

SECOND LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

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

Thursday, 21st January, 1960

The Council met at 2 p.m.

PRESENT :

Speaker, His Honour Sir Donald Jackson

Chief Secretary, Hon. D. M. Hedges

Attorney-General, Hon. A. M. I. Austin, Q.C.

Financial Secretary, Hon. F. W. Essex, C.M.G.

} *ex officio*

„	B. H. Bern	—Member for Essequibo River (Minister of Natural Resources)
„	Janet Jagan	—Member for Western Essequibo (Minister of Labour, Health and Housing)
	Ram Karran	—Member for Demerara-Essequibo (Minister of Communications and Works)
„	B. S. Rai	—Member for Central Demerara (Minister of Community Develop- ment and Education)
Mr. R. B. Gajraj		—Nominated Member
„ W. O. R. Kendall		—Member for New Amsterdam
„ R. C. Tello		—Nominated Member
„ F. Bowman		—Member for Demerara River
L. F. S. Burnham		—Member for Georgetown Central
„ S. Campbell		—Member for North Western District
A. L. Jackson		—Member for Georgetown North
„ Ajodha Singh		—Member for Berbice River
„ E. B. Beharry		—Member for Eastern Demerara
„ S. M. Saffee		—Member for Western Berbice
„ Jai Narine Singh		—Member for Georgetown South
„ R. E. Davis		—Nominated Member
„ A. M. Fredericks		—Nominated Member
„ H. J. M. Hubbard		—Nominated Member
„ A. G. Tasker, O.B.E.		—Nominated Member.

Mr. I. Crum Ewing — Clerk of the Legislature

Mr. E. V. Viapree — Assistant Clerk of the Legislature.

ABSENT

The Hon. Dr. C. B. Jagan, Minister of Trade and Industry — on leave.

Handwritten signature

MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Wednesday, 20th January, 1960, as printed and circulated, were taken as read and confirmed.

PAPERS LAID**ELECTRICITY INQUIRY COMMISSION'S REPORT**

The Minister of Communications and Works (Mr. Ram Karran): I beg to lay on the Table the

Report of a Commission of Inquiry into the interruption in the supply of electricity by the Demerara Electric Company, Limited, which commenced on the 20th September, 1959.

STATEMENT BY MEMBER OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**MOBILE DIESEL GENERATING SETS**

Mr. Ram Karran: The Commission set up to inquire into the breakdown of the electricity supply in Georgetown has submitted its report, copies of which will be distributed to Honourable Members, and a limited number will be available for sale to the public through the Government Information Services.

Since the Commission concluded its Inquiry the two mobile Highway Tractor Mounted Diesel generating sets of 415 KW each, acquired by the Government, have arrived and are being used to supplement the supply of electricity generated by the Demerara Electric Company.

Offers of further Diesel generating plant are now being examined by Government, and it is hoped to have such additional plant in service within the next six months.

**ORDER OF THE DAY
APPROPRIATION BILL
BUDGET DEBATE**

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

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

Mr. Tello: Mr. Speaker, yesterday afternoon I rose to ask your indulgence to correct two unfortunate statements, one incorrect and the other improper, which were made by the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Benn), and you promised that on the resumption this afternoon you would permit me to do so.

Mr. Speaker: What is the correction?

Mr. Tello: In the course of his speech the hon. Minister said that in the Interim Government I had made no effort to adjust the wages of Government employees, although I knew that there was a wide margin between their wages and those of bauxite workers. That is an inaccurate statement, and it would appear that the Minister's memory does not serve him properly. It was during the period of the Interim Government that affiliates of the Trades Union Council agitated for the appointment of the Hands Commission to revise wages and salaries in the Public Service.

As a result of that revision there was an increase of wages of Government workers equal to 20.57 per cent. The wage rate at that time was \$1.52 per day with a cost of living allowance of 57 cents, making a total of \$2.09 per day, and as a result of the recommendations of the Hands Commission the basic wage was increased to \$2.52 per day. I should also say that the Interim Government, of its own volition, saw the need for further revision of the Hands recommendation and the appointment of a Committee led by Mr. Jakeway.

Mr. Speaker: In short, you say it was inaccurate to say that you made no effort in relation to that matter.

Mr. Tello: That is so, Sir. The other statement made by the Minister was that the T.U.C. could not afford to

attack or oppose the employers of labour because it had received assistance from them for a trip. I do not know what is meant by the use of the word "attack", because it is not customary for the T.U.C. to attack anyone, or for me as a legislator to attack anyone. What I know is that a decision was taken by the General Council of the T.U.C. to send a delegation to the World Economic Conference in Geneva and also to approach the Colonial Office in London to plead for financial assistance in an effort to relieve the unemployment problem in this country.

The General Council also decided to solicit public subscription from people in every walk of life towards the delegation, and the collection was done above board and in public. It is perfectly true — and we are very proud of it — that industry and commerce contributed 25 per cent. of the cost, while the workers themselves contributed 25 per cent, and the United Steel Workers of America contributed 50 per cent. Of the 25 per cent. contributed by commerce and industry, Bookers contributed \$1,000 and the Demerara Bauxite Company \$1,000.

I would like to add that subsequent to that appeal for subscriptions the M.P.C.A., the union which caters for sugar workers, was not in any way hampered in prosecuting its normal function as a trade union in negotiations with the Sugar Producers' Association, and was able to conclude what the Plantation Conference which was held in the Caribbean accepted as the most progressive agreement within the territory. At that conference every sugar-producing territory in the Caribbean, except Antigua, was represented. Further, in the case of the Demerara Bauxite Company, the B.G. Mineworkers' Union has just concluded a very good agreement with the Company. So that it is true to say that the Trade Union Movement attacks no one.

Mr. Benn: Sir, the hon. Nominated, Member, Mr. Tello, evidently did not pay attention to what I was saying. He was too perturbed over the actions of the Trade Unions in this Country represented by the T.U.C. when he referred to the wages paid by the Demerara Bauxite Company in relation to those paid by Government. What I did say was, that they should not attempt to get an increase in wages on the basis of disparity existing in this respect between workers of the Government and workers of the Demerara Bauxite Company. That was not brought into the picture at that time. It is wrong for a trade union to collect money from an employer for any purpose whatsoever. It is reprehensible!

Mr. Tello: That is childish! Both the Trades Union Congress of Britain and the American Federation of Labour, two of the largest organizations—

Mr. Speaker: You say one thing, and he says something else. Let us stop all that and get on with the job.

Mr. Benn: Yes, Sir. The hon. Member made a long speech, and in reply to some of the things he said, I say that no self-respecting trade union genuflects before the people whom it is supposed to fight.

I was speaking last night on the Government's attempt to diversify agriculture, and I was referring to a statement made by one hon. Member that the Budget was a gloomy one and had no balance, and to another Member's remark that this country was marching backwards. I mentioned figures that pointed to the expansion of agricultural production in 1959. I also mentioned attempts by the Department of Agriculture to speed up that process. Yet another Member said it was wrong or suggested it was wrong for Government to spend so much money on "rice, rice, rice." That hon. Member apparently did not take time to read the Budget Speech,

[MR. BENN]

but it shows that a lot of money is being put into agriculture by way of bonuses for production. Bonuses upwards of \$30 are going to be paid for every acre that the farmer puts under coconut cultivation; the same for cocoa.

The Department of Agriculture has distributed more seedlings in the past few years than it has in its whole history. In addition to the incentives provided for the production of cocoa, coconuts, beef and dairy products, there is to be special assistance for fisheries by the acquisition of a trawler and other incentives. All these things will be understood by any thoughtful person as acts by a Government designed to provide employment and a better standard of living. During 1959, this country exported more cattle, more beef—

Mr. Bowman: As a result of what Mr. Beharry did.

Mr. Speaker: Order! I wish to say that if Members persist in cross-talk, it will lead to further unparliamentary conduct, and I will have to suspend the sitting until such time as Members would wait and listen to what other Members have to say.

I shall, however, if Members do not know of it, attract attention to the relevant Standing Order. Standing Order 34 states that, "A member present in the Council during a debate —

"(3) shall maintain silence when another Member is speaking, and shall not interrupt, except in accordance with these Standing Orders;

(4) shall otherwise conduct himself in a fit and proper manner."

Every Member who stands up to speak in this Council is entitled to a hearing without interruption. I do not mind one or two remarks now and again, but this is getting just a little too far.

Mr. Bowman: With your permission, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Not now, please. The Member is on his legs.

Mr. Bowman: I was about to make an explanation.

Mr. Speaker: Not now.

Mr. Benn: I was referring to what the Government has done, and not what one individual has done, or did during 1959. During that year 44,659 pounds of beef were exported. How can anyone, who has studied the Development Programme, say that the Government is concentrating only on the expansion of rice production, when the Programme shows what is being done for other crops?

The criticisms relating to an inadequate market for rice makes it necessary for me to mention that the B.G. Rice Marketing Board is interested in securing other markets than the West Indies. The Board has succeeded in getting some padi to Venezuela, and it has held discussions with representatives of Canada, England and Eastern European countries in this respect, that is, to find out whether it will be possible to export rice to those places at some future date.

One Member mentioned that there was some concern among rice farmers who got lower gradings than they expected this year. I have been informed that the R.M.B. will meet Government to discuss this whole matter very soon.

A Member also mentioned the question of visits to the Marketing Organization. I felt constrained to say last night that both the Milk Marketing Organization and the Government Produce Depot had reduced their deficits in 1959, and Government has already said that it is concerned over these deficits. Government has also announced that the Minor Industries Department, the Milk Marketing Organization, the Government Produce Depot, and certain other Government-run commercial Departments will be organized under one Head — a Director of Marketing. Advertise-

ments have been put out for applicants for this post. In addition, the Government has secured the assistance of the International Co-operation Administration by way of a marketing specialist working here as an adviser to the Government.

One Member suggested that it is all well and good to tell farmers to diversify their crops, but too little is being done to educate the farmers. I would like to say that over the last year several meetings and seminars were held to educate farmers along the lines of diversification. Only Monday this week I opened a Seminar for agricultural development in this Country. At that Seminar, which is still in progress, we are being ably assisted by I.C.A. officers stationed in this country, and from British Honduras and Guatemala.

We have now in this country— and only a few weeks ago we announced it in the Press—the presence of half-a-dozen Agricultural Extension Officers from the I.C.A.; some in marketing, some in vocational education, some in cocoa, coconuts and other crops of that nature. In addition to these, an I.C.A. expert is in the country now, giving valuable assistance on the proposed construction of an agricultural school at Mon Repos. I have mentioned these things today because it is being suggested that Government has been doing very little in providing education for the farmers of this country.

A lot has been said about Government's land policy. Every time we hold a meeting here we are told: "Why does not Government say what is its policy on land— whether it is freehold or leasehold?" I think we stated it more than once. Colony and Crown lands for agricultural purposes will be leasehold. I hope that neither Members of this Council nor editors of the Press would worry themselves to ask that question again. Well then, one would

like to know what are the details of that policy?

More than a decade ago, it was discovered that the whole question of land tenure had not been properly gone into in this Colony. In 1955, Sir Frank McDavid, who was then the Member for Agriculture, Forest, Lands and Mines, made the remark that the whole question of Government's land policy was a formidable task. Much as one may dislike this former Minister, one must admit that he was an extremely efficient and capable person, and if he said that the question of Government's land policy was a formidable task, one should understand that Sir Frank McDavid knew what he was talking about.

This Government has been working consistently on this whole question of a land policy, and there are certain details which have already been worked out on the question of Colony lands. They are, that the lands will be leasehold; that they will be given out on 25-year leases renewable at the end of each term; that the basic rental would be 25 cents per acre per annum; and that there will be other charges for capital improvements, maintenance and the like. In addition, Crown lands leases will also be 25-year leases renewable at the end of each term. On the question of Colony lands, arrangements will be made in the leases to prevent fragmentation and to prevent small holdings from falling into the hands of landlords or other persons who would not be qualified for being on land settlements. That is it in brief. More details will be given later. As I said in this Council, when the Government's comprehensive policy is worked out, a statement will be made here on it, but a full policy has not been made out yet.

Certain persons have said that so many people cannot invest in this country because they do not know how they will be able to hold their land. There are many companies in this country which have been proceeding with their work successfully and have not shown very much anxiety over Government's

[MR. BENN]

land policy. Many people in this country have been holding lands on annual permission and every day Government is renewing annual permissions. Many people have 99-year leases or leases during Her Majesty's pleasure. But, suddenly, fear has come into the minds of investors. Or is it in the minds of the "Opposition"?

It is suggested, on this question of planning, that Puerto Rico, Jamaica and Surinam have small planning units in different sectors and then there was an overall planning unit; and it was suggested that this Government should do likewise. I have read a little and I think I can say without contradiction that there is no such thing as several small planning units in Jamaica or Puerto Rico with an overall planning unit, as suggested in this Council. But do planning units remove unemployment? Is there no unemployment in any of the countries which have planning units? Unemployment is a serious problem in British Guiana. Certainly so! The hungry cannot be easily asked to wait. But are planning units the cure for unemployment? Is there not unemployment in Jamaica, and are the people not going to England in boatloads?

A few days ago, the Hon. Norman Manley was opening a Seminar on Literacy at the U.C.W.I. and he referred to the low amount of calories in the food of the Jamaican workers. He suggested that the people who were giving literacy instructions were faced with a hard job. He said, in plain words, that it is difficult to teach starving people. That is in Jamaica. Look at Puerto Rico, the "showpiece" of the Caribbean. I want to read a small portion of a book entitled, "Enemy Forgotten", by Gilbert Green, who referred to the unemployment in Puerto Rico. He said:

"At the beginning of 1954, five per cent. of the U.S. workers were listed as unemployed, as compared with 18 per cent. of Puerto Rican workers".

Gilbert Green may not be acceptable, so I will turn to the McGale Report

on "Unemployment in British Guiana in 1956". It is stated that Puerto Rico, in 1956, had an unemployment rate of 13%. British Guiana, the "God-forsaken country", had an unemployment rate of 17%. Do planning units wipe out unemployment? I would say that this Government recognizes the necessity for advice in planning and, when it is possible to secure the staff needed for economic advice and so on, this country will have the planning unit which it is aiming at. But we are not going to mislead the people that planning units will wipe out unemployment in this country or any other country for that matter.

One hon. Member spoke of the question of crime. The hon. Member said that there was a lot of crime in this country and that as long as unemployment is there, there will be crime. Agreed! But I do not think that British Guiana has a crime rate as many of the highly industrialized countries. Look at England and the United States of America! Compare this country with the highly industrialized countries! Yet, they have unemployment and the type of crimes committed would hardly be thought of by any Guianese.

I mentioned the efforts in the agricultural sector to overcome unemployment. I should like now to refer to the efforts by the Government in other sectors to overcome the problem of unemployment. Hon. Members know that the building of schools, the building of houses, the building of health centres, hospitals and the like will provide more employment than is now possible. Has there been any attempt by the Government to help industrial expansion? Let us look at the record of this Government for 1959. It shows that 21 companies applied for tax concessions at different times of the year. Of those 21 applications 11 have been granted, eight are under consideration and two have been rejected. One of the rejected applications was from a foreign company.

As regards the concession of duty-free importation of machinery under the

Industries Aid and Encouragement Ordinance, the total value of goods imported into this country amounted to \$7½ million. In 1959 26 new local companies with a total share capital of \$3½ million were registered. In addition, eight overseas companies were registered in this Colony. I almost said “in this communist country” because some Members have suggested that because of our ideology people with capital are not coming to this country to invest their money. I would remind Members that a Canadian Trade Delegation came to this country during the period of this Government. However, one Member suggested that nothing has been done since that delegation came to this country. A Japanese Trade Delegation and a Hungarian Trade Delegation also came to this country. Can it truthfully be said that this Government is not interested in attracting people with capital to come and help in the development of this country?

In addition, a delegation comprised of representatives of this Government, the Chamber of Commerce and the Rice Marketing Board paid a visit to Venezuela where a certain amount of trade was agreed upon. I understand that a similar visit to Brazil has been postponed on account of certain factors. But that is not all that Government has done or is trying to do about industrial development. It was announced some time ago that Government was endeavouring to acquire land near Georgetown for the establishment of industrial estates in the Ruimveldt area. It has also been announced that at Garden of Eden, on the Demerara River, provision will be made for the setting up of industrial estates.

The reports of the Industrial Development Advisory Committee have been given to the Canadian Chamber of Commerce and other Chambers of Commerce, and have also been sent to several Embassies. But it takes time and a lot of planning before an industry can be established in these days. Such considerations as the availability of raw materials have to be carefully investi-

gated before a small industry or a large one can be started. One has to consider where he is going to get his raw materials and how far away they are from the proposed site of the factory, the cost of such raw materials and other things. Then there is the question of the availability of labour, especially skilled labour, which we are trying to produce at the Technical Institute. Then there is the question of markets. One does not establish a glass factory, a brewery or any industrial enterprise unless he knows where he is going to sell his product.

Then there is the question of finance. The planners have to consider where capital can be obtained, and at what rate of interest; and how the money borrowed is to be repaid from the profits, if any, from the industry. That is planning. Some people talk glibly about a condensery, as though it was a balloon one could blow up. Every industrial enterprise has to be carefully examined before it can be established. We are producing pasteurised milk and we feel that our people ought to drink the milk. We really have not got a market for the milk because our people have not yet developed a taste for the type of milk we produce. Government has to create a desire among our people for this type of milk.

Only yesterday, as a result of an application by this Government to the International Co-operation Administration, the leader of a team of industrial consultants arrived in this country. He proposes to spend three weeks here looking into the potentialities of industrial development, after which he will return to his headquarters to bring back his team of industrial consultants. [Applause]. Is that not an effort by this Government at industrialization, so as to provide work for our people?

Perhaps I will silence the critics if I mention some of the other schemes on which Government will have the advice of industrial consultants, and which we have been looking into for some time. As hon. Members may have heard, Government feels able to proceed with an

[MR. BENN]

application for funds for setting up a glass factory. If it is not possible to get private enterprise to set up such a factory a sum of money has been made available under the Development Plan to do so. A glass factory, we hope and believe, will be a reality. We are also examining the commercial production of pottery. The Minor Industries Section has been carrying out tests in this direction for some time, and even the use of agricultural waste to produce fertilizer and gas, which is called Biogas, is being energetically pursued. The Hungarian delegation which recently came to this country discussed this project with the Ministry of Trade and Industry, and a member of the Ministry staff who went to Hungary during his leave in England investigated the possibilities of a Biogas factory.

Government has also been examining the question of the manufacture of wooden articles — furniture and toys — not only for local use but for export. Quite a lot of toys are imported into this country, and it is felt that whether or not we are able to achieve an export trade in toys the local market may be sufficient to justify the setting up of such a factory.

Then there is also the question which has always been suggested by my friend, the hon. Member for Demerara River—the milling of wheat into flour—but as hon. Members know, the question of international wheat agreements is being looked into. It has also been suggested that a small percentage of the large quantity of cassava which we are producing, and which is causing Government some headache, could be mixed with wheaten flour to produce a type of flour which may become palatable to Guianese.

Government is also looking into the question of the assembly of bicycles in this country. That will also come under very close examination by the industrial consultant from the I.C.A. and his team, and one or two other technical advisers

outside of this country have been asked to help us to look into one or two of these projects.

Government has set about investigating the potentialities of the Kopinang area in which a deposit of bauxite has been found. I understand, however, that the quality of the bauxite is very low, but further investigation is being made into that. In the Wamara area chromium has been found, and I think it is public property by now that a large quantity of iron ore mixed with bauxite was discovered some time ago in the Omai area, and samples have been sent away by Government for investigation of the possibility of separating the bauxite from the iron ore.

Hon. Members will also recall an announcement a few days ago, that a soil scientist has been sent to the Kopinang area to investigate the possibilities for agricultural settlement in a portion of that area. I have mentioned these things so that they can be apprised of Government's efforts to provide employment and industrial development.

The Government has gone further. It has made application to several countries and several Agencies of the United Nations for assistance in the development of this country. The investigations into the deepening of the Georgetown harbour present one specific case. Other cases are the Greater Canje Project, a comprehensive soil survey and water resources for hydro-electric power, research into further woodpulp and plywood, and an aerial survey. In connection with the latter, I think an official from the Colonial Office, one Mr. Tamer-Smith, has come here already. I mention these things to help Members to understand that the Government is not marking time.

Projects like these take some time to materialize. You do not decide to build a road and then just build it. Investigational work has to be done first.

One hon. Member asked, "where is the Berril Report?" Perhaps the hon. the Financial Secretary will answer that. What I would ask is: where was that hon. Member when the Development Programme, which was based on the Berrill Report, was discussed?

Another hon. Member said that sufficient was not being done for housing. Well, perhaps not. Sufficient is not being done for many other things in British Guiana, because it is not a rich country. There are very few countries in the world today which can carry out all the schemes they would like.

One Member mentioned the training of teachers. That is a problem which is as serious in England as it is in British Guiana.

The hon. Minister of Labour, Health and Housing has said that \$1 million per year will be spent on urban housing, and the number of houses to be built in the next five years would be no less than the number of houses built during the last Development Programme. No less! I want that to sink in. So do not go and say that the Government is not building houses for the people of Georgetown. Funds have also been made available for the British Guiana Credit Corporation to lend money for rural housing. I understand it is about \$6 million for the next five-year period.

We heard a few words, comments or discussions on independence, and one Member told us that we cannot go on borrowing money and still expect to be an independent country. Reference was made to the constitutional position before 1928, and the visit of the Wilson-Snell Commission. But these are different days, and there are few countries in the world today that are not borrowing. If the hon. Member had taken the trouble to study some of the Reports of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, which members of this Council receive regularly, he would have seen how many countries are engaged in borrowing from interna-

tional agencies as well as national agencies. If the hon. Member cares to examine the Report of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference held in New Delhi in 1957, he would see a paper on economic relations in the Commonwealth and therein how many countries inside the Commonwealth are borrowing from other members of the Commonwealth and from outside. These are not days when one country marches troops into another because of money owed—these are days of international co-operation and, as the hon. Member for Western Berbice said last night, "peaceful co-existence."

Mr. Rai: Under Standing Order 35 (2), I beg to move that the hon. Minister of Natural Resources be permitted to speak for a further period of one hour.

Mr. Saffee: I beg to second the Motion.

Question put, and agreed to.

Mr. Benn: Thank you. As I said, a lot of countries today are borrowing from international agencies. Look for a moment at Guinea. That country voted against remaining a part of the French Union. Then France took out everything that belonged to her, or almost everything she could take. Even with a large amount of illiteracy, has Guinea gone down? No. Guinea linked up with Ghana, and Sékou Touré has been touring the world in the interest of his country — visiting the United States of America, England and the Soviet Union, among other places — and has received financial assistance for Guinea. Has Guinea lost her independence?

The statement that the British Guiana money mission came back with borrowed money still holds good. This country will have to borrow money for some time. This Government has tried to borrow money at low interest rates—as a matter of fact that was the chief quarrel between Dr. Jagan and the Colonial Office, if there was any quarrel

[MR. BENN]

at all. The discussions on the question of the amount of interest on loans he would get were held with Mr. Berrill, the economist from Cambridge and Mr. John Adler, the economist from the World Bank. We want more money at lower interest rates, and Dr. Jagan has been consistently pleading for co-operation in this Council and in this country as a whole to enable the people of British Guiana to get more money for real development—co-operation in this regard instead of the production of a lot of hot air which we get all the time.

Did not the Government in its Development Programme for 1960-1964 make a very high bid for development money? We suggested over \$200 million in loans, moneys raised locally and grants for this country. Did we not try to get this amount? And when Dr. Jagan was unsuccessful in getting approval of a Development Programme costing \$200 million and more, did he not appeal for the co-operation of Guianese so that he might ease the unemployment situation which so many Members were shedding crocodile tears in this Council about? What did they do or say when the call for co-operation was made? The wrath of the working-people will fall on the heads of those people who refused this co-operation when it was asked for. More money would have meant more development. More money would have meant a new Airport, as the hon. Member for Georgetown South suggested.

We put into our Development Programme the construction of a new, fancy airport like other countries, but did we get the assistance and co-operation to get that money? No! Perhaps, we will not get an international airport. We had put in a bid to start the East Coast road. Did we get the money? Is it because, perhaps, of the Government's ideology that we did not get these moneys? What about the Georgetown Hospital? Many people suggested that because it is to be built in Georgetown that it is not built. Did we not put it in our Development

Programme? But did we get the money? One hon. Member reminded this Council that this was a Colony and I said that it is a very true remark and worthy of consideration by every Member of this Council. British Guiana is still a Colony.

One Member, referring to Colonialism, suggested — he was talking about education — that Government had not done enough and how are you going to get independence if you do not have more educated people. He said, in earnest, that Government had not put enough money into education and how are you going to run the country. Of course, we know that that hon. Member does not really believe in the full independence of this country. And it is not only the members of the Majority Party who have said that the hon. Member for New Amsterdam does not believe in independence for this country. No less a person than his hon. Colleague, the hon. Member for Georgetown Central, said this of the party to which the hon. Member for New Amsterdam belonged and which has been incorporated in what has been described as the People's National Congress.

In an article written by Mr. Burnham, who is now the Member for Georgetown Central, in the "Thunder" some years ago, he said that the U.D.P. was not capable of leading the people to independence. He said that in 1955. Today, he is part of the U.D.P. which has been swallowed up like how Jonah was swallowed up by the whale.

Hon. Members will remember a recent statement made by the Ministry of Trade and Industry that \$225,000 was being set aside for tourism. A lot of people believe that tourism will help to bring large sums of money to this country and help, to a great extent, in relieving the unemployment situation. The Government has put \$225,000 aside to go into this question of tourism. I said a moment ago, in referring to independence and education, that it was suggested that if you do not have good education you could not get independence. One Member referred to the difficulty

which Nigeria was experiencing. The hon. Member for New Amsterdam was one who criticized the Government most for putting very little money in the Development Programme for education. But countries like India and Guinea and many other Asian countries have got independence; and Guinea, I do not think I would be wrong in saying it has a higher rate of illiteracy than British Guiana. And the rate of illiteracy in Latin America and Africa is far higher than that of British Guiana.

One or two Members referred to the question of our ideology; and this brings me to the question which was posed and commented upon by the hon. Minister of Labour, Health and Housing. The hon. Member for Demerara River referred to the abrogation of the Constitution of 1928, but in their reports to the Colonial Office, people like Weber and Crane said that what was responsible for the backwardness and loss of the Constitution was the local Press. This sort of thing still goes on today, and many of our friends in the "Opposition", by their statements in this Council and outside, are carrying on the process that was started — not a process of helping the Government, but a process of criticizing it so that their criticisms would get into the Press and make headlines.

I wish many of them were like this Member, who is not a Guianese but who has come to live here, the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Tasker. Mr. Tasker, in the "Montreal Gazette" of the 28th September, 1959, pointed out several conditions under which Canadian Companies can enter the country. Mr. Tasker could have, like other people who went outside the country and spoke of communism, raised a red flag about Communism. He could have talked about leasehold and freehold. Those people who talk about Guianese and Guianization can take a lesson from a person who is not a Guianese and who went to Canada and tried to advertise Guiana.

This country, as I said, has suffered in the past and has been suffering because

of the fulminations of irresponsible people who do not like this Government, and because of the Press. The challenge of every Guianese today is to forget petty jealousies and whoever the Government is, to co-operate with that Government for the betterment and for the upliftment of their own country.

We are faced with a new Development Programme beginning this year. I said a few days ago that the Development Programme should become the central point of the people's ambitions. The Development Programme is a reality, and it can only become the central point if politicians, civil servants and Guianese co-operate to make it so, because it could make a great change for progress in this country. The World Bank people who also promised to loan this Government money for the British Guiana Credit Corporation believe so, and it is the duty, I feel, of every Guianese to help in this process.

We have heard an appeal from the hon. Minister of Trade and Industry for co-operation in order to raise loans for the development of this country and for reducing unemployment. We have heard the appeal, time and time again, for a united front—before the Elections, after the Elections and on several occasions in this Council. We appeal again for that co-operation which alone will put us really on our feet economically, and also put us on the road to national independence—as my hon. Friend, the Member for Georgetown Central, said in the "Thunder" of October 23, 1955, . . . — "the inalienable right to be free and rule one's country". Perhaps, we are marking time, but we have not marched backwards, politically. We have to remember this statement.

One or two Members have suggested: 'Oh! I now see. You and the official members are hand in glove. You are co-operating now'. There are several reasons for that, the main is that the official members and the Elected section in the Executive Council have to work with each other, understand each

[MR. BENN]

other, and see each other's point of view and try to work out things within the context of the Constitution. The Colonial Office knows that the Majority Party is in the Government. It is a *fait accompli*. It is an established fact. So they put up with us. The Majority Party on the other hand, because there are not enough patriots to help in the fight for national independence so that we might get out of the thralldom of colonialism, have come to regard it as a necessity to co-operate and to work with the Colonial Office during this period. It is therefore a challenge to those who call themselves the "Opposition"—it is a challenge to all political parties to join hands so that British Guiana will be a free, independent and self-respecting country. The fact that the Official Members and the Elected Government have worked together and have learnt to understand each other's point of view during this period, should earn the commendation of Members on the other side of the Table, because it has helped during this period in pushing us on faster towards economic progress.

I wish, therefore, to close by again appealing to hon. Members on the other side, and to the Guianese people, to co-operate for the success of the Development Plan, and to assist this country to gain national independence in the shortest time possible, and the shortest time is when the Constitutional delegation leaves these shores for England. That is the challenge. The ancient Romans used to say "It is a glorious thing to die for one's country". You are not called upon to die; you are called upon to co-operate for something which you can get by demanding it, by co-operating. That is the challenge.

I feel that if we get the co-operation of hon. Members on our Constitutional delegation; if we get the co-operation of hon. Members in trying to speak well of British Guiana, to help her and give her a fair name and forget the petty differ-

ences; if we get the co-operation of hon. Members to push forward this Development Plan, then we could look at the Guianese people and say "The period of colonialism is departing, and the joy of freedom and independence is in the offing".

Mr. Gajraj: I am sure that all Members will join me in congratulating the hon. Minister of Natural Resources for the great vigour with which he has defended his Government. I think it is only right that in his position he should do so. It is his right and indeed his duty, but I am also sure that all hon. Members will express their disappointment at the statement of the hon. Minister when he said that Members of the "Opposition" might be pardoned for their criticisms. We do not sit here to do our duty as Members of this Council with any feeling that we are doing something that is wrong which would merit either pardon or some other form of chastisement, for just as the hon. Minister has defended his Government has a right, so every Member of this Council, and particularly those who are not in the Government or of the Government Party, have a duty to perform. And in that duty one must point out to the Government, the Council and the country as a whole, those deficiencies which are apparent to Members, and indeed at the same time indicate methods whereby the objective of the Government, which I daresay can always be said to be the objective of the country, may be attained more easily and perhaps more quickly.

I know that a great deal of time has been spent in this debate, and I appreciate the desire which was expressed earlier, and has continued to be the keynote, of the urgency to get on with this matter, and therefore at one stage I felt that there might not have been the need for me to speak, but having listened for a while to some of the statements made I think I would not be fulfilling my duty as a Member of this Council if I did not join with my colleagues in putting on record some of the views which I hold.

I do not propose, of course, to touch on every head in the Estimates; if it becomes necessary that would be done in the Committee stage. But there are a few points with which I might deal which appear to have created some degree of controversy between those who hold the standard of the Government and those who are not perhaps as fully informed of proposals for the future as the Members of the Government would be.

There have been some statements which will not merely create difficulties in this Council but might create difficulties for the people of British Guiana. The first note I made was on the question of the policy of the Government in relation to primary education in this country.

Reference was made by some hon. Members on this side of the Table to the undesirability, shall I say, of Government pursuing some modification of the existing system of denominational control of schools. I do not wish to speak at length on this subject, except to say for the benefit of those whose memories may not be as long as mine, that this question has been exercising the minds of the people of this country for 20 years or more.

There has been an insistent demand for many years for a better arrangement to be put into effect, whereby funds of the State which are voted to pay the salaries of teachers in schools which are owned and run by religious denominations, should be spent in a manner which would not be considered as discriminatory, and it was because of this that the system of building new Government schools began, because it was felt that if all new schools were Government schools then in the course of time those persons qualified to teach, who are denied an opportunity for advancement in denominational schools either because they do not belong to the particular denomination, or are not Christians at all, would find some place of employment in the Government schools, and perhaps the situation might have been easier had it been possible for previous Govern-

ments to have spent enough money to build Government schools wherever the population pressure indicated that new schools were necessary. I myself would say that it is not, and it should not be, the intention of this Government, or of any Government, to destroy what is there. What is indicated is that some measure of common agreement be reached whereby the existing system of denominational school control might be so adjusted as to bring about a situation wherein those charges of discrimination which have been justifiably levelled time and again might completely disappear.

It must be realized — and I am sure all Members realize — that if there should be criticism of the Budget for 1960 the main burden of the criticism should not be on what the Budget proposes that we should do, but on the things which we find will not be done, or will not be done to the same degree or in the same measure as we would like to see them done. That must be the main criticism but then, of course, based upon such criticism one has to realize that in order to do more things for this country and for its people the period of one year which the Recurrent Estimates cover must be marked by efforts to increase considerably the amount of funds available. Then when one sees that more money in large quantities is necessary, one must ask oneself, "how should one get it?" The task of any Government in this respect is not easy, particularly where the needs of the community are so great and its income far below the needs. In such circumstances one must perforce decide upon priorities and upon measuring the amount of money as against the particular work which can be accomplished by the funds.

That is why I believe we find in this Budget that anyone can say that more money should be spent on this or more money should be spent on that. I think we will all agree that these things are important or desirable, but if we are to accomplish them, even within the framework of existing taxation, then certainly we

[MR. GAJRAJ]

have to cut our coats to suit the amount of cloth which we have.

All of us would like to see a lot more money spent on social services. They are necessary, and indeed the accent was on social development and housing, in the previous Development Programme. In every country where it has been found necessary to prepare development programmes, certain stresses are made, so that while in the previous Programme social services and housing carried great weight, so now in the present Development Programme we have to place a greater weight and emphasis upon economic development.

Members of this Council and the people of British Guiana must appreciate that we are not getting money freely, though it is true that some grants have been given to this country. When we hear of Programmes costing \$110 million or \$200 million, Guianese must realize that the greater portion of those amounts has to be borrowed and, more important still, the money has to be repaid. How are we to repay? We must produce and earn from our own efforts and from our own land—using our skills so as to produce more wealth — to pay for development which is aimed at not only reducing the number of people unemployed at the present time, but to take care of those who will need employment in the years to come.

In a country like this which has suddenly bounded forward in its population any sane Government will recognize the need for planning for the future. Our population has increased each year with the eradication of malaria and other diseases which had been decimating it. But in planning, there are so many outside causes and effects to be taken into consideration, particularly the state of the money market available to a colonial territory. It is well known that although the Colonial Office might, under pressure say, "Go and borrow money from wherever you can get it", we know from

practical experience, and from the experience of other territories similarly placed, that our main hope lies in the United Kingdom money market and that the Colonial Office has to sanction our agreements.

So that however much the people of this country might desire their Government to embark upon development in a larger measure than has been proposed, that desire must be completely conditioned by the available finance. I sympathize with my friends on the opposite side of the Table in their not being able to propose a much more vigorous programme of expenditure in the year which has just begun.

Those hon. Members who have seen the hon. Financial Secretary's Budget Statement and Government's expressed desire to effect economy in the administration of the country's affairs as a dark cloud and an indication of further retrenchment and unemployment, are taking an extreme view of the situation. I have heard one hon. Member say that far from the Government showing progress by increasing the numbers employed in the various Departments, it will probably reduce the numbers so employed. However, I myself do not see that progress is indicated merely by finding work for people in Government Departments in large numbers. If we, as a people, are to move forward and carry our full weight in the future, whether or not we are certain that a large measure of constitutional advancement will be granted to us, then every Guianese who is working for this country must give of his best, and we must not have two or three persons to do a job which can be properly done by one. We must economize in the amount of human effort which must be spent on a job, and the Government and the people themselves must endeavour to find other avenues of employment of a productive nature whereby they can put their best services at the disposal of the country.

Those are the things to which I think we should turn our minds, rather than putting on a pair of dark glasses to see the year ahead as a gloomy picture. I do not think the picture is as gloomy as has been painted, but one which is a challenge to people to get together, work hard and gain self-respect and the respect of others. In fact no people who hope to gain independence can afford not to work hard.

In spite of the desire of some Members to see a greater accent placed on the creation of new industries in this Colony — and I wholly agree that this should be one of our aims — we must never forget that the backbone of the wealth of this country will for a very long time to come lie in agriculture. I was indeed very sorry to find that since the accent has been placed on developing and draining lands to be put at the disposal of the people the charge has been made, both in this Council and in the daily Press, that the rural community has been given a larger slice of the cake than others. It is a pity that political considerations should have created the desire or the need for hon. Members to find some reason for attacking one another. An agreeable desideratum has been turned into a political squabble, thereby creating a division between those who live in the rural and urban areas.

I remember that more than 30 years ago hon. Members of this Council were telling the Government that it was necessary to have a larger proportion of the revenue of the Colony put toward drainage and irrigation, so that agricultural crops would be assured thereby allowing the productive sector of agriculture to contribute more towards the national wealth.

Time and again it has been pointed out that because of the lack of water control, valuable crops have been lost; and up to 1953, I believe, all representatives of the working class, as well as all the people interested in this country, were *ad idem* on this score that drainage and irrigation must be given top prior-

ities. Now that that has been done we are faced with the sad state of being turned to this suggestion of the rural people being given a larger slice of the cake than the urban people.

Apart from all of that, everybody in this Council and outside must appreciate that if we have a large unemployment problem and if we are short of funds, then we must utilize the money we have to create jobs for the many rather than for the few, and in creating jobs for the many instead of the few, the emphasis should be on agriculture rather than on new industries. I am not against new industries, but we cannot take the little money we have got and invest solely in industries, because we have had it from eminent industrialists in this Council and outside that you have to spend the money, whether in agriculture or otherwise, so that the same expenditure would be able to create jobs in industries. Do we wish to give work to the many albeit they may not get the larger slice of the cake?

Following upon that, one has heard that too much emphasis has been put on the provision of land for planting. If agricultural crops are to be encouraged, what are we going to do with the crops? It is true, at times, when ground provisions are in plentiful supply for local consumption, that the people are not able, in the City of Georgetown at least, to take off all of the crops. We have had a case in the past where plantains and cassava had been left to rot. But as one who has spent a great deal of my life in commerce, on the marketing side, it is my view that we are not taking full advantage of the capacity of the people in British Guiana to make use of all of the ground provisions that are reaped because, in trying to give the farmer a guaranteed price, one finds that the produce is all channelled to Georgetown. Whilst there is a larger section of the population in Georgetown than in anywhere else; nevertheless, they cannot be expected to use up all the produce. So one agrees with Government to appoint a Marketing Officer. I hope

[MR. GAJRAJ]

he will be given the services of an Advisory Board to help him along, because I feel, myself, that if some of the produce is sent to areas in the country where such stuff is not grown, that the portion of the produce which is thrown away can be marketed.

On the question of rice, I want to associate myself with the assurance given by the hon. Minister of Natural Resources when he said that in spite of the record crop which has been reaped in the autumn of 1959, which will be available for sale until the autumn crop of 1960, the Rice Marketing Board has no fears as to the disposal of it. We have, of course, heard in this Council on more than one occasion, that the Rice Marketing Board, perhaps the Government, is doing nothing to obtain additional markets for this large and expanding production of rice. One must realize that you have got to produce the stuff before you can seek the marketing of it; and I can assure hon. Members that the potential of the West Indian market has not been fully supplied by British Guiana. In the past, we have never been able to give them all of their needs. They have had to seek supplies outside. But during last year we were able to supply their needs and we believe we will be able to supply the West Indies' needs for 1959—1960.

Even if we had a surplus of a few thousand tons of rice from this crop, it is my opinion that a bit of sales propaganda in some of the smaller islands of the West Indies would result in the increased consumption of rice; for the Rice Marketing Board has never, so far, embarked on such a campaign because we do not wish to create a demand for something which we might have been hard pressed to supply. Members must realize this: that the West Indian market is a protected market for us. According to our agreement, British Guiana, I think, must reserve from its production, as much of its rice as the West Indian islands might require. If the requirements of the West Indies

for 1960 is 70,000 tons, we cannot attempt to sell outside the West Indian area until they were supplied or unless we are absolutely certain we will have 70,000 to give them and will be able to accumulate a further 10,000 tons.

In the meanwhile, the Rice Marketing Board has not just been sitting there exploiting the West Indies. We have been attempting to find out where are the potentialities for our rice if the rice is produced. Apart from our neighbours in Venezuela, who seem to me to be in a position to pay us a price reasonably comparable to that which we get in the West Indies, we would have to go farther afield and pay higher freights, etc., then the returns to the rice producers would be somewhat less than they are getting now. The West Indies is near to us. Therefore, to place our produce in their market would cost us less than if we had to send it much farther away.

Only a few days ago I read in a trade magazine that Australia sold rice to Canada, and when I read of that my first reaction was: Here is part of our potential markets going to Australia. Then I was not worried when I read the amount of money which that contract was bringing to Australia; because when I divided it by the 8,000 tons I realized that the price they were receiving per ton was substantially less than we were receiving from the West Indies. Therefore, I want to say here, as I said before, that the West Indian market is vital to British Guiana and we must do everything possible and, indeed, should give the assurance that the Rice Marketing Board is doing that to keep in touch with our customers and to supply them with as much of our produce as they can consume.

In our quest for a better price for our rice, we have realized, as all good marketers have realized, that we have not only got to market produce that sells in bulk. In this competitive world one has got to establish demands for one's product by means of the brand, by

means of a package that would be attractive to the eye and would be remembered by the illiterate buyer and be pointed out on the shelf, and it would be found that the Rice Marketing Board is paying particular attention to the development of a larger proportion of our West Indian market in packaged rice.

A small delegation of members of the Board went to Jamaica recently, and it is my view, as a result of the visit paid, the enquiries made, the goodwill generated and the arrangements concluded, that in the field of packaged rice, British Guiana would find Jamaica a very remunerative market. We also sell packaged rice to Trinidad. The manager and I had the opportunity last year to investigate the Trinidad market as well, and I feel very certain that here, again, the proportion of rice which we sell them in future will show an increase in percentage in packaged rice.

Packaged rice brings in a better return, but on the other hand rice growers and the public in general must realize that one only puts his best product into a package which is going to be identified by its brand name or its particular pattern, colour and so on. Therefore, when one finds that producers grumble about the grades and claim that standards have been raised, one must necessarily ask oneself: where do we want to head for? Do we want to produce rice which will merely be called rice, or a product of which we can be proud, and which by its very appearance will fetch us a greater return? It would be better for the farmer himself and the industry itself, and it would be far better for the economy of the country if we could raise our standards and thereby reap in reward a greater sum of money.

As I said earlier, we have to pay for our development, and one of the ways, and perhaps the principal way, is by a greater production of the goods of the country and a greater production of a higher standard of product. It has been said in the course of this debate that the Rice Marketing Board has adopted higher standards, and many of

the farmers find themselves in the unhappy position of receiving grades which, when translated in terms of money, mean less dollars and cents for them than they had anticipated.

Let me say right here and now that that is always the case with everyone who is selling something. He is always anxious to obtain more. That is a human trait and we must recognize it as such, but on the other hand there is also justifiable ground for many of them saying that they are not getting what they expect to get, not through any fault of their own but because it has been found that the Gandhi bug, an insect which attacks the rice at flowering time, had been particularly active in certain of the rice areas of the country during the last crop. When the bug attacks the grain of rice it becomes black in colour, and one can easily appreciate that when a large number of grains are so attacked, the general appearance of any sample of rice is bound to suffer, if instead of the normal 1 or 2 per cent. of discolouration the percentage goes up much higher.

The information which has been given to me and my colleagues on the Rice Marketing Board is that the new guides which have been prepared are not an improvement on the standards. Indeed, the instructions that were issued were clear-cut; that the guides must restore to the various grades the general appearance which naturally is lost over a period of time when the sample of rice ages and it is handled. But the formula upon which the guides have been prepared for each of the grades remains the same. So that although complaints reach us—and immediately as those complaints reach us we investigate them—we realize that the farmers would naturally feel aggrieved because up to a short time before the Rice Grading Inspector operated the guides, whereas the new guides, having been prepared from new crop rice, certainly showed a better general background.

There is one more point which I must mention, and that is that although

[MR. GAJRAJ]

it is most desirable that the new guide samples be made available at the beginning of each crop, it is almost impossible for them to be so prepared and be ready, because it must be recalled that it is the result of the new crop that must be used to produce these guides. So that on this occasion many of the millers, or those who buy padi for milling, have complained that they purchased their padi on the basis of what it would have given in relation to the old guides, and by the time the new guides were brought into use they felt that they had been misguided. I want to say that it is difficult for these guides to be made available as the new crop comes in.

A point has been made by the Minister of Natural Resources in this respect, and I want to underline it. It is that under the Ordinance the preparation of guides and the approval of such guides is a matter entirely in the hands of an official of this Government and not a matter for the members of the Rice Marketing Board, and that official is the Director of Agriculture. The Board, having realized that through no fault of the producers themselves a considerable increase in the percentage of black grains appears in the rice, has decided not to make changes in the guides. Having been established, the guides stand, but a greater degree of tolerance will be exercised by the Grading Officer in order to make the lot of the farmer and miller a bit easier. But it must be realized by all those engaged in the industry that it means less money to the Board, to the industry as a whole and the Colony as a whole, so that action in one respect brings about a reaction which can have great repercussions. We want the people who are engaged in this back-breaking toil to be happy. I think it is necessary in a country that is going forward that its agriculturists, who are the backbone of the country, should be happy.

I would like to touch on the coconut industry. I have heard the hon.

Minister of Natural Resources recite figures indicating the action which will be taken by Government to encourage the planting of as many more coconut trees as possible in order that the needs of this country in oils and fats may be met. British Guiana has been a deficit area in oils and fats for a long number of years, and it has been accepted generally all along that a vigorous effort to increase production of copra was necessary. Such an approach is progressively necessary as time goes by, because not only have we got to catch up on this deficit but we have to realize that with the increase of our population going on each year the demand for oils and fats is bound to increase as the years go by. So that we have a double problem. The first is to make up the present deficit and the second is to provide for the additional needs which are becoming more apparent as time rolls on.

I was a little perturbed when I read earlier this week that at the recent Oils and Fats Conference the Government of Trinidad and Tobago indicated that it thought the Oils and Fats Agreement had outlived its purpose and there was no further need for it. I do not know, of course, what has happened since the Conference. Our representative is not yet back, but I hope that it has been decided to continue the Agreement, because its whole purpose was to guarantee to the industry within this area a protected market. A price is fixed each year in order to enable the producers of copra to look after their coconut estates properly and make something on their investments.

Where we have the right under the Agreement to import into British Guiana to the extent of our deficit we find that within recent times the Government has been importing our deficit in terms of oil while British Guiana is served by two oil mills. We have money invested in the processing industry, yet we are importing oils, thereby creating a period of unemployment in our own industry. I would like to suggest to the Government—the Minister of Trade and Indus-

try is not here now, but I would like it recorded for his benefit—that it would be better for us to endeavour to import the raw material of the industry, which is copra, and have it processed through our own mills, because then we would be spending a minimum amount of our money overseas and creating a greater amount of employment in our country. We must not let our milling capacity stand idle and thereby lose the value of our investment.

I now understand that the suggestion of the Trinidad Government not to continue the Oils and Fats Agreement was rejected at the Conference, and rightly so. We may therefore look forward to a further period of stability in the coconut industry of this country whereby the productive sector of our agricultural economy may move forward at a greater pace and take over the deficit in this very important and necessary field.

Mr. Speaker: You have five minutes more before a motion is necessary for an extension of your time.

Mr. Gajraj: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe reference has been made in this Council in the past by Members on both sides of the Table, to the need for advice from economists. Probably when one thinks of economic planning units, it is on a scale more grandiose than that which the Government has in view. I was nevertheless very disappointed to hear the Minister of Natural Resources dismiss the need for economic planning units by referring to the unemployment situation in Jamaica where there was much unemployment and immigrants leaving the Island by shiploads for the United Kingdom. That was an unfortunate way to endeavour to answer the argument; because of the fact that there is unemployment in Jamaica does not say that economic planning units have done no good for the country. Indeed it shows the need for greater economic planning in order to get rid of unemployment.

Mr. Benn: I am sorry to interrupt my friend, the hon. Nominated Member, but I did say at the end of my speech that the Government was still interested in setting up a planning unit, and would do so as soon as an economic adviser for such a unit is available. What I meant was that economic planning units would not wipe out unemployment.

Mr. Gajraj: I agree that the hon. Minister did say so, but I still contend that he dismissed the argument in the early stage of his speech by referring to the unemployment situation.

I repeat, it shows the greater need for economic planning. People who go by the shiploads to other countries as immigrants from these parts are not necessarily the unemployed or the unemployable. They are often persons who have sold out their small businesses to go to the United Kingdom in order to better their own position. If they were unemployed they would hardly be able to raise the passage money. The immigrants are often those who have a natural desire and ambition to make their position in life better—as happens here in British Guiana.

I am glad that the Government intends to pursue the question of having an economic planning unit. But let me say this, it is a matter of urgency where so many hundreds of thousands of dollars are being spent to have at least one person who is a trained economist to advise us. If it is thought that an economic planning unit as a separate service is too expensive for us, surely Government might be willing to obtain a trained economist to be attached to the Finance Secretariat for the purpose of checking on the overall spending in the Development Programme.

Mr. Speaker: A motion is necessary at this stage.

Mr. Davis: I beg to move that the hon. Member be allowed to speak for a further period of 30 minutes.

Mr. Hubbard: I beg to second the Motion.

Question put, and agreed to.

Mr. Gajraj: Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: The further period of 30 minutes cannot be utilised this afternoon—the rest will have to be taken up tonight.

Mr. Gajraj: I am not one who will charge the Government with doing nothing in respect of the creation of new industries. Those who are familiar with the investigation of possibilities for new industries know the length of time involved: problems have to be studied, data obtained and consideration given as to whether a new industry would be a financial proposition or not. I must congratulate the Ministry concerned for pursuing this matter, and I am sure other Members will agree with me in this.

However, one of the things I would warn Government about is this: we must not attempt to industrialize merely for the sake of producing more local articles without regard to the economics of the ventures, or without taking into consideration the price to be attached to the article to be sold to Guianese. Much as one would like to see imports reduced and people buying articles produced in Guianese factories, I would not wish to find us in the same position as the largest territory in the West Indies Federation where, over the past few years by protecting its industries, they developed a number of local factories which, from my own knowledge, operate rather inefficiently behind a high tariff wall. The result has been that the people of that Island have been called upon to pay a much higher price for the goods that are produced in Jamaica than they would have paid elsewhere, whereas agricultural and any other products which had to be sold on the world market had to be bought at the world market price.

It is not a wise thing to ask people to buy local things at inflated prices, for some reaction will soon set in, and the people will cry out. I would like the Government to bear that in mind when they are pursuing the question of a factory to convert wheat into flour. They must not be deluded by the fact that a large amount of flour comes here. Even if the flour is milled here, the cost of freight will be higher than that charged by other countries. Government will do well to look into the economics of producing flour here before going into such a venture.

In the course of the debate I heard one Member say that it was a pity that Government's Plan, Programme or Budget did not indicate that they were acting in the interest of all the people of the country. I think that was an unfortunate statement to make, because one must realize that whoever is in power, the laws that are made, or anything that is done, are made or done with the object of benefiting all. If we start at this stage of our development to charge any Government with looking after only one part of the country and not the other, then we invite the same sort of statement to be made on a subsequent occasion when another Government or Party has taken over. If we continue in this way, we will never be able to think, work and co-operate as Guianese.

Sometimes when I see in the newspapers and hear on the radio reference to Guianese, I wonder if all the racial groups are included in the term. All of us in the different racial groups have come here—not all of us of our own volition—and we have tried to make this a better country, not for one but for all. Help for one is help for all. Unless we are able to realize that, we will be creating greater problems for our children than those which are present today. Think of the poor tots we are bringing into the world and the position we are placing them in. Everyone wants to realize that during his stay on earth he has been able to make conditions better for his

children. Let that be our aim. Let us as Guianese get together and work for this country. I know that if the Government is changed at some time in the future and one of the Parties represented on this side of the Council occupies the other side, they would expect us to believe that their efforts are in the interest of all the people. If that is what we want, we can only get it with the same magnanimity of spirit and faith in this country of ours which we should apply now, and faith in the earth which will cover our remains when our work is ended.

Mr. Jackson: Mr. Speaker, before the hon. the Financial Secretary replies to the comments made on his speech, I crave your indulgence to make a correction. In my comments I did say that the Government and the Federation of Unions of Government Employees did reach an agreement upon terms for a resumption of work on the 16th December, 1959, and that amongst the terms of resumption was the inclusion of the word "provisional" in the agreement signed by the Government and the Federation. The Minister of Labour, Health and Housing, in replying to my observation, read what purported to be a statement or part of the agreement which made no reference whatsoever to what I said. If what she has quoted is allowed to go unchallenged, then the situation would not really be what it ought to be and what really is the substance of the agreement signed by the Government and the Federation.

Mr. Speaker: What is it really?

Mr. Jackson: The Minister read from the agreement, in part, and I say she should have read the whole. She said that the Government and the Federation have agreed to the payment of a minimum basic rate of pay of \$2.75 per day. That indicated a conclusive field of thought and was not accurate with respect to what I said. I crave your indulgence to put in the complete agreement signed by Government and the Federation so that there will be no mistake as to what I said.

I wish to say:

"Government and the Federation have agreed to a minimum basic rate of pay of \$2.75 per day with effect from the 1st April 1959, together with adjustments to the daily wage rates and related salary scales which have previously been proposed to the Federation on the understanding that there will be further negotiations and discussions covering the entire field with a view to arriving at a final solution to the dispute having regard to the financial and economic factors involved and to the need of the worker to enjoy a reasonable standard of living. It is understood that these are provisional rates and, as a result of discussions in Whitley Council, may be confirmed or varied".

Mr. Speaker: What you want to say is that those are provisional rates?

Mr. Jackson: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

The Financial Secretary: It is always difficult to speak last in a Budget debate like this. People say so many things. They say nice things; they say nasty things; they say them for a long time and they say them up to the last minute, so that one has no opportunity to think up answers to some of the things which are said towards the end of the debate. I feel rather like how Butcher must have felt with his pads on in the pavilion for days while others have their innings and no matter how great the desire to speak, the enthusiasm to do so gets less and less as 15 hours become 18 hours and so on.

I would like to start, and I can do very little more than start with the innings which the hon. Member for Georgetown North has played. I feel very strongly about this indeed, because, in a sense, it has imputed bad motives both to the Government and to myself, because I was the Member of this Council who delivered the Budget Speech. It is this allegation that the Government has obviously decided not to do anything more for the workers because the Financial Secretary said in his Budget Speech that the Government had agreed to pay \$2.75 per day and to make adjustments in related daily and

[THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY]

weekly wage rates and related “B” and “C” scales, and that this had not been reflected in the Estimates. I cannot for the life of me, understand how anyone can say that that was an indication that the Government was prejudiced and had made up its mind on what it was going to do despite its solemn agreement. I was dealing with the facts, and the fact is that whatever else the agreement said, Government had agreed that \$2.75 per day was going to be paid, and that is what I said. I take full responsibility for saying so, and I challenge anyone to say that this is an indication that Government does not regard the agreement as a provisional one and had decided not to discuss it in Whitley Council.

And there was another slice of this atmosphere of suspicion which we are trying to dispel. Because I said Government hoped to economise to accommodate this rise in the basic wage which was agreed, the hon. Member alleged that there was going to be wholesale retrenchment in the Government Service. Why do we have to assume that because I say ‘economise’ it means wholesale retrenchment? It is incomprehensible to me. The statement was also made by the hon. Member for Georgetown North that there had been retrenchment throughout the Government since 1957. I should like him to show me where that retrenchment has taken place since 1957, consistently as he alleged. Of course, the day may come when retrenchment may be necessary. One hopes it may never come. It may be necessary in 1960 not to fill certain vacancies, but there is no Government policy of wholesale retrenchment. It is possible to economise in other ways than getting rid of civil servants or, if I may use a phrase which is so prevalent, casual labour.

As I say, there is this atmosphere of suspicion; but whatever the hon. Member may say, I went out of my way to draft the Budget Speech in such a manner as not to prejudice either the Government side or the side of the

Government employees. Having been so over-careful, it is still wrong. It is turned and twisted and we hear the same old story.

Another thing which impressed me considerably is what the hon. Member, who has just spoken, said about blackmail by certain members of the Medical Department. Yet in the course of his discussion on this heinous statement of \$2.75, he threatened all sorts of things which would happen if the Government did not do what the workers wanted it to do. I regard that as blackmail.

The remarks of certain Members of this Council have been very conflicting. On the one hand, Government is accused of wasting money to employ people on non-productive work. On the other hand, it is expected to keep on doing things for the sake of keeping people in jobs. Speaking frankly, nothing would please me better than to get rid of what a newspaper cartoon once depicted as my “harem”, the Transport and Harbours Department, the Mahaicony-Abary Rice Development Scheme and the Government Produce Depot. If I could divorce myself as Financial Secretary from these “wives”, my life would be very much happier; but, there it is, we have started these things and we have got to live with them for the present. But, it is no use blaming one for these things. Mr. Fredericks suggested that we should curtail the work consistent with efficiency. What the Government is trying to do in all this is to compromise. We want to economise, but we cannot suddenly abandon things like the railways.

We move away from that conflict to another conflict of thought. “A jolly good Budget”, some Members said, but it is purely political because it has no additional taxation proposals; especially the hon. Member for Eastern Demerara. He, in particular, gave no credit to my statement this year, that there had been in 1959 an increase in taxation on a wide variety of consumer goods, but it was too early to see what the effects on the revenue would be from the results of a

year like 1959 where the economic situation for most of the year was not very favourable; and also, that at this moment, it would be undesirable to increase taxes on articles which affect the cost of living; and I said, at this moment, that would be the only way to get a substantial increase in indirect taxation. No credit for that at all. Purely political! What I said was that it makes good sense and that it is humanitarian. I cannot really see where politics come into it, but if politics do come into it, well, so what? [*Laughter*].

Mr. Speaker: I think it is fitting that we suspend the sitting at this stage until eight o'clock tonight.

The sitting was suspended at 5.10 p.m.

RESUMPTION

8.10 p.m.

The Financial Secretary: Sir, when you called, "over" I think I had said "so what?" — not "how's that?" The point I was dealing with was the accusation of its being a political Budget because it contains no taxation proposals. I have given the reasons — good economic and humanitarian reasons why there was no taxation, and what I was about to say was that if incidentally it was politically advantageous, so what? The point is that no Government likes to increase taxation, and if the accusation this year is that a no-taxation budget is political, I think we must admit that last year's Budget was extraordinarily non-political.

The other thing that was said — again in retrospect — about last year's taxation proposals was — and the point was made most strongly by the hon. Member for Eastern Demerara — that the taxation proposals had failed. He did not make it very clear what he meant by "failed". I assume he meant that we did not produce from the proposals the extra revenue which had been estimated. That, of course, is true. He said that

taxation proposals had been introduced under false pretence — that Government had said that the object of the increased taxation was to make a bigger Development Programme.

Well, of course that was not true; that was partly true but not wholly true. What I said last year was that first of all we had an obligation to produce \$2 million a year for the Development Programme, but I also said it would be quite unthinkable to start the year 1959 without a surplus at all, without a reserve, without a cushion against any misfortunes that might happen on the recurrent budget itself.

If we may not have produced from this increased taxation, as much as we had estimated it is just as well we did have increased taxation, for if we did not have that extra \$800,000 we should have been that much worse off. The fact remains that in 1959 we were able to carry on the Development Programme at more or less the level which we had been doing it in the last few years, and I am sure that hon. Members will agree that the taxation proposals were amply justified. We may quibble about the items which were chosen, but the fact remains that the money produced was very important.

In the speech of the hon. Member for Eastern Demerara there was a further conflict. He said that we must protect and encourage, but particularly protect, local production, and he cited milk as a particular example. Yet, on the other hand, there he was condemning taxation proposals, some of which were, quite demonstrably, partly revenue-raising and partly protective.

The hon. Member for Georgetown North and the hon. Member for New Amsterdam, my very good friends, said that the Budget was unimaginative. Indeed, "unimaginative" from the lips of the hon. Member for Georgetown North became this year's catchword. Once it starts it goes on and becomes the order of the day. I ask you — what is expected

[THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY]

of a recurrent budget? It is to carry on the normal services of Government as economically as possible and to cope with any inevitable increase of social services, for the most part education, health and social assistance. What imagination could there be? What those speakers conveniently forgot was the imagination of the Government lay in the proposals for the Development Programme. While these proposals do not provide a panacea, they do provide for certain works which will grow in force and help to reduce unemployment. Though the pattern is set for the Recurrent Budget the Development Budget has been given a "new look". The building of houses, laboratories, more sea defences, drainage and irrigation works, and roads will provide employment.

It is fatuous to say that the Government is doing nothing about unemployment. We are not doing social relief work, with people digging holes just for the sake of digging them. We are trying to get people to "dig holes" in the right places—"holes" which will provide extra employment in the years to come. That is where the imagination lies. It gets increasingly difficult to think of catch-phrases so that the Budget Speech may have greater "sex appeal". Sometimes I hit on an apt quotation to lighten it up. The speech is not easy to write, and it becomes more difficult to write each year.

I now turn to one of the main themes which this Council has listened to for the last few years—this business of increasing the production of rice. My colleague, the Minister of Natural Resources has dealt with it, but I would like to mention one more point. Even though it may be considered by some Members to be patently absurd, rice-growing is going to increase. But emphasis is also placed on the diversification of crops, to include coconuts and, particularly, cocoa, as well as cattle. This is a little less absurd. The hon.

Member for North Western District in his thoughtful speech did not, he said, condemn agriculture, but agriculture he pointed out, did not help the townsman. He was obviously thinking in terms of employment. But agriculture helps the townsman considerably.

The townsman provides services for the most part. It depends on the amount of money which there is to spend apart from the direct services which he provides as an ancillary to agriculture. Agricultural productivity is most important at this stage of the country's development, and this was mentioned by the Member for Georgetown South and the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Gajraj. What I am not clear about is, when Members speak of unemployment and standard of living problems, which of them they want us to tackle first.

You can brief a hundred economists and get ninety-nine different opinions on many things, but modern economic thought recognizes that if you want to raise the standard of living the normal way to do it is by a programme of industrialization; but this does not follow at all that if you industrialize rapidly you are solving your unemployment problem. This was hinted at by the Minister of Natural Resources today. If you industrialize, then the average gross domestic product or the *per capita* income will go up, but it may take years and years for the increase to filter down.

There is not the slightest doubt in my mind, and, I am sure, in the mind of Government, that at the moment it is agriculture which directly or indirectly will provide the bulk of jobs. It will not make millionaires out of farmers, but at least it will give them something to live on.

The Development Programme makes the policy perfectly clear. The Government will continue to interest private enterprise in industry, but may indeed set up manufacturing industries itself if they can be shown to be economically viable, even though the margin of profit may be small, as long as they do not demonstrate

loss. If private enterprise is not interested and prospects appear reasonable, then the Government will consider taking up a venture. Government has said in the Development Programme that it is not going to rush into anything, except when private enterprise will not.

I would like to comment on a point made by the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Davis. He said that he hoped Government would make use of private enterprise when contract work is available. My colleague, the Minister of Trade and Industry, would have endorsed, if he were here, the view that Government does not intend to over-capitalize the country and buy dozens and dozens of bulldozers, for instance, when these machines are already in the country.

I think it is appropriate here to stress what Ministers have referred to before—that the Government is not trying to discourage investment but to encourage it. It is fouling one's nest with a vengeance to say that the Government is trying to discourage investment. I thought we had enough to bear last year, but the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Tello, and the Member for Demerara River went off again on the same old track.

The hon. Member for Demerara River said, in fact, he did not believe it was economic factors that made the consumption of beer less than it should be. He just said that. I do not know how he explains what has happened in 1959—how Government's revenue from import duty of all consumer goods was low for most of the year with a large upsurge towards the end of the year.

As regards beer, I think Members might be interested to know that the duty which was paid in January this year in excise on beer was just over \$89,000. I explained that the excise tax on beer, by a concession to the brewery, is paid in the second month after its brewing. \$89,000 at 75 cents per liquid gallon represents nearly 120,000 liquid gallons. The liquid gallons on which taxes were paid for the whole of 1959 were 675,000, yet the production for November alone

was 120,000 liquid gallons, and I understand in this month there is a full programme of brewing going on. Revenue next month will be less than \$89,000, but in the two months after, it is going to be high because of the two brews. So nobody can say that the industry is crippled by this cent on the price. It is just fantastic. Even if the whole increase is passed on to the consumer, how can that account for a decrease of 33 1/3% in consumption? I tried to explain that there are various other reasons.

Then we have the wonderful business of this gentleman from Barbados who was to start a chair factory here. The Minister of Labour, Health and Housing exploded some of that myth. There was one point she did not mention and that is, that the newspaper report said that he did not come to British Guiana because of—you know what—that he did not go to Trinidad because he was not satisfied about the possibility of labour trouble there; yet the newspaper article tries to infer that this man was definitely going to put down his factory here and then he went to Barbados. I just cannot understand it. Just like in the days of the Interim Government. Everytime a businessman or commercial traveller came to this country, as long as he was a visitor, it did not matter, some newspaper asked him about the East Bank Road. They said: "Don't you think the East Bank Road is the worst in the world? Of course, we admitted that the road, then, was pretty shocking, but it was certainly not the worst road in the world. The point I am trying to make is that we are trying to spoil the country's face by trying to get people to say bad and discouraging things of British Guiana, and it does nobody any good except our competitors for investment.

I would like now, before I speak about the longest speech which was made, just to mention one or two things in commentary on the most amusing and enlivening speech by the hon. Member for Georgetown North—one or two questions of fact. He was talking about independence—with that everything would be all right.

[THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY]

Members: Georgetown South!

The Financial Secretary: Georgetown South, I am sorry. He said that Ghana has gained her independence. A very good thing. But he further said that she has no public debt, internal or external. That is just not true. She has a public debt. In fact, in 1957, it was about £22 million, of which about £3 million was external and £18 million was internal. That was in 1957. Venezuela, too, has a public debt, internal. But whatever he was trying to say, although we enjoyed it very much, he gave the wrong impression.

He also said that money can be borrowed from the International Monetary Fund. The International Monetary Fund does not lend money. The International Monetary Fund is an international organisation, and a very valuable one, which is meant to correct temporary balance of payment difficulties. In other words, it is to provide external currency for a country which wishes to take advantage of it. If you want to get the currency of another member from the International Monetary Fund, you have to put into the Fund the equivalent amount of your own currency. You have to put your money in first. No doubt, ways will be found to do these things in independence, but all I am saying is that independence, which is a very laudable thing, has to be worked for and when you get it, you still have to work. It does not automatically make manna fall from Heaven. On this interesting speech by the hon. Member, I would also like to say that even now in our Colonial state, if you simply take the *per capita* national income figures, this country is better off than most of Central America, in fact, of South America, and if you compare it with most of Asia, it is well off indeed.

The longest and fullest speech was made by the Member for Georgetown Central. The Member always says he knows little about figures or economics, but I must say he has come a long way,

in making this speech, particularly when he stuck to his script. I think it was really most interesting and instructive. He has claimed not to have devoted considerable study to economics and statistics, but he has hitched his flag to the mast of Miss O'Loughlin of the U.C.W.I. He, apparently regarded the statements of Miss O'Loughlin as *ex cathedra*. She has done this country a lot of good. She is really a first-class national income statistician, but there was a lot in her Report that I, for one, could not agree with. I said that publicly and I said so to her.

There are two things from the Monograph which the hon. Member used. The first concerned housing and the second, rice. As for housing, the hon. Member was trying to say that Government was not spending enough on housing. He said it was a mistaken idea that housing was non-productive: it was productive, he alleged, and Miss O'Loughlin said so. With your permission, Sir, I would read from the same paragraph to which he referred, putting the emphasis in rather different places:

"Although housing loans are often considered as non-productive capital, they can, to some extent, contribute to the expansion of income. So long as there is a flow of credit-worthy applicants for housing loans, the fund will continue to revolve, employment in house-building and repair will at least be maintained, if not increased, the local saving will be stimulated. Thus in the first thirty years, if the fund revolves three times, the initial grant will have been matched by approximately twice as much of local saving."

Now I come to my second emphasis.

"It is not *entirely* true that the capital resulting is non-productive, as apart from direct incomes being created by letting..."

and she goes on to say that the increase in the value of land leads to concentrations of wealth and expansion of domestic saving and so on. But what I am saying is that Miss O'Loughlin did not stress that housing was productive. "It is not entirely true that it is non-productive", she says. She also says that there must be a flow of credit-worthy

applicants. What we are trying to do in the Development Programme is to increase the flow of credit-worthy applicants first. Naturally, any government hopes that everybody would live in a good house, but it will take some time before everybody would be able to buy a house. As I have said on another occasion, it is no use the Government providing free dentures for people if they do not have anything to eat. That is why housing and other social objects are not so highly placed in the 1960-64 Programme as our productive projects.

I think a larger housing programme was justified in the previous Programme. After all I was a Member of the previous Government too. The housing problem was then particularly acute; it is still acute, but I think that Programme has given a fillip to housing and has also produced a reservoir of skill for people to build houses. We are producing a lot of extra contractors and so on, and adding new skills to the country.

I now come back to the point about employing people, a point which my colleague has already made with reference to the remarks of the hon. Member for Georgetown South (Mr. Jai Narine Singh) and other Members. The hon. Member for Georgetown Central (Mr. Burnham), who has reminded me that I am not a politician, said that Miss O'Loughlin has said that the emphasis on rice in the Development Programme was for political and social reasons. The hon. Member was prepared to apologize and do obeisance to the Minister of Community Development and Education (Mr. Rai), if he had misjudged him — I cannot find in Miss O'Loughlin's comments the word "political". I may be wrong, and I likewise am prepared to apologize to the hon. Member, if I am wrong, but the paragraph which was read, and which I would like to read again —

Mr. Burnham: May I assist the hon. Member by referring him to page 125 of Vol. 7, No. 2, of the "Social And Economic Studies".

The Financial Secretary: I am referring to another Volume (Vol. 8 No. 1, page 83), in which Miss O'Loughlin says:

"All in all, however, it must be concluded that the Development programmes outlined by the I.B.R.D. and put into effect by the government are extremely low in income-creating potential. We should probably look for social rather than economic reasons in the emphasis on expanding rice lands for underemployed labour, but it is evident that this type of farming is unlikely to bring about that kind of income growth which is the object of economic development, and it must be regarded as much as a social relief measure as an economic development measure"

What Miss O'Loughlin was stressing was that it was social relief — not raising the standard of living but employing people. It must be remembered that rice and agriculture generally provide employment, and the growing population — and the potential unemployment — is mainly in the agricultural areas. There is no gainsaying that agricultural development must be geared to absorb that growing agricultural population, and there is nothing political in what I am saying.

I would like to revert to housing, because the other point the hon. Member made — and it is a very interesting point which is often made — is that if we had a revolving fund for housing, as suggested by the Secretary of State, a fund whereby money from rents and hire-purchase went back into the building of new houses, we would have had a much larger programme. In my comments on the Public Accounts Committee's Report for 1957 I made it clear why this idea of a revolving fund was (a) undesirable and (b) unnecessary, and I may say that the argument in those comments has been accepted by the Secretary of State. Basically it is that the cost of maintaining the rented houses, and meeting the loan charges which are necessary because of the housing programme, and which are borne by the recurrent budget, are more than the receipts from housing. Therefore, if you take the receipts from housing to build more houses you do less other things. There is no need to give auto-

[THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY]

matic priority to housing by giving it a special earmarked fund. In any case the extra money which the Government has put into the programme for housing is considerably more than the receipts.

The general impression I got from the speech of the hon. Member for Georgetown Central was that it was uncharitable, a word which I borrow from the hon. Member of New Amsterdam (Mr. Kendall). This is not like him. He simply attached different reasons to the facts which I have stated. I gave reasons which had some authority. Although you may call them excuses, I gave reasons which he did not credit. In fact the only reason he gave for anything which was not particularly attractive in the Budget Statement was either my ineptitude or that of the Government. The hon. Member for Georgetown Central was accusing me of incompetence.

Mr. Burnham: I have not accused the Financial Secretary of incompetence; I accused the Government. But if he chooses to assume incompetence personally it is a matter for him.

The Financial Secretary: I was trying to defend my competence. The incompetence which was attached to the Government was that things did not turn out as they should have done — that I and the Government were bad guessers. He cited the estimates of revenue, particularly customs and excise. But I do not think the record is too bad. I have said here before, and I say again, that budgeting is an empiric art. You try to gain on the roundabouts what you lose on the swings. The crystal ball is not always the most reliable way to estimate what revenue is going to be. Let us look at the record; let us take customs and excise first, because that was alleged to be the particular incompetence of myself and the Government. In 1957 it was quite remarkable. The revenue from customs and excise was \$50,000 different from the original estimate; that was \$50,000 in an estimate of \$21.4 million, and I think that was pretty

good. In 1958 it was not quite so good, and I and the Government were \$1 million light in the estimate. This year it is a bit worse, but the fact remains that since 1957 the Government and I produced a surplus of more or less the same amount as we budgeted for, except that in 1957 we got \$2 million more. That is where the empiric art failed slightly, but it was a good thing it did. This year, because the revenue from customs and excise was less than had been estimated, the hon. Member virtually blamed me and the Government. I do not know why we should be blamed for the weather or for a drop in the world demand for bauxite.

In regard to income tax the estimates are always peculiar. The way the Department works is that it asks the major taxpayers, the companies, to say what they think they are going to pay. By the nature of things the companies are pretty cautious, and they tend to depress their estimated figures. Then the Commissioner of Inland Revenue and his Department are cautious too, because they know that in many years income tax windfalls have been the saving grace, because they provide a cushion. Anyway, I would like to say, in view of the underestimate of \$2 million of income tax, that I had added myself to the original estimate nearly \$2½ million. Even so it was \$2 million less, as it turned out. I say that merely to demonstrate that the original estimate was made on the best information available, and I just say that to show how the situation does change in a very short time. It is not always possible, even with the best statistician, to know what is going to happen in a few months' time. So much happens in the last few months of the year to make all the difference in the income tax returns of the next year.

To go back to my apologia, excuses and defence for incompetence, I would like to say that the total revenue in 1957 was 4.7 per cent. more than the estimate of over \$40 million. In 1958 it was 2.4 per cent. more than the estimate, and for 1959 it looks like being .9 per cent less.

I do not think that is too bad. I am not one of those who say I am always right, and I made that clear in the Budget Statement. I said where I was wrong and I tried to give reasons for my wrong guesses.

The hon. Member made some play with this guessing business. He said that what we wanted was an economic planning unit, so that we will know all sorts of things and correct these horrible mistakes which were made in estimating the Budget. It was an interesting part of his speech, but I was not clear what sort of planning unit he was talking about, because there are many. There is the planning unit which sits in an ivory tower and clears up the economic future of the country. There is another kind—the one I like best—made up of working economists who go out into the field, so to speak, into the Departments to work with them, evaluate schemes, and that sort of thing.

No doubt economists of that category would be extremely useful to us. Speaking personally, and not as a Member of the Government, I am against all planning units which sit in an ivory tower. There is nothing magical about economists. They are very useful people, but their services have to be used properly. You can find some economist to give you almost any answer you want. He practises a science that is not an exact one, and his answer may be different from those of his fellow economists. It is not like medical science where, if a person who has appendicitis consults fifty doctors they will all diagnose appendicitis—or forty-nine of them anyway.

We do have a plan for 1960 to 1964, and therefore it is not right to say that Government has no policy or no plan. Both are clearly set out in the Sessional Paper, No. 5 of 1959. Further, the hon. Member for Georgetown Central said that we said nothing about diversification of agriculture or the increases of agricultural staff, but both are mentioned in the Sessional Paper.

The hon. Member went on to make some interesting comments on the question of trade, and he felt that the visible adverse balance was nothing to be proud of because it meant that people were importing less machinery, other capital goods, and so on. That is to some extent true, perhaps, but he forgot to say that what was more important was, that the exports had gone up by 7% and imports gone down by 5%.

The hon. Member said a lot more things, many of which I cannot recall now. But he did speak of calcined bauxite, and alleged that I said that the export of this article for the first 10 months of 1959 was 45% higher than in 1958 — while saying nothing of what it had been in 1957. The figures were \$8.3 million and \$8.7 million — a difference of just \$.4 million more.

He deduced from the fact that the gross domestic product was the same for 1959 as for 1958 and there were more people to consume food, that the standard of living had fallen. That is an over-simplification, especially as the gross domestic product for 1959 is provisional. He also over-simplified the question of having a stable cost of living. I think it is remarkable that the cost of living has only inched up by 1% over the last few years. He said it was a sign of the shortage of money. That may be true.

Whole books have been written about unemployment and employment, and there are several schools of thought about factors relating to the cost of living. It is generally true, historically, that in times of high prices you tend to see prosperity at least for a time. It is a symptom and not a cause. In times of falling prices you tend to have unemployment. In British Guiana the important thing is to keep the cost of living as stable as possible. We do not want inflation. A little inflation is good, and it makes for prosperity, particularly among people like traders; but it also makes the cost of living rise and life very much harder for people with fixed incomes or people who have no income whatsoever. In any

[THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY]

case, as the hon. Member for Georgetown North will agree, inflation starts first and wage rates come up some time after. So nobody really benefits.

The hon. Member for Georgetown Central talked about the substantial increase in the duty on tobacco, and he accused me of not saying what figure for additional revenue we are aiming at. This is not true. I said quite categorically that we aimed at \$450,000 and had not reached that figure.

On the question of “stagnation” I have always taken the long-term rather than the short-term approach, and I have said that we should not be too depressed at temporary pauses in the general run of the country’s development.

It was said that the Budget was a gloomy one. It was not really intended to be gloomy, though there are some gloomy facts in it. But I believe this country is going to develop economically, and I do not think I am being over-optimistic in that. I believe it, and I think I have certain rational reasons for it. Let us not stress the gloomy side.

I know I would get it in the neck for not having a literary quotation in the Budget Speech. But I should try not to disappoint the hon. Member for Georgetown Central; and as we have heard so much about thralldom, I think no better source for a quotation would be found than Shakespeare’s “*Tempest*”. I should, however, make it clear that Prospero’s island can bear no comparison with British Guiana, in view of British Guiana’s shapely inhabitants. But, in concluding, I say with Ariel, when Alonso and others drew their swords.

“ . . . the elements,
Of whom your swords are temper’d may
as well
Wound the loud winds, or with be-
mock’d-at stabs
Kill the still-closing waters, as diminish
One dowle that’s in my plume; my fellow
ministers
Are like invulnerable

If my fellow Ministers and I are not invulnerable — and we certainly do not claim to be — at least we have tried in this Budget to do our best. I hope that Members will give us credit for that trying and pass the Second Reading.

Mr. Speaker : Hon. Members, the question is, that the Bill be read a Second time.

Agreed to.

Bill read a Second time.

COUNCIL IN COMMITTEE

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

Clause 1.—*Short title.*

The Financial Secretary: There is a change in the date. It should read:

“Appropriation Bill, 1960”.

Agreed to.

Clause 1 passed as amended.

Clause 2.—*Supplementary amount authorised for financial year, 1958.*

The Financial Secretary: I suggest that we leave that until we have done the Schedule.

Agreed to.

Schedule.

GOVERNOR

The Chairman: The question is, that Head I — Governor — be carried out as printed at \$50,851.

The Financial Secretary: The net amount is \$17,251.

The Chairman: The question is, that it be carried out at \$17,251.

A Member: A dollar!

The Chairman: Is somebody moving an Amendment by \$1? Stand up

and move it. I thought we wanted to get ahead. I think there was some urgency about it.

Agreed to.

Head passed.

GOVERNOR'S SECRETARIAT

The Chairman: The question is, that Head IA — Governor's Secretariat — be carried out at \$41,684.

Agreed to.

Head passed.

LEGISLATURE

The Chairman: The question is, that Head 2 — Legislature — be carried out at \$43,711.

Agreed to.

Head passed.

AGRICULTURE

DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE

The Chairman: The question is, that Head 3 — Agriculture — be carried out at \$1,952,468.

Mr. Jackson: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move the reduction of sub-head 1 (2) — "Deputy Director of Agriculture" — \$7,920, by \$1.

[Noises.]

The Chairman: It is difficult for me to listen to two or three persons at the same time. If one Member is on his feet and somebody else is raising an objection, he should stand up and do so. But when two or three persons are speaking at the same time, more particularly when the sound comes from Government members who I think are in a hurry —

Mr. Jackson: I move this reduction because it is my opinion, and I am

convinced, that Government's policy with respect to agriculture is one which is intensified to a very large extent. This policy, from their own lips, is one which is based upon the diversification of agriculture. They are spending more money on it. They are expanding the work of agriculture, and up to the time this Government came into office there were two Deputy Directors of Agriculture with not as much responsibility then as there is at the moment. I feel if that is the policy of the Department and the intention is to carry it out, it is unfair to the present holder that there should be one Deputy, whereas prior to accepting responsibility and prior to the work envisaged by the Government, his predecessor had two and not one Deputy. I argue that there should be two Deputy Directors of Agriculture. We have been saying this before and we are repeating it.

Mr. Benn: The question of two Deputy Directors of Agriculture was put to me by an hon. Member of this Council during the discussion on this Head in Finance Committee. The Director of Agriculture, himself, did say that he was satisfied that the Department was properly staffed to carry out the work that faces it this year. I am so advised; and I am confident that the Director of Agriculture, with his staff, will carry out the work placed before them, efficiently.

Mr. Burnham: Mr. Chairman, this seems a rather unusual stand for the hon. Minister to take when I recall, with particular vividness, his predecessor and himself, in 1958, arguing very strongly for two posts of Deputy Director of Agriculture and assuring this Council that it was an absolute necessity for the efficient running of the Department of Agriculture and the Programme as at that time envisaged by the Government. It does seem a little strange today, when we understand there is acceleration, when we understand there will be more duties and more people to teach, more people to train, more crops to grow. We cannot understand, and we are not prepared to accept the answer of the Director of Agriculture who, after all, is a civil servant and cannot question the authority

[MR. BURNHAM]

of his political heads. If in 1958, with less work, you needed two; in 1960, with so much work, you need three.

The Minister of Community Development and Education (Mr. Rai): If I understand it, the hon. Minister had been advised by the Director of Agriculture and he accepts the advice. I think it is quite enough on which this Council may act.

Mr. Jai Narine Singh: We must not hide the facts. Previously, there were two Deputy Directors of Agriculture. It was because of the Guianization programme — let us face the facts, and Government must not be afraid to speak what the facts are — that the Director of Agriculture was pressed. Actually, this post of Deputy Director is vacant. The same thing occurred in the Police Department where, to avoid embarrassment, there had been the appointment of two Deputy Commissioners. Let us not hide our heads in the sand as ostriches. I hope that the Government and the Administration will state the facts as they are.

Mr. Jackson : The Minister of Natural Resources indicated that the Director of Agriculture, himself in Finance Committee, did agree that one Deputy Director is enough. I was present at the meeting when that question was asked. Is the Director to be expected to express an opinion on this matter before Finance Committee? As my friend said, he is a civil servant, therefore, he has to conform to the policy of the Government. How can one expect him to say one or two are enough? Whatever he said, we are not concerned with. We are concerned with the policy of the Government in this Council and as such, we demand an answer to this question because we are convinced that the policy of Government in agriculture is to have one Deputy Director and one Assistant Director. It is a psychological matter in Finance Committee, and no one ought to press an individual, at the moment, in Finance

Committee to say whether one or two Deputies would do.

The Financial Secretary: I wonder if the hon. Member can tell us why two Deputy Directors are necessary, and what they are going to do? There is provision for one Deputy Director and three Assistant Directors who are Heads of the branches. There is also provision in the Development Estimates for another Assistant Director.

Mr. Jackson: Before the present Director was appointed there were two Deputy Directors, and there was a Development Programme before. The present Development Plan is the result of the first programme; it is only an extension of what was done in 1954. If there was need for two Deputy Directors before, now that the Development Programme is to be accentuated and diversified still further, this is all the more reason why there should be two Deputy Directors and not one.

The Financial Secretary: My question to the Mover was what two Deputy Directors are going to do?

Mr. Burnham: What were they doing in 1958 when you sat down there and refused to delete one of the posts? You said then that there was an enormous amount of work, and now you have the temerity to ask us what they are going to do. In 1958 you said you wanted two Deputy Directors — one for Administration and the other for Marketing, but because the present Director is a Guianese you do not need two Deputy Directors now. When an officer comes from across the seas you need another to assist him — perhaps to teach him.

Mr. Jai Narine Singh: We need two Deputy Directors as we were told previously — one for Research and the other for Administration. We were told in Finance Committee that we do not need another Deputy Director because in the Administrative Branch there is a Marketing Officer who was specially appointed for that purpose. The point nevertheless arises that there are now in this Depart-

ment 15 vacancies in technical posts, and of the 47 technical posts 8 are held by expatriates. We do not know what the Government in the past has done, and what the present Government is doing to make sure that Guianese are trained and made available to run their country technically and administratively, especially in the agricultural field, in which thousands of trained men are needed to teach the farmers — not from an ivory tower but from the ground floor. In the present circumstances it is impossible for the Director, even if he were a magician, to exercise full control and see that the technical officers do their jobs and, in addition to that, make sure of his responsibility as adviser to the Minister in matters of policy.

Mr. Rai: I really cannot understand the terms of the Motion. The hon Member has moved a reduction but is seeking to have the posts increased.

The Chairman: He did not move a definite increase.

Mr. Rai: He has moved a reduction of the vote but he is seeking an increase of the posts. In the Development Estimates there is provision for additional staff, including one Assistant Director. What has obviously happened is that there has been a re-distribution of duties with the object of securing greater efficiency. Members should read their Estimates before they make their comments.

Mr. Jackson: I am very grateful to the hon. Minister for his observations, but I would like to remind him that this is the only course open to us to get at what we want. Assuming that his observations with respect to the Development Estimates are correct, is he intimating to us that the posts provided for are permanent posts, or are the officers on contract for two or three years? His remarks are not an answer to the point I made. My point is that long before the Development Programme commenced there were two Deputy Directors of Agriculture. One has now been abolished,

and we have heard from the Financial Secretary that many posts on the Estimates will not be filled.

The Financial Secretary: I said they might not be filled.

Mr. Jackson: I am assuming that they will not be filled. We want to know about them as we get on with the Estimates. We contend that it is unfair to the present Director of Agriculture that there should be only one Deputy Director when there were two before. On one occasion when the Director was required in Finance Committee we were told he was at a seminar, and we have heard of a new seminar which has just started. If the Head of this Department has to attend these seminars there is need for another Deputy Director.

The Minister of Labour, Health and Housing (Mrs. Jagan): In connection with the request for an additional Deputy Director I cannot understand what the hon. Member wants. Isn't it correct that we accept the advice of the Director? If we do not accept his advice, whose advice do we accept? Is the hon. Member qualified to advise the Director as to how to run his Department? I for one have the greatest confidence in the Director of Agriculture, and I think he has the good sense to know how to manage his Department. He is a fearless officer who is not browbeaten by his Minister. I cannot see any other advice that this Council can take but that of a man who knows his job.

I think the hon. Member asked what is the policy of the Government with regard to staffing? Perhaps I should say that it is the policy of the Government to make every effort to have the Department run efficiently, and it is also the policy of the Government not to over-staff its Departments. We are very clear on that, and certainly if we have the advice of a person who has the confidence of the Government and, I believe, the people of the country, we cannot throw away such advice, and we also cannot throw away the taxpayers' money.

Mr. Burnham: This is bordering on the humorous. In 1958 all these Members of the Government sat there and refused to reduce the number of Deputy Directors of Agriculture, and growing wise with grey hair in 1960 they decide they want no more over-staffing. The hon. Minister of Community Development has told us about the provision for an additional Assistant Director, but he cannot seriously expect a number of adults, whose intelligence is presumed, to believe that this Assistant Director under the Development Programme will take care of all the duties which we were assured had to be taken care of by the two Deputy Directors in 1958.

It is also very interesting to note that two questions were raised in this Motion but the Government has only feebly attempted to answer one. The second question was raised, at least by inference, by the hon. Member for Georgetown South — why is the one post vacant when a Guianese has been acting in it for several months? Answer that now. We have heard how courageous the Director is. He may be a courageous man but he is not a foolhardy man. It would have been foolhardy on his part to have sat there in the presence of his political boss and disagreed with what he knew his boss thought. Let us forget his courage for the moment and his absence of foolhardiness, as I prefer to describe it, and let us know why you have had a Guianese acting for several months and he has not yet been appointed.

Mr. Jai Narine Singh: I would like the hon. the Chief Secretary to answer it.

The Chief Secretary: I should like to have an opportunity to go into the matter, as this is the first time I have heard about it. I will give the hon. Member an answer tomorrow if he would be so kind as to wait until then.

Mr. Burnham: I am sure the hon. Member will indulge the Chief Secretary, but I would like to have an undertaking from the Government side that the item

will be re-committed so that we can hear the answer and be able to debate it. Kindness must flow from both sides. I should like to hear from the hon. Chief Secretary whether he will give that undertaking, because he controls the votes on that side, otherwise we shall not indulge him, because he ought to know or he ought to have had his Permanent Secretary or the Establishment Officer behind there to advise him. He knew we were going into Committee and he ought to have familiarized himself with the state of the Establishment. After all he is the Chief Secretary and he has been here for some time.

Mr. Ram Karran: The "Opposition" claim that last year they moved the deletion of this post because they felt that two Deputy Directors were not required. There it is, Government has removed one of the posts because of certain reasons. The hon. Member for Georgetown South has explained the position in detail. The Director of Agriculture took the same view as the "Opposition", and now the "Opposition" are charging him with supporting Government's idea.

Mr. Burnham: Mr. Chairman, the hon. Minister of Communications and Works is wrong so far as the years are concerned. It was not last year. Who rushed in where angels fear to tread?

The Chairman: There would be no question of recommitting the item if the position is that the hon. the Chief Secretary would like to look into the matter. We can return to it tomorrow and in the meantime pass on to something else.

The Financial Secretary: We can clear up the matter now. The whole purpose of the two posts is that the Deputy Director is on leave prior to retirement; and I think the Director of Agriculture said in Finance Committee that the matter of his successor was before the Public Service Commission.

Mr. Jackson: I accept the Financial Secretary's view that some indication was given as to what is happening in this

matter now. I am going to withdraw my Motion, not because of that, but because I have already said what I wanted to say, that there is need for two Deputy Directors of Agriculture.

Motion withdrawn.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF AGRICULTURE
(VETERINARY AND ANIMAL
HUSBANDRY)

Mr. Burnham: I beg to move the reduction of sub-head 1 (14)—“Assistant Director of Agriculture (Veterinary and Animal Husbandry)”—\$7,200, by \$1.

The Chairman: I want to say at this stage that once we move forward with the items in the Estimates, I will not turn back. When we put our hands to the plough we should not look back. Members know what has been written of the one who looked back.

Mr. Burnham: I can assure you, Mr. Chairman, that I will not be a lineal descendant of Lot's wife. I move this because this post has been vacant for over seven months now. There has been acting in that post a Guianese. There is no question of anyone being on leave—the post is vacant. I would like to know why, if a Guianese has acted for seven months, he cannot be appointed? It is all right to talk of independence, but one of the concomitants is the staffing of the Public Service with your own people, where they are available. This is one case where a local man is available, acting for seven months, and no appointment has been made. Is it that they are hoping the man will go on leave and someone else will come up?

It is true that this comes within the Portfolio of the Chief Secretary. The Chief Secretary may be asked to give an answer tomorrow. He was here from last year. No such plea can be entered by the political Members of the Executive Council, and they must be as vigilant as anyone else here to see that these

things do not continue; and I would like to know what is the answer. Why no appointment of a Guianese? This is one of the things referred to by the hon. Member for Georgetown South—a number of posts vacant and men acting. I would say it is a threat to efficiency to have a man acting for several months.

Mr. Benn: As hon. Members know, the filling of vacancies is in the care of the Chief Secretary's Office, and the Public Service Commission investigates applicants for posts in the service. If it is true that this post has been vacant for some time—

Mr. Burnham: Seven months!

Mr. Benn: Then the Chief Secretary's Office and the Public Service Commission must be looking into it. That is all I can say on this matter. The posts are not filled by political Ministers; they request that the posts be filled, and the Public Service Commission gets on with the job.

It is not true that all countries which become independent immediately fill all their posts with local people where those posts had been filled by outsiders. It happened neither in Ghana nor in India. In addition to this I want to make it clear that the Majority Party are as anxious and keen over this question of Guianization as anyone else in this Council. We have said it over and over again. There is no point in Members on the other side getting up and screaming about it over and over again. The Public Service Commission is doing its work, and when it is finished, the post will be filled.

Mr. Burnham: Mr. Chairman, the hon. Minister is adept at misunderstanding and/or misquoting, but I did not say that all countries becoming independent immediately fill all their posts with local people. I said that one of the concomitants of independence is, you fill as many posts as you can fill with your own people. Of course, there is a distinction.

[**MR. BURNHAM**]

Not content with misunderstanding me, the hon. Minister goes on to say that this matter is receiving the attention of the Public Service Commission. All right, we have heard that. When was this matter referred? When did the Minister ask that the post be filled? When did the Public Service Commission start considering it? I want to know whether these people are like the mills of God—slow in grinding. If the Staff is small, then increase it. Seven months to fill a post?

Mr. Rai: Confidential.

Mr. Burnham: I know the Official Secrets Act covers that.

Mr. Jai Narine Singh: Those are the laws laid down by the British who control the people of this land, and I am with the hon. Member for Georgetown Central in his remarks. If he goes to London he should have a voice and he should air these matters, otherwise we shall be perpetually sinking in the mud—unless we push ourselves up.

Mr. Ram Karran: The hon. Member for Georgetown Central has gone on record in this Council as saying that the Elected Ministers should have nothing to do with the Civil Service, and so it is rather strange that he should ask the political head of a Department about the promotion of someone.

Mr. Burnham: Mr. Chairman, this infection which has struck the Minister of Natural Resources has now spread to the Minister of Communications and Works. I have not gone on record as being opposed to Elected Ministers being in control of or responsible for the civil servants. I have gone on record as being in favour of giving the Public Service Commission executive power. The point is that the Public Service Commission will make its appointments, but things like policy, as I have unreservedly said, should be in the hands of Ministers. They do not seem to understand. *Sanctas simplicitas!*

Mr. Ram Karran: I would refer the hon. Member to the discussion which was held.

Mr. Burnham: Antics to delude the unwary! Which discussion? He who accuses and indicts should state his facts. Let him show me where I have said that, and for the first time in my life I will apologize to him.

The Chairman: The clock is striking ten, and we shall have to go back into Council.

Council resumed.

Mr. Speaker: Council is adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m.