing the artificial process now in force of rationing rice in Trinidad—by *force majeure*. They are rationing rice among their people while we here have more to sell than they can consume. With free trade our competition would, without doubt, defeat any attempt by Trinidad to become self-sufficient in rice. I am assuming that everyone agrees that we are in a position to grow rice more economically here than they can in Trinidad. Our competition would also

defeat the attempt to grow rice on a large scale in Jamaica. Our trouble with Jamaica —

Mr. Speaker: I think the hon. Member will confirm that I was present at the conference in Barbados in 1944 with him. I remember a delegate spoke about the start of the cultivation of rice in Trinidad. They have been trying to do it for 10 years, but their prospects are the same today, as they were then, of doing so economically.

Sir Frank McDavid: At the moment it is purely political in so far as Trinidad is concerned. As regards Jamaica, Mr. Sharpe, the Head of the Agricultural Development Corporation there, with a colleague came to British Guiana, and I took them to the Mahaicony — Abary Rice Scheme. I overheard one of them whispering in a corner, "If we had anything like this", when they saw the broad acres of rice, the rice mill, and the bond. They can only go on cultivating rice under artificial conditions so long as we are out of the union. I am sure my hon. friend, Mr. Jailal, will deal with this matter fully, and I shall leave it to him, as I have already taken up too much time on it.

Unfortunately, I must now come down to the hon. Member, Mr. Raatgever, and again I emphasize that I am dealing with him as what I call a political person. I disregard him as a private individual. I made notes on this statement of his when I read it, and my description of it was certainly not favourable. I had in mind a lot of strong adjectives about this statement, but I would not use them, as the hon. Member is very sensitive. The only ones I will use are "egotistical," "illogical," and, in some respects, "spurious." I mean that as to some of his points. I will not take them in the order in which they appear in this published statement.

Mr. Speaker: I think it is open to question whether a Member of this Council, although he has previously

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made a statement which appears in the newspapers, is not entitled to say "I have altered my opinion since that was published." I do not think the hon. Member must accept the statement published in the newspapers as being necessarily true. I think, I must ask the hon. Member to refrain from doing so. In view of the parliamentary practice I do not think that a Member has the right to give any opinion to a newspaper on a matter, which is the subject of a motion which has not yet been discussed. I acquit the hon. Member, Mr. Raatgever, of having done that, because I know he would speak on a motion of this kind. He has already said that he did so before the motion came to his hand.

I do not think the hon. Member (Sir Frank McDavid) should refer to the statement. It is against parliamentary practice to do so, where the Member is present and proposes to speak himself. The hon. Member (Mr. Raatgever), too, has indicated that. I prefer the hon. Member (Sir Frank McDavid) to wait until he has given his views. The hon. Member cannot take the newspaper report and adopt that as the Member's contribution to this debate. I think that is the parliamentary procedure.

Sir Frank McDavid: I was firm on this statement because it bore the hon. Member's picture on it. I accept Your Honour's ruling. What I shall have to do is to deal still with the publication about Federation in that way, but I shall not refer to it deliberately as the hon. Member's views but as views which I have heard and have adopted as final, coming from the protagonist camp against Federation.

Mr. Raatgever: Perhaps I may say that the views expressed in the Press interview are still my views. They are according to my conviction.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member can comment on the statement in the

paper, but he must not quote the actual words used in the report.

Sir Frank McDavid: Sir, the opinion has been expressed very forcibly that this Interim Government has no power to re-open the question of Federation or to change the decision arrived at by the alleged people's representatives in 1952. I have challenged the accuracy of that statement already, and I intend emphatically to challenge it again. The elected representatives in 1952 were substantially of the opinion that we should have Federation. The opinion was divided 8 to 4. I just want to mention something — if one of us Officials had been allowed to speak, I am quite sure, he would have emphasised the **great deal of confusion** of thought about self-government and Dominion status. Am I right, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Speaker: I cannot express any opinion by way of agreement or otherwise.

Sir Frank McDavid: You can easily go to self-government or even responsible government, but the question of Dominion status is quite a different matter. A territory earns Dominion status. The territory which gets Dominion status is—to use the words that appear in this newspaper I have in my hand — "accorded a status of an equal partner with the other nations of the Commonwealth." That is a status that has been consented to by the other partners. It is not something to be granted out of hand.

Mr. Sugrim Singh: May I refer to paragraph 9 of the Rance Report which would relieve the hon. Member's anxiety on this question of Dominion status, reference to which has been made. It reads:

"We start from the assumption that the main and underlying purpose of our task is to seek the shortest path towards a real political independence for the British peoples of the region, within the frame-

work of the British Commonwealth — what is meant in fact by 'Dominion Status'...."

Sir Frank McDavid: The Rance Report points the way to Dominion status to the Federation. What I am saying is that British Guiana, standing by itself, is not able to earn it and to stand up as an equal partner with the other nations of the Commonwealth.

I want to pass on to another point that has been very much stressed — that the small Islands are going to be an economic millstone around our necks. Of course this word "millstone", as you know, Sir, has a classical connotation and has several meanings. It appears in Shakespeare with a different meaning from the one that is traditional. I suppose the one usually understood comes from the well-known Biblical text—the hon. Member, the Rev. Mr. Bobb, would correct me if I am wrong—I think it is written:

"But who so shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and he were drowned into the midst of the sea."

What is the inference? I think myself that the person who used that quotation used it very inaptly.

When I read this newspaper report to which I referred, I beguiled my imagination by the tragic-comic picture of the writer with the millstone of the Island of Dominica hung around his neck sinking into the depths of the Caribbean Sea! I am not supposed to indicate the person by name. But speaking again more seriously, we all know what is meant by this metaphor. The meaning is that there are two or three of the small Islands which are uneconomic in the sense that they are not in a state of production which enables them to balance their Budget. They have got to be grant-aided.

Mr. Lee: May I ask if the Rance Report said how many? My hon. friend has not stated definitely how many.

Sir Frank McDavid: There are about six in all. I do not know the exact number, but I said that two or three are grant-aided. I wish my hon. friend, Mr. Macnie, was in his seat. He would have put me right.

Mr. Macnie (taking his seat): The number changes from year to year. When I was last in the Leeward Islands about 5½ years ago, that was so.

Sir Frank McDavid: I said two or three were grant-aided.

Mr. Macnie: I really cannot say. The number does change. There is one in the Leeward Islands — St. Kitts — grant-aided for a long time. My impression is that Antigua no longer gets grants-in-aid. Montserrat and Dominica certainly do.

Sir Frank McDavid: St. Vincent and Grenada do not. There is a small number of them that are grant-aided. The point I wish to make is this. Not so long ago I moved a resolution in this Council thanking H.M. Government for their assistance over a long number of years to British Guiana in the form of grants-in-aid. I am just drawing the picture as the West Indies would see British Guiana. When I became Colonial Treasurer, or Financial Secretary, as the post is now styled, it was my unfortunate lot to work through a period of Imperial Treasury control because we were grant-aided. I had to present every form of argument to obtain approval of even the smallest expenditure.

Mr. Speaker: We could not obtain approval of our Estimates for many months.

Sir Frank McDavid: Even in the Rance Report there is a series of statistics at pages 66 and 67, which give the figures of Revenue of all these Caribbean territories in respect of certain years, only going back as far as

(Sir Frank McDavid] 1937. The years given are 1937, 1938, 1939, 1946, 1947 and 1948. Those are the years chosen for comparative statistics for this Report, and in the summary there is a column called "Grants in Aid of Administration". The total of that column for those years I have just enumerated is just over \$4 million, and one-third of that total is allocated to or belongs to one territory—British Guiana.

Mr. Lee: I think there is a distinction between grant-in-aid and grant-aided Colonies.

Sir Frank McDavid: It is a distinction without a difference. British Guiana has also got a lion's share of the Colonial Development and Welfare money as grants. British Guiana last year presented its case to H.M. Government and received a special grant. We do not call such allocations of C.D.&W. money grants-in-aid, but we get the lion's share of what is going.

I want to ask hon. Members what would their feelings be if they were West Indians and having those facts as I have given? Would they not be inclined to suggest that of all the millstones British Guiana might conceivably be a mountain of a millstone around the neck of the Federation? I am not trying to belittle British Guiana. During my work in the Treasury it was my greatest good fortune and delight, in the last stage of my official career, to be in a position to bring British Guiana not only into a state of solvency but to a sound financial position, such as the hon. Member, Mr. Sugrim Singh, has himself emphasised, but I would like to ask this: Does it lie in our mouths with any grace to talk about economic millstones around our necks? It does not at all. I would honestly suggest it would come with better grace from people, whether they believe in Federation or not, to stop putting themselves on a pedestal in front of those so-called poor Islands.

Mr. Lee: I am sorry to interrupt to say that grants-in-aid for particular purposes from the C.D. & W. are vastly different from grants given in aid of the cost of administration.

Sir Frank McDavid: The grant-in-aid, the hon. Member is talking about, is exactly what I am talking about—the grant-in-aid this country received for many years while I was Financial Secretary and later those grants were supplemented by what are known as C. D. & W. allocations. I did not stress that, but those grants-in-aid were exactly the same type those poor West Indians get. I say again that it does not lie in our mouths to despise and condemn those small Islands. If I were to quote another text (I hope I quote it correctly), I think the correct text would be:

"First cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast the mote out of thy brother's eye."

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member is the second Member during my occupancy of this Chair to refer to a quotation from the Sermon on the Mount. I must ask the hon. Member to look at the St. Matthew's version. It starts with the words "Thou hypocrite". (*Laughter*).

Sir Frank McDavid: I admit that, Your Honour, but my own common-sense and generosity prevented me from starting the quotation with the correct words.

Mr. Speaker: I would like an opportunity to make some remarks about the continuation of the debate. I do not think every Member will speak for two or three hours, but it is quite plain to me that we may be three or four more days on this debate. Today is Wednesday. It is a day on which we do not usually sit. I propose to sit tomorrow and Friday. I was wondering if I may expect Members to sit somewhat later than 5 o'clock and resume

after dinner, at least tomorrow. I mention the matter now, so that Members can make some arrangements for tomorrow. Does any Member support that? That is only one night in the week. I do not want to suggest Friday: Some such sort of arrangement should be made about the days on which we should meet.

Mr. Macnie: May I make a suggestion? In previous debates in this Chamber there have been occasions when we sat late in the evening. We adjourned about 4.30 p.m. for tea and then continued from 5 to 7.30 p.m. I do not know whether Your Honour means that.

Mr. Speaker: Either arrangement would suit me. I am not speaking of myself, but as regards some extension of the time. I know that Friday is a kind of a week-end day. I am thinking about tomorrow.

Mr. Luckhoo: Much as I am willing and anxious to co-operate, I do not know whether we can avoid sitting in the evenings if possible. After a long day it becomes boring to give one's attention. In that case I would suggest that we sit on Thursday and Friday and continue next Tuesday.

Mr. Speaker: That would be the ordinary adjournment.

The Chief Secretary: I was hoping it would be possible to conclude this debate this week. On such occasions I

appreciate the strain on hon. Members, but that strain is fully experienced by legislators all over the world. A debate does lose a certain amount of keenness and edge when it goes on beyond a week. We were hoping to have a break in the Legislature for some weeks, which would be curtailed if this session goes on to another week, and the object of sitting later was, if possible, to finish the debate by Friday.

Mr. Raatgever: I do not think it is possible to finish the debate by Friday. I agree with the hon. Member, Mr. Luckhoo, that we should continue as usual and adjourn to next week. I am not prepared to come here and work at night after four hard days.

Mr. Speaker: I want to get some idea of the views of Members. There may be quite a long session over the Hands Salaries Revision Report. Mr. Macnie's suggestion is one for a late sitting, which hon. Members may consider seriously. Surely it will not cause anyone any inconvenience to adjourn tomorrow afternoon at 4, take tea, return at 5 and continue until 7.30 p.m.

Mr. Bobb: I would agree with that, Mr. Speaker—adjourning at 4 or thereabout for tea, resuming at 5 and going on until an early hour in the night.

Mr. Speaker: We shall see what can be done. Council is adjourned to 2 p.m. tomorrow.