

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

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

WEDNESDAY, 24TH MARCH, 1954.

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

PRESENT :

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

Ex-Officio Members:—

The Hon. the Chief Secretary, Mr. John Gutch, C.M.G., O.B.E.

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

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

Nominated Members of Executive Council:—

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

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

The Hon. W. O. R. Kendall.

The Hon. G. A. C. Farnum, O.B.E.

The Hon. G. H. Smellie.

The Hon. R. B. Gajraj.

The Hon. R. C. Tello.

Deputy Speaker:—

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

Nominated Officials:—

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

Mr. J. I. Ramphal.

Nominated Unofficials:—

Mr. T. Lee

Mr. W. A. Phang.

Mr. L. A. Luckhoo.

Mr. C. A. Carter.

Mr. E. F. Correia.

Rev. D. C. J. Bobb.

Mr. H. Rahaman.

Miss Gertrude H. Collins.

Mrs. Esther E. Dey

Dr. H. A. Fraser.

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

Mr. R. B. Jailal.

Mr. Sugrim Singh.

Clerk of the Legislature — Mr. I. Crum Ewing.

Assistant Clerk of the Legislature — Mr. I. R. King.

Absent:—

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

The Speaker read prayers.

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Friday, the 19th of

March, 1954, as printed and circulated, were taken as read and confirmed.

ANNOUNCEMENT

LEAVE FOR MR. MACNIE

Mr. Speaker: I have to announce that the hon. Mr. Macnie has been granted leave of absence for today's meeting at least.

GOVERNMENT NOTICE

INCREASED FEES FOR RURAL CONSTABLES

The Chief Secretary : I beg to give notice of the following motion standing in my name on the Order Paper:—

"Whereas the fees and allowances payable to Rural Constables laid down in the Third Schedule to the Constabulary Ordinance, Chapter 30, were fixed in 1949;

"And Whereas the rates payable to Rural Constables for performance of Police duties when required to assist the police are considered to be inadequate in present circumstances and should be increased;

"And Whereas it is provided by Section 118 of the aforesaid Ordinance that the rates specified in the abovementioned Schedule may be varied by Resolution of the Legislative Council from time to time:

"Be it resolved:

"That the rate payable under Item 6 of the Third Schedule to Chapter 30 be increased from \$1.50 to \$2.00, and that the maximum award provided for under Footnote (d) to the said Third Schedule be increased from \$3.00 to \$4.00;

"And be it further resolved that these increases be given retrospective effect from the 1st of January, 1954."

CONGRATULATIONS TO MR. LUCKHOO Q.C.

Mr. Speaker: Before we proceed with the Order of the Day, I am sure hon. Members would wish to join me in congratulating the hon. Mr. Luckhoo on the dignity that has recently been conferred upon him by Her Majesty the Queen, in appointing him to be one of Her Majesty's Counsel in and for this Colony. I am not sure whether he has already been called within the Bar which, of course, is a prerequisite to his being so recognized. In this Council, however, I am the sole judge of order, and there is no appeal from that decision. I would like to say that as a brother professional and a friend of his father, whom I have known for many years as a Solicitor, and with whom I practised most successfully before the advent of his nephew, but after whose arrival I got no briefs at all, I can truly speak of the professional touch, training and experience that he has had, and the distinction that has been conferred upon him is one that is a credit not only to himself, personally, but to a member of a well-known legal family, and one that is well deserved in every way. I wish him continued success. I have heard him addressing a jury elsewhere—in one of the High Courts—and I told him what I thought of his advocacy. He has fulfilled the expectation I had of him, and I look forward with pleasure to his being a Member of this Council, so long as I have the honour to be in it.

The Attorney-General : As leader of the Bar, may I be permitted to associate myself with the congratulations to Mr. Luckhoo on the dignity that has been conferred upon him and to express the wish that he will achieve further success in his profession. I also hope that he will continue to play a very important part in the public life of this Colony.

Mr. Cummings: As a member of the Bar, I wish to associate myself with the congratulations so ably tendered to Mr. Luckhoo by Your Honour and the hon. the Attorney-General. I, Sir, have known Mr. Luckhoo from boyhood; we attended the same schools, and one always appreciated the fact that he would rise. It is with great pleasure that I join in congratulating the hon. Member.

Mr. Lee: Mr. Speaker, as the oldest member of this Council, I feel it my duty on behalf of all the others to associate myself with the remarks made by way of congratulation to Mr. Luckhoo on his preferment. Mr. Luckhoo is well known to several of us sitting around this table and I know, personally, that he has been a very good practitioner as well as a friend. I feel sure that he will do well in public life and also at the Bar.

Mr. Raatgever: As an old Member of the Council, I too, would like to associate myself with the remarks made by the other Members. I have known Mr. Luckhoo since he was a boy — I know the other members of his family also — and it gives me very great pleasure to join in congratulating him on the award of this dignity which he so richly deserves.

Mrs. Dey: Not being a member of the Bar and being the only lady Member of the Council present, I join in congratulating Mr. Luckhoo on the honour that has been bestowed on him. I speak for myself and my colleague, Miss Collins. I have been associated with the Luckhoo family for a number of years, and I am proud to tell this Council that anything Mr. Luckhoo undertakes to do, he means to do it to the best of his ability. I sincerely trust that this is not the end what Mr. Luckhoo will achieve in the course of his career.

Mr. Bobb: I desire, very briefly, to join with those who have expressed their appreciation of this dignity which has come to Mr. Luckhoo and, incidentally, to the whole Colony. I do not know whether I am correct in saying that most of the cases which Mr. Luckhoo won at the Bar and which brought very much credit to him, came from the rural areas. If that is so, it gives me added pleasure to join in congratulating him, though I do not intend to infer that there are more crimes in the rural areas than in any other part of the Colony. I do know, however, that the people in the rural areas would like to join with us in congratulating Mr. Luckhoo on the dignity that has been conferred upon him.

Mr. Ramphal: Mr. Speaker, I crave your indulgence, Sir, to join with other Members of this Council in congratulating Mr. Luckhoo, because, there is a special relationship between Mr. Luckhoo and myself, which I do not think there is need to refer to. I would wish however, to say publicly something which I believe, Mr. Luckhoo would not wish to say himself. Over two years ago he and I discussed his future in the political field, and he told me then that he wanted to retire slightly until he had achieved one particular ambition. Now, Sir, that ambition has been fulfilled. I reminded him when the news came out of the conversation we had, and now that the ambition has been fulfilled I shall look forward to his playing a full part in the field of social and political welfare in this Colony. I have no doubt, Sir, that from now on, we shall see the best phase of Mr. Luckhoo's work in this country.

Mr. Kendall: Mr. Speaker, I think the people of New Amsterdam would like me to congratulate Mr. Luckhoo publicly, on the honour that has been conferred upon him by Her Majesty the

[Mr. Kendall]

Queen. It is something that we had been looking forward to and, now that he has received it, I think all the people in that particular town are especially proud of him and his achievement. I would not like to strike a personal note, but I anticipated this because I know how keen Mr. Luckhoo was about his work. Because of that fact, he was expected — and it is the expectation of every ambitious man — to reach the highest position in his particular sphere of activity. I know that Mr. Luckhoo has done a very fine job, especially when we take into consideration his age. I do not know if he is the youngest member of the Bar to have taken Silk in this Colony, but I must say that his achievement is a credit to New Amsterdam. I have great pleasure in associating myself with the congratulatory remarks of the previous speakers, and in wishing Mr. Luckhoo continued success as an advocate at the Bar.

Mr. Rahaman: I must also join in extending congratulations to Mr. Luckhoo, and I am doing so not as a member of the Bar, but as a member of the turf. I thank you, Sir.

Mr. Tello: I crave your indulgence, Mr. Speaker, to speak not as a Member of the Council, but as a trade unionist. Personally I am most unfit to eulogise a lawyer because I have not in any way contributed to the existence of lawyers since I have neither prosecuted nor have I been prosecuted. But I have found him in trade unionism just as he practised at the law — he never cared for cheap popularity and approached measures in the way he saw fit. He fought his way as a trade unionist according to the same legal principles he followed as a lawyer — everything within law and order. I wish to say further that his association with the

trade union movement has assisted him to attain this great honour at such an early age. I offer him my heartiest congratulations and wish him further success.

Mr. Luckhoo: May I say very briefly, no less very sincerely, how grateful I am to you all for your very kind and generous remarks. Thank you.

CONDITIONS AT PUBLIC HOSPITAL

Mr. Cummings: Before you proceed with the Order of the Day, Sir, permit me to refer to an item on page 2 of the Minutes of the 19th of March relating to the Public Hospital, Georgetown.

Mr. Speaker: Yes. You may do so.

Mr. Cummings: I observe that the hon. Member, Mr. Luckhoo, in his very careful and enthusiastic manner paid a visit to the hospital and described certain conditions as deplorable; he saw an opportunity to bring the matter to the Council and was minded to move a motion. You will remember, Sir, shortly after the first meeting of this Council I tabled with the Clerk notice of a motion that this Council should approve of the appointment of a committee to examine this Colony's medical services with special reference to hospitals. I mention this because I wish to assure the hon. Member I am aware of the conditions and the Director of Medical Services and His Excellency are deeply concerned. The personnel of the committee is now being considered and a memorandum will be submitted to the Executive Council very shortly. But I wish to thank the hon. Member for his criticism because I do not think we can get anywhere without criticism. If it is criticism, then out with it. Then we can get somewhere. I do wish to

assure him that the matter is under consideration.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member is quite correct, and I think some reference has been made to it by the hon. the Chief Secretary; I think the hon. Member, Mr. Luckhoo, received some assurance from the Chief Secretary that the matter has not escaped the attention of Government. But I would like to direct your attention to the first recommendation of the hon. Member's motion; it does appear, before the question of a Select Committee or otherwise is considered, that the desirability of further training might in the interval be given consideration at the various hospitals.

Mr. Cummings: I do not have the first recommendation before me.

Mr. Speaker: It is in the Minutes: that a qualified medical officer be immediately placed in charge of the Blood Bank.

Mr. Cummings: Sir, all that is under consideration. As a matter of fact I may mention now that I even had a talk with officials of the World Health Organisation on this matter — an informal talk.

Mr. Speaker: Is there any other matter to which any hon. Member might like to refer?

ORDER OF THE DAY

DEBATE ON DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Council resumed the debate on the following motion by **Sir Frank McDavid** (Member for Agriculture, Forests, Lands and Mines):

“Be it resolved, That with reference to the Report on the Economic Development of British Guiana by the Mission organised by the International Bank for

reconstruction and Development this Council approves in principle of the expanded and accelerated development programme for the years 1954 and 1955 presented to the Council on 11th February, 1954, and of the financial arrangements for its implementation.”

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member, Mr. Jailal, had not finished his remarks.

Mr. Jailal: I had concluded what I had to say last meeting about stone quarries and steel barges.

I am still somewhat in a quandary to know what will be “priorities” in the programme. We all certainly would like to know that. I would like to see the “blueprint”, as it seems to me that after the architect is finished he must hand it over to the “builders”. So far for the planning.

In the summary of the programme — which I have tried to read as well as I can — missing from the list of items is something which I think would bring a lot of aid and assistance to the country as a whole. I believe the time has come, now we have the money, I feel it is no use talking about internal drainage of the country when there are sandbanks to force the water to remain on a longer period than expected especially in the Mahaicony and Abary Creeks. I believe there are Members here who can bear me out in the fact that the mouths of the Creeks are a menace to farmers who plant inland. The mouths are very little and they are becoming more and more mudflats rather than mouths of rivers, consequently, the movement of the current is not fast when there is a flood. If a suction dredge were stationed at the mouth of the Mahaicony this would be eliminated within two weeks, and similarly with the other creeks.

[Mr. Jailal]

I will now refer particularly to dying New Amsterdam. New Amsterdam will die if the mud is allowed to accumulate in the Berbice River. We can employ a suction dredge to clear the harbour all the time. Then there is the Georgetown harbour—here, I think if a suction dredge is employed we will be able to build a good harbour in a short time. Our harbour shows crying need, and it is the only harbour. Captain Coghlan was trying to get the river bridged, but is no use talking about a bridge when you have nothing on the other side. However, I visualise that in a few years from now the wharf space on the other side will be completely taken up since I venture to believe there is going to be more need for wharfage, and the other side of the Demerara will be used just as the Thames in London.

It is my proposal that Government should at once think in terms of obtaining the services of what I would call a Harbour Master General, a man who would be able to plan our harbour. It is no use driving piles on the riverside and calling them wharves. I have not seen a proper wharf in our port. The entire waterfront is held by a certain set of people and there is hardly any improvement, except that as a result of the last Water Street fire Messrs. Sprostons are building a new wharf on the burnt out waterfront site. I think that one of the things that could be done with a suction dredge would be to fill in certain portions so as to provide continuous wharf and storage accommodation along the waterfront. I think it was suggested by someone that the Fort Groyne should be extended in order that the channel in the river might be kept clear by the force of the current. I think that if a suction dredge were used a large quantity of silt could be removed, and we would be

able to reclaim miles of land off the Sea Wall. If British Guiana is to have the continental destiny so many people would like it to have, one of the main things we should look after is our harbour.

There is also much talk about not having sufficient land. It is my opinion that if the Moruca river was thoroughly dredged its overflow into the Akawini, which forces itself across the Pomeroun, could be arrested, and arable savannah land would be reclaimed. In the Essequibo river and all around the coast we see evidence of the need for a suction dredge. Many hours are spent travelling around a few sand banks which could be removed in a few days by the use of such a dredge. I cannot emphasise too strongly the need for a suction dredge for the implementation of our drainage and irrigation projects. A small suction dredge was employed by a private company at Everton, on the Berbice river, and I believe those hon. Members who saw it in operation were convinced of what could be done with equipment of that type. My experience is that places like Trinidad, Jamaica, Aruba and Curacao, where there are good harbours, have all employed suction dredges. I feel that without such a dredge our drainage problems will not be solved, and I would ask hon. Members to give careful study to the recommendation I have made. In conclusion, I am appealing to Members of this Council to see that this country gets full benefit at the earliest possible time from this Development Programme.

Mr. Lord : I beg to support the motion which has been so lucidly put before Council by the hon. Member for Agriculture, Forests, and Lands and Mines. I agree with him that we are too much inclined in this Colony to what he called self-deception. I recall

an occasion when I was speaking with Dr. Priddle, the Medical Adviser to the Colonial Office, on his visit of inspection to this Colony, when he remarked that the people here were too prone to record stagnation and lack of progress in the Colony. He thought it would be far better if we told the world something of what we had achieved, despite the difficulties which beset this Colony.

With regard to the Development Programme, I agree that there is absolute need for expansion of our agricultural industries, and whilst I am not in a position to refute the gloomy prediction by my friend, the hon. Mr. Raatgever, I feel that there should be no reason why our rice industry should not be expanded, because there should be scope for marketing some of our rice in the neighbouring countries, such as Venezuela. I also think that, through the offices of the Trade Commissioner in the United Kingdom, efforts should be made to secure markets for our rice in the European countries.

In order to expand our rice industry there is need for flood control—for drainage and irrigation surveys and engineering surveys, and there is also need for the normal land surveys which are carried out in this Colony. My fear is that we lack the necessary technical personnel to carry out these works, and I speak particularly of surveyors. The shortage of surveyors is a very serious matter at the present time, and we should take every opportunity to provide facilities for young men to take up the study of surveying. I would go so far as to say that the time has come when it is necessary for us to establish in this Colony a school for surveyors, where there should be a full-time staff technically qualified to train young men who have the necessary basic academic qualifications. Accurate surveys are the only safeguard

against costly errors in development, and that, I think, is something this Colony has lost sight of on many occasions. I would like to see more emphasis placed in the Development Programme on the need for a greater number of surveyors.

In the geological field I regret to see the rate at which young geologists who have been recruited from abroad are being snapped up by mining companies, for without qualified geologists the Director of Geological Surveys will find it a very hard task to carry out his section of the Development Programme.

In the realm of public works I see there is a lot of money to be spent on roads, but I would like to see the day come when the use of burnt earth for the construction of public roads in this Colony will be banned. There are very adequate supplies of stone which should be available not only to the Public Works Department but to private operators, but I feel that past experience of the Public Works Department in the quarrying of stone does not recommend that Department further undertaking the quarrying of stone. I think it should be possible for the Public Works Department to establish a mill which could take stone from private operators at sight, and be able to control the cost at which boulder stone is produced, thereby saving the expense of bringing unserviceable material to Georgetown. There will be the necessary transport facilities in the form of steel barges which have been recommended for the Department.

I wish to associate myself with the comments by the hon. Member, Mr. Jailal, as regards dredging. I do not know whether that item is included in the expenditure to be provided for the Public Works Department or the Transport and Harbours Department, but I

[Mr. Lord]

am satisfied that the periodical flooding of some of our rivers, like the Mahaica, Mahaicony and Abary, may be overcome if the mouths of those rivers were dredged, because from a common-sense point of view, and from my own observation, a cross-section of those rivers at their mouths shows that there is nothing like the volume of water which is to be found 30 or 40 miles up river. I know of a point up the Mahaicony river where there is a depth of about 40 ft. while at the mouth there is only about 12 ft., which makes it impossible for a large volume of water to go out at a normal time.

I will not deal with the question of housing which forms part of the Development Budget, because I feel sure it will get better advice from the Colonial Office Officials who are in the Colony, than anything I may be able to offer. I wish them success in their deliberations on this matter. I take it that the suggestion put forward by other Members whereby there would be placed before the Council detailed estimates of all these works would be given due consideration.

Mr. Phang: I rise to support this motion and also to take the opportunity to congratulate the hon. Member for Agriculture on the very lucid exposition of this Development Programme from which we can see that there would be large scale development in this Colony within the next two years. There would be more land for agriculture, better housing, better roads, better transportation and better health services. What is very important is that everybody who wants whole-time employment would be able to get work. I have in mind the amount available to the Colony being sufficient for the schemes. However that may be, at the end of two years I feel sure that there

would be a higher standard of living all over the Colony except in the North West District. If you look at the Development Programme you would see that except \$50,000 to be expended in 1954 and a further \$10,000 in 1955 on the Hosororo Experiment Station, there is not one red cent earmarked for any development programme in the North West District. So the position would be this at the end of two years. You would have a higher standard of living in the other parts of the Colony and in the North West District nothing.

For as long as I can remember there has been a studied neglect by the Government of the North West District. During the past few years we have seen experts of this and that coming to this Colony. They are carried all over the Colony and they go to as far off as the Rupununi but not to the North West District which is just one hour's flight from Georgetown. We had the Venn Commission, the Waddington Commission, the Robertson Commission going all over the Colony and even to the Rupununi District but not to the North West District. If Government is not interested in the North West District, why not give it up, why not invite some corporation and give them some charter to develop the area? It is not right for Government to punish the people of the North West District in that way. So much so, not many weeks ago I mentioned in this Council that I had moved a motion for the appointment of a committee to go to the North West District and investigate the bad conditions there, and that that Committee had reported but its recommendations have not yet been implemented. I would like, with your permission, Sir, to read from *Hansard* what I said on the occasion of that motion which was taken on the 17th July, 1952:

"Before the settlement of the boundary dispute between ourselves and Venezuela in 1899, there was for over 150 years considerable irritation and ill-feeling between these two countries over the boundaries, and for over half a century there were diplomatic exchanges over the large and at that time indeterminate area known as the North West District.

Anticipating trouble with the Venezuelans over the boundary question, Mr. Im Thurn (afterwards Sir Edward Im Thurn) was sent to the North West District to establish British rights in that area, and in the year 1891 founded Morawhanna, which was by Ordinance created a township in 1892. On the other side of the Mora Passage he built his residence. In order to induce the people to take up the 80 lots comprised in Morawhanna, he promised that they would have amenities, such as hospital, post office, schools, churches, police station, etc., etc. By year's end most of the lots were taken up. Cultivation and civilization and as full administration as in any of the older parts of the Colony were introduced. Morawhanna was established.

Some two years prior to the establishment of Morawhanna, gold was found at Takatu in the Barama River, a tributary of the Waini. Gold was also found in the Barama. In the fiscal year 1892-1893 the District produced 33,392 ozs. of gold, which at that time was \$16 per oz, and valued at \$534,272.00; 1893-1894 the amount was 31,837 ozs., of a value of \$508,592.00; 1894-1895 the amount was 34,065 ozs., of a value of \$545,040.00; in 1896-1897 the amount was 35,935 ozs., valuing \$574,960.00.

I have no record of the agricultural produce shipped, but between March 1890 and March 1891, 18 sloops and schooners carried cargoes of agricultural products making between them 141 journeys. What that is in number of bags I would not know, but the shipments were considerable. There was other trade in balata, etc., and it would be conservative to say the District did over a million dollars per year in those years."

That will give an idea that Government does due us something. You have, it is true, a considerable decrease in the produce of the District as the

mineral areas have been nearly worked out, but there are still large patches which with a little help can produce gold still. There is land there for agriculture. As I have said before, I do not know why Government refuses to recognize such a place as the North West District. It is blessed with considerable merit and can help the economy of this Colony if it is properly developed. If Government is no longer interested in the District I would suggest that Government give it to some corporation to develop and, I am sure, they would make a good job of it, or Government can give it to Venezuela.

Mr. Lee : Mr. Speaker, I feel certain that the hon. Member does not mean the last remark that he made. Before I say anything on the Development Programme I would like to draw the attention of this Council and of the public to the striking actions — what is being done at the present time and what is my humble opinion is the prospect — of those people who call themselves "The P.P.P." Let us examine their attitude and their actions, and see whether they are right and we are wrong in certain aspects and whether they are wrong and we are right in certain aspects. They have to recognize the fact that this is a British Colony. Of course those who preach the communistic doctrine, perhaps, have had orders but they cannot in any wise and at any time whatever wrest this Colony from the British Government neither would they be able at any time whatever to rule this Government with dictation from their masters. Therefore, in my humble opinion, their policy is to create disorder, to create hatred. In my way of thinking if those were their instructions — and I feel that those were their instructions— they have succeeded to the greatest extent. If we are to combat that

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which they have succeeded in doing, we have to put our shoulders to the wheel. The only way we can succeed in combating their ideologies is to give as much as possible to every person in the Colony, a stake in this Colony for which they will fight to protect.

If that is the attitude of the British Government I admire it, and I sincerely hope that the British Government would also take that view and continue with these projects. At the present moment they are doing it with non-co-operation. But non-co-operation in what? In what belongs to us? We are born here, have been brought up here and we expect to die here. If they say they would not co-operate, I am asking this Government to introduce legislation whereby those persons who try to disturb or are disturbing certain people in this Colony would be controlled in such a manner that their utterances would be useless and be given a deaf ear. I appeal to you, Mr. Speaker, to convey to His Excellency that as this Development programme is one for progress in the Colony, we want the greatest degree of co-operation; and I am appealing to the public to give the greatest degree of co-operation to the Programme.

Let us examine the actions of the Government and see whether we are getting co-operation or not from people who should know better. Look at the appointments to the Regional Committees. I am speaking in respect of people whom I know and in respect of two particular committees. The majority of the appointees are P.P.P. sympathisers and, in one instance, I know that two of them have supported the P.P.P. Yet they are named to function on the Regional Committees. I do not know of the other districts because I have not travelled throughout the Colony to know them. Those nominees could only have been put forward by

Members of the Government, and it grieves me to think that they had not examined the character of those people before they were recommended to the Governor. I say it is not too late to remedy it, and I ask the Government to examine the nominees on the regional committees and see whether they are going to co-operate with the Government or not.

As you perhaps, know, Sir, all progressive proposals have to go from the sub-committees to the Regional Committees and then to the Governor or the Central Body before they can be acted upon. We are dependent upon the rice industry which we are hoping to develop. Examine the nominated members of the Regional Committees and you would see that they have no interest whatever in rice. They have no interest whatever in the land, but unless you can get people who are interested in the land — people whose stake is in the land—such as the rice growers—there would be no success. They would not recommend people who are sympathisers with the P.P.P. I feel that it would be bad for the Colony if this Programme is not carried out. So long as I have a voice in this Council and so long as the facts are brought to my notice, I shall say that Government who are responsible for these nominations and who will be responsible for the recommendations and proposals of the Central Committee, have not done their duty. I am warning Government about the whole situation, and would point out that it is possible for them to do a lot of good.

Let us see what can be done for the benefit of this Colony. The hon. Mr. Raatgever has brought to the knowledge of this Council facts about the policy and programme of Government for a number of years past, but there was one thing he did not bring to our attention—that the Gov-

ernment desired, at any time whatever, to be a landlord. Government have openly said that they do not have any such desire, except as regards land settlement schemes where they desire to control — and control in such a manner that there would be an equal distribution of land to the settlers. In these development schemes we are thinking of production within the shortest possible time, in order to catch available markets.

Now, let us see whether the hon. Member for Agriculture, Forests, Lands and Mines, in presenting this Programme, has said anything with respect to the compulsory acquisition of land for purposes of agriculture? There is nothing, so far as the Programme is concerned, to show that there would be any such acquisition. Mention has been made, however, of the Bonasika Scheme which is in progress. I know nothing of the Torani Scheme, except that I visited the scene with Mr. Leeming (Drainage and Irrigation, Public Works Dept.) and the blueprint appears to be very good.

As regards the Bonasika Scheme. I know that the majority of the lands towards the river are owned by private individuals, and that these people have not got the means to develop them. Is Government going to allow these lands to lie low in the face of the vast amount of money being spent on these schemes? It has been provided that some \$3,440,000 will be spent on the Boerasirie project and Government is endeavouring to get contractors to carry out the work as early as possible; but what would happen to the lands lying between the river and this scheme? Are they going to be developed?

The Attorney-General: I am trying to find out what the hon. Member wants to convey to this Council when

he speaks of lands lying "low". Does he mean that the owners would have to raise money for the purpose of developing these lands or, that the lands themselves would have to be incorporated in the scheme, as indicated by the hon. Mr. Jailal?

Mr. Lee: I am sorry if I am trying to race too fast with my ideas in order to put over the picture. It seems as if I have to go right back and deal with the principle involved. It seems that my hon. Friend, the Attorney-General, does not realize that this is a Government programme.

The Attorney-General: I do not follow when the hon. Member speaks of lands contriving to "lie low" near to a particular scheme.

Mr. Lee: I was pointing out that the hon. Member for Agriculture did not say anything with respect to the compulsory acquisition of land for agricultural purposes, and I was referring to lands that will be available when the Boerasirie Project is completed between 1954 and 1955.

Sir Frank McDavid: I do not think the hon. Member should be so optimistic as to expect the extension of the Boerasirie project to be completed within those two years. If he looks at the note relating to this item he will see what it says.

Mr. Speaker: It says "five to seven years".

Mr. Lee: I am looking at the expenditure that will be incurred within these two years (1954 and 1955). For the Boerasirie Project, it will be \$1,440,000 in 1954, and \$2,000,000 in 1955. That means that the total expenditure for those two years will be \$3,440,000. Isn't that the amount that the project was estimated to cost?

Sir Frank McDavid: If the hon. Member looks at page 30 of the Report of the International Bank Mission, he would see that the Boerasirie Project (under the head Agriculture) is estimated to cost a total of \$6,300,000 and that this expenditure is spread over a period of five years. What is intended in this Programme is to accelerate the project by putting a larger sum of money than that stated in the Report, but it does not mean that the project will be completed within two years.

Mr. Lee: I said that deliberately so that the public would know what is happening. The majority of the people are under the impression that this scheme would be completed in two years, and I wish Government would correct that impression.

Sir Frank McDavid: No member of the public whom I know has any doubt that most of these schemes would be continued during the next three or five years. What Government is trying to do, is to accelerate them. I do not know any Member of this Council who feels that this scheme will be completed in two years.

Mr. Lee: I am telling hon. Members what the public, after seeing the publication of these schemes in the newspapers, are saying. I am speaking about the people who own lands on the river banks and in the county of Esse- quibo. Their question is: What are we going to do in order to get money to develop our lands? Are they going to get money if they put forward proposals to Government for the development of their lands? Are they going to get money to develop the lands? If they do not, then the schemes so far as they stand, will lie low and the lands will lie low. Is Government prepared to lend money to the proprietors or co-operative groups who are willing to

acquire the lands, The whole public has not read "The Economic Development of British Guiana" but it is recommended in the report of the International Bank experts under that title, that lands be compulsorily acquired. Why has no legislation been introduced to protect those people who cannot buy. Let the people know that we are going to introduce legislation whereby they can become landlords or Government can acquire the lands. This can be done simultaneously with the implementation of the development programme, and if we are going to use the BPI, this is where we can do so. It is no sense having the lands unused, lying fallow and low, when there are people who can develop them. If the hon. Member for Agriculture can get say, 25 per cent. of the unemployed people from Georgetown to go and cultivate the lands, I would say he is a wizard.

Sir Frank McDavid: As I understand it, the hon. Member is seeking an assurance that an appropriate land utilisation policy in connection with the very large schemes recommended, and also in connection with lands along the river banks—which we know are owned by landed proprietors and are not being used—will be evolved.

Mr. Lee: I am only trying to get something specific on how the land utilisation policy will be framed.

Sir Frank McDavid: If I were he, I would say the same thing—only not in quite so many words.

Mr. Lee: I accept the censure, but to be on the serious side: people on the sugar estates who desire lands are anxiously awaiting the publication by Government of some policy in this respect. They want to know how these lands are going to be developed, in two years, but having been given the assurance by the hon. the Member for Agriculture,—

The Attorney-General: He did not give an assurance as to the policy to be adopted. I thought the hon. Member's assurance was that he understood what he was speaking about.

Mr. Lee: It is an assurance.

The Attorney-General: An assurance has not been given and therefore there should be no misconception about it.

Mr. Lee: An explanation is given as an assurance that Government will lay down the policy and plan. This is the point I am trying to make. I am trying to drive home to the hon. the Member for Agriculture that if a machinery pool is made available to rice planters on the Essequibo Coast and islands I am certain that Government's policy of increased production whereby revenue can be assured; and we can do away with the ravings of the P.P.P. people. I want to be assured that the machinery would be available as soon as possible, the district Commissioners would receive instructions and the Regional Development Committees would consider the schemes, and thus give the lie to the P.P.P. or their orders from the Soviet people.

Mr. Speaker: Has the hon Member not heard that tractors have been hired by people who own lands and that there are not sufficient tractors to go around, but the intention is to make them available wherever required?

Mr. Lee: I have had to telegraph Mr. Jailal, the Secretary of the Rice Producers' Association in seeking to obtain the use of tractors, and I have been given the use of tractors at times when they were available, but, as I said before, Government should give the assurance that tractors would be made available as soon as possible. There

are lands in the Essequibo islands where one need not worry in respect of irrigation because the river banks are raised to keep out the river water for 10 months of the year; they can get sweet water to cultivate the rice. There are lands which can be cultivated but some on the leeward side are owned by people who have no means to develop them and do not intend to develop them, and I am going to put to the Regional Development Committee proposals for early consideration that the rice growers of the Essequibo be given a chance to take advantage of bringing the unused lands into cultivation.

Those were my points in respect of agricultural production, but I wish to know whether it is the opinion of Government that the money to be spent on land settlement is sufficient or if it is expected that more would have to be raised for it later on. We know from experience that money expended on the Anna Regina and Vergenoegen land settlement schemes were not sufficient.

I notice from the Development Programme summary that there are forest projects and the expenditure in this respect for the two years is a total of \$761,560, apart from the expenditure for staff training, which is \$30,000. I think this money can be better used to extend the social services in the Colony — extending of the public hospitals in Georgetown and New Amsterdam. I would like Government to consider that question, because there is a crying need for the extension of those hospitals and an urgent need for specialists. The medical men are asking for more money and better employment conditions, and I leave this for the hon. the Member for Health to consider. I cannot remember the year — there are records — but Government had decided to take the block of houses which were near to the female block of the hospital in Georgetown, between Middle Street and New Market Street to extend the

[Mr. Lee]

hospital, and was going to compensate the houseowners. What I would suggest instead of this is that Government should see if it is not possible to get the land that is over the railway line for the purpose, thus saving Government from having to compensate all those people.

I observe in this programme provision for a hospital at Port Mourant to cost \$93,000. Port Mourant is only 15 miles from New Amsterdam by a road on which Government has recently spent over a million dollars. Instead of erecting a hospital at Port Mourant why not extend the New Amsterdam hospital where efforts are being made to provide a surgeon specialist?

Mr. Speaker : May I remind the hon. Member that there are two motions dealing with hospital administration? Perhaps he might defer his remarks on that subject until those motions are being discussed. There is one motion on the Order Paper and another was referred to this afternoon by the hon. Member for Labour, Health and Housing. I do not think it is necessary for the hon. Member to go into minute details about hospital administration when the whole question is to be reviewed by a Committee.

Mr. Lee: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, but what I would like to point out is that if the Government Members who are responsible for this Development Programme could see the weakness in one or two of the proposals they would be in a better position, when we are discussing the details in Finance Committee, to inform Members of any changes they were prepared to make. My object in making reference to land settlement and social services is because some people are resorting to all the tactics imaginable, political and otherwise, in order to try to convince the people

that we are not preparing a proper programme for the expenditure of this money. I trust that Government will review the proposals so that this Council and the public can be satisfied that if we co-operated with Government and the Regional Committee something tangible could be achieved within the two years.

I am wondering whether it is not possible for Government to offer more concessions to capitalists from abroad than those already provided. Our present concessions are the same as those offered by Trinidad and Jamaica, but it must be borne in mind that British Guiana is off the shipping route, and it is necessary that we should offer greater inducements to capitalists from abroad than those offered by our West Indian neighbours. I am not a commercial man but I feel sure that if members of the commercial community knew that this Government was prepared to offer greater concessions to capitalists than those offered by Trinidad and Jamaica they would induce their principals to invest capital in this country.

One last point I would like to make is that the sum of \$2½ million allocated for agricultural credits will not be sufficient to meet the demands for the farmers.

Mr. Speaker: Has the hon. Member a copy of the Development Programme?

Mr. Lee: Yes, Sir.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member was inquiring whether there was any provision made for agricultural credits. Items 59, 60 and 61 of the Development Programme deal with agricultural and other credits. Item 60 refers to the sum of \$4.2 million for loans to farmers, rice millers, copra dryers, cattle ranchers and fishermen.

Mr. Lee : What I am saying is that the amount provided is too small.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member may have intended to say that but he did not.

Mr. Lee : I say from experience that if the agriculturists really call on the Banks for assistance to cultivate their lands the sum of \$2½ million provided here would not be sufficient.

Mr. Speaker : I gathered from the hon. Member's remarks that he was endeavouring to explain that agriculturists will receive greater assistance from the Loan Banks so as to offset the contention of the political Party referred to, that Government was doing nothing for them. All the hon. Member has to do is to explain what is stated in this memorandum. The hon. Member gave me the impression that there was no provision made at all. If he now says that the provision is not ample he should wait until the time comes and say so.

Mr. Lee: What I was trying to point out is that Government has not laid down any policy, and the public has no knowledge.

Mr. Speaker : I am only pointing out that perhaps the hon. Member did not realise that he was saying that there was no provision for assistance to agriculturists, and I am drawing his attention to the fact that there is provision for a period of two years.

Mr. Lee: What I do say is that the rice cultivators are looking out for assistance whereby they could develop other lands, and I think Government should give publicity to their proposals as early as possible.

Lt. Col. Haywood : Mr. Speaker, on Thursday of last week I listened

with great interest to the speech by the hon. Member for Agriculture, Forests, Lands and Mines (Sir Frank McDavid) who reminded this Council and the people of the Colony that much had been done, particularly in the few years since the war ended. That reminder was both necessary and timely, and I fully agree with the hon. Member when he said that time was not on our side. Many of the projects already started, or about to be started, will require time before their full value becomes apparent to the people, therefore it is necessary that there should be some accelerated progress without any delay.

When the motion was put before us again on Friday last it was my hope that there would be one or two very brief speeches, and then the motion would be carried unanimously. It is desirable that all of us should speak fully and frankly on this Development Plan but, in my opinion, that should come at a later stage. I think we should first get into Finance Committee on the details and thrash out every point thoroughly and expeditiously, and then when we resume in full Council we shall be able to speak with more assurance on the Plan as a whole, or in detail. I do hope that hon. Members will see that this motion, and the other two motions which are closely connected to it, are passed before we adjourn today. If I remember correctly, the hon. Member pointed out to us that it was desirable (I do not think there is any dispute over that) that these motions should be approved as soon as we could possibly do so.

I would like to say, with full respect to you, Sir, that in my humble opinion, the working of this Council needs some reorganisation. On Friday, the 5th of March, the Council was adjourned until Thursday, the 18th of March. Surely, between those dates we could have met and dealt with these

[Lt. Col. Haywood]

motions? We met again on Friday last week and at 5 o'clock we adjourned until today. When we adjourned we had before us five motions, one Bill in the Committee stage, three Bills in second reading, and four Bills which we had just read the first time. If we are not careful we will be going home this afternoon with six motions, one Bill to be read for the third time, and seven Bills for second reading waiting for us when we get back here, and I do not know when that will be, because I understand there will be a meeting of Finance Committee tomorrow. I submit, Sir, that until we have fully disposed of our work, and particularly the work in connection with the Development Plan, we should meet every day — Monday to Friday each week—at 2 o'clock and follow what I believe is the example of the House of Commons, by continuing until we have finished the business put before us. Time is certainly being wasted.

If hon. Members do not prepare their speeches we shall ourselves be accused of that failing, i.e. of wasting time, and we would cure ourselves if we knew we had to remain here until we had finished the work set before us, because it is piling up, and I consider it wrong, particularly wrong at this time. Everything possible should be done to hurry up the consideration of the details of the projects in Finance Committee.

Mr. Speaker: As it is a matter of procedure that the hon. Member has raised, I think, he would find on enquiry that most of the business of the House of Commons is done outside of the House itself. There are numbers of Committees which sit every day, and one cannot compare the progress of work and try to imitate locally the proceedings of the House of Commons as if that was possible. There is the Ministerial system in operation in Great

Britain, and the Order of the Day in the House of Commons is not one that is within the Speaker's prerogative to settle, neither is it here. The Leader of the House has the right with the Leader of the Opposition to determine what the Order of the Day should be every day. For instance, when we adjourned on the last occasion I asked the hon. the Chief Secretary what day he would suggest I should adjourn to: One must remember that as Chief Executive Officer of Government along with other Members of the Executive Government he has had recently much to do in the way of many conferences with a number of people from abroad who are at present in the Colony and will only be here for a short while, and this Council must be patient and give him an opportunity of dealing with Government business. What has appeared to the hon. Member as an obstacle to progress, I think from my experience, he would later find out that we are doing exceedingly well in the circumstances.

I would like to add that so far as the meetings of the Council are concerned I hope the necessity will never arise for us to meet an entire week, from Monday to Friday. Some day in every week has to be set aside for Executive Council meetings and decisions. I will not go into details but, for instance, the hon. Member for Health has been absent from the Colony and there was on the Order Paper one or more Bills with which his Department had to deal. That could not be dealt with in his absence and in the circumstances must therefore remain on the Order Paper. Then the list of business has to be added to as the necessity arises. There was the Bill, for example, by the hon. the Financial Secretary in relation to Customs. Members will be able to understand when they have had the explana-

tion why that had to be withdrawn and another Bill substituted.

I know that the hon. Member is most anxious to have the debate shortened, but in course of time he will find that the business or the Order Paper might not have to be added to and that the procedure of adjourning to Finance Committee is a very effective way of curtailing a number of hours' debate in this Council. To some extent some proposals made by hon. Members in this Council in the course of debates are usefully made prior to meeting in Finance Committee under the ordinary rule of procedure. Proposals, for example, such as those by the hon. Member, Mr. Jaillal, are properly made in this Council and subsequently examined in Committee, but in general I agree with the hon. Member that we do not want to go back to the old days of having long speeches made in Council.

The Attorney-General: I do not agree with what the hon. Member has said at all. As a matter of fact this Legislative Council is constituted under very peculiar circumstances and, I think, it is desirable that opportunity should be taken by Members of this Council to express their views on such an important matter as this Development Programme. It is all very well that matters of detail might be investigated and decided upon in Finance Committee, but on grounds of general policy this is the channel through which, on these matters, suggestions and comments should be made. It may be somewhat irksome to some Members of this Council to sit here and feel that some of the speeches are repetitious, yet in the nature of things that is bound to be.

I feel that every opportunity should be given to those Members of the

Council who wish to know what is the programme, following upon what the hon. Member for Agriculture in his admirable speech has addressed to this Council, and they should make their comments on it even though some of us think those speeches should be curtailed. After all, the circumstances under which this Council has been brought together are somewhat different from those of the Legislative Councils of the past, and I am sure the hon. Member himself would fully appreciate the necessity for allowing speakers to express their views without let or hindrance, particularly on an occasion of such vital importance to the economy and development of this country.

Mr. Correia: I had no intention of speaking on this motion until the Finance Committee stage is reached, but the hon. Member, Mr. Lee, has forced me to speak in defence of Forestry. The hon. gentleman suggested that the amount allocated to Forestry, with the exception of the amount allocated for the staff training scheme, should be allocated to the Medical Department. I do not think the hon. Member was serious when he made that suggestion. Forestry, Sir, is one of our greatest natural resources, something which we have to develop and thereby introduce re-afforestation. Our great housing project depends a lot on our forests. As I have said, it is on account of the hon. Member's remarks that I have risen in defence of Forestry under the Development Plan.

What I would like to see introduced by Government, Sir, is a vast scheme of seasoning of our timbers and woods and the education of the public in the use of the various types of woods we have in our forests. When such time comes that the Government can provide the public with enough seasoned timbers other than greenheart, then Gov-

[Mr. Correia]

ernment should legislate that no more than 40 per cent. of the building materials in a new building should be of greenheart and the other 60 per cent. of other woods. That, Sir, would extend the life of our economy and of our economic forests by about 200 per cent. Instead of curtailing the allocation to Forestry I think it should be greater than the amount allocated for the two years.

Mr. Tello: I rise to support the motion, and I do so very heartily. Unlike my hon. friend, Mr. Lee, I entertain no fear of non-co-operation, and I have no anxiety because certain persons whom we once regarded as not suitable are now on the Regional Development Committees. I want to say that I have heard the Development Programme being acclaimed by the rank and file of the masses as good and sound. That being so, I look confidently on this Development Programme and its implementation. I want also to express my gratitude to the hon. Mover of the motion, who has made known to me in such a striking manner the achievements of the last Five-Year Plan. Indeed I have never made a thorough study of it and I hope he would take it in the spirit in which I put it to him, that the average man in the street is not even aware that we have just completed a Five-Year Plan. Possibly sufficient publicity was not given to it, or possibly it did not reach down far enough to the ordinary man in the street. While, Sir, it is indeed very convincing the amount of progress and achievement made by the Five-Year Plan, now that we are on the threshold of a Two-Year Development Plan we should look back and examine carefully both the debit and the credit of that last Five-Year Development Programme.

I want to speak critically of it so that it would give us the necessary caution and the necessary inspiration as well, in embarking on this Two-Year accelerated programme. Before I enter upon my criticism I also want to assure my hon. friend, Mr. Lee, that in moving around in the country I have discovered that the masses are not labouring under any misapprehension or misunderstanding of the acceleration of the Two-Year Plan and its relation to the new Five-Year Plan. They understand it fully well. It was explained by His Excellency himself in his broadcast and followed by speeches in the country, and quite a good deal of publicity was given to it on the radio and in the Press. I can assure the hon. Member that quite a great deal of the rank and file of the masses do understand that this Two-Year Development Plan is only an acceleration and not a substitute for the contemplated or recommended Five-Year Plan.

As I look back on the Five-Year Development Programme I notice a deal of omissions and errors, and I am very perturbed at those omissions as they reach right down to what I call "the small man". I find that the rice expansion certainly has done a great deal for the rice farmer. It has succeeded in teaching and encouraging the rice farmer to accept mechanization of rice cultivation. And, Sir, I would say also that the R.M.B. is taking care of the produce of would-be recognized farmers against the exploitation of money-lenders, because the Board went out of its way to make the purchasing of machinery by the farmers a much more easy matter than it was in the past. Today farmers are not hampered by the necessity to obtain loans under the pressure of heavy interest. I also made special reference to the extension of the Mahaicony-Abary scheme, but I regret to say that while a great deal

of emphasis was laid on the extension and the mechanizing of production, we find that most of the construction work was done, from all that I have heard, by what I am sorry to call sweated labour. The workers were made to do the greater part of this construction by doing 10 hours "flat time" per day, including Sundays, and if they refused to do this on any one day they were refused work for the balance of the week. What I do charge the authorities of the scheme with, is a certain degree of carelessness as regards the small man. There is too much neglect of the interest of the small man.

I do not know if it is part of the Plan, but I returned to the Colony and found that much progress had been made as regards drainage and irrigation and also as regards sea defence. I found, however, that on the sea coast where several small proprietors and persons live, they suffered a great deal from day to day, from month to month, and from year to year from the elements of nature, but nothing was done for them. To strengthen or to heighten the indecency of the situation, I discovered that the experts who were invited to examine our sea defence and our drainage and irrigation problems—I refer to the Hutchinson report—have included that area which had been by-passed. It is difficult for the average person to interpret this report other than looking through the glasses of these small and disappointed people. I notice here—and I quote from the report of the International Bank Mission, Chapter 15, page 222, — that in dealing with the Five-year Programme in Agriculture, the following is stated:—

"In whatever way these factors may be combined, it is clear that present government policy in agricultural expansion should emphasise not only production, but above all the profitable utilization of the colony's extensive human resources. The

main effort, therefore, should lie in development of family-size farms and the building of a strong, economically independent farmers' community...

I suggest that 5,000 acres which are now lying idle should be utilized for the fulfilment of this recommendation. On the next page (223) the Report recommends first priority for—

"Reclamation of agricultural land and improvement of water control."

That is exactly what these poor people are clamouring for, and I think they would be a little happier now, because only this morning the Member for Labour informed me that he was sending the appropriate Officer to investigate the situation and that if conditions warranted, he would cause immediate action to be taken.

Another set of small people who have been overlooked by Government are the small coconut oil producers. I understand that experts have advised that their method of producing coconut oil is far from economical. My complaint, however, is that these people who are the pioneers of this industry were pushed around and never encouraged to organize themselves, or further financed in order that they could improve their methods of production. I feel that if they are re-encouraged by co-operatives and a little financial aid, we would not have had them today pointing out—whether it is true or not — that Government, instead of supporting or assisting them, encouraged the big monopolists. Whether it is true or not, they say that these two big monopolists were encouraged to crush them out of existence. Those are the things which must be examined.

I should also like to refer to the small people on the East Coast, especially those between Plaisance and Golden Grove, who at one time carried on a thriving industry in the rearing of

[Mr. Tello]

small stock, including pigs. The complaint I have received is that the Agriculture Department has had little or nothing to provide them with by way of pedigree stock that would have been profitable to rear, while the price of stock feed became almost prohibitive, and so a thriving industry is dying, if not dead, on the East Coast. We have, Sir, a similar thing in the North West District, and I am surprised that my good friend, Mr. Phang, has not mentioned it, because I lived there for a part of two years and I know what has been taking place. Some of my friends have written to say that nothing has been done to prevent them from losing large quantities of fruit and other crops, while the Commissioner of Local Government visited the area very seldom indeed. The people there are clamouring for quicker transportation to and from the City, and they have suggested that Government should assist them either with the canning machine or with some form of cold storage equipment. All these things are said to have reached the deaf ears of Government under the Two-Year Development Plan.

We come now to our good friends, the pork-knockers, and here I want to read from "The Geology and Mineral Resources of British Guiana" (by Smith Bracewell, B.Sc.). On page 27 it says:

"Between 1884 and 1941 British Guiana has produced 3,028,745 ounces of gold valued at \$56,035,183. Annual production increased from 250 ounces in 1884 to a maximum of 138,527 ounces in the year 1893-94, then declined steadily to 6,083 ounces in 1928. Consequent mainly upon the increased value of gold and the development of dredging operations by the British Guiana Consolidated Goldfields, Co., Ltd., there was then a slight revival of the gold industry and by 1938 annual production had increased to the figure of 41,919 ounces. (s).

"Of the three million ounces of gold produced, only about one-fifteenth has been produced by dredging, about one-thirtieth by milling, and about one-seventieth by large-scale hydraulicking operations. The remainder has been recovered mainly by hand methods from thousands of small workings scattered throughout the Esse- quibo, Potaro, Mazaruni, Cuyuni and North West Districts."

Sir, I have quoted these passages because we see in them once again that only a very small percentage of production was made by large-scale operations, most of it having been made by the small man who has established this industry and maintained it all along. He was, therefore, both the pioneer and the mainstay of the industry. I fear that if he drops entirely out of it and if the big companies fail at any time, the industry would die.

As regards diamonds, it is stated on page 23 of this publication, that—

"Diamonds were first discovered in British Guiana in 1837. The reports of the Lands and Mines Department indicate that the aggregate production from 1901 to the end of 1944 was 2,278,323 13/16 carats valued at \$41,147,376. The maximum annual production was attained in 1923 when 1,141,425 stones weighing 214,474½ carats, valued at \$1,033,014 were produced. Production has since declined steadily and in 1944 only 143,240 stones weighing 16,019½ carats valued at \$388,460 were declared."

I have quoted expert opinion; and it is expert opinion also that the pork-knockers, these hard working people who are willing to take their hard lot without complaint and are always willing to share their good luck with everyone, should receive the close attention of Government. Expert opinion has also recently been expressed that the method of "pork-knocking" for diamonds is obsolete and possibly not economic. I suggest that now that we are embarking on the development programme we should find ways and means of rendering pork-knockers financial assistance and encouraging them to qualify for obtaining money through the Credit

Corporation; and to enable themselves to have diving suits, so that they might benefit in a modern way from the industry to which they gave birth. I am told by one person who has more than 20 years' experience in the interior that it is not true that gold and diamond bearing areas of the Colony have been exhausted and the only means of obtaining those minerals is by diving. What he claims is, that the source of diamonds is now less easily accessible.

In this budget there is provision for re-conditioning of airstrips, and possibly building a few new ones. I recommend that when decisions are to be taken as to the most suitable sites for airstrips these people who are familiar with the interior should be taken into consultation on the matter, and I suggest to the proper authorities that they should take the Miners' Association into their confidence.

Mr. Speaker : You can make the suggestion in Finance Committee and get one or two of the members to address the Committee. Evidence can be heard by the Committee. You make your suggestion there.

Mr. Tello: Thank you very much Sir. Reference has been made about "having a stake in the land". If we have a stake in the land we would not be afraid of threats of non-fraternisation and non-co-operation. It must not be merely a part of a speech in a debate in this Council : it must be more practical than that. I feel that the Governor and the Economic Development Council have expressed their faith in the small man in the appointment of the Regional Development Committees, but if the small man must have a stake in the land, then he must have a part in making important decisions. I seem to think that important decisions have been made in his interest and with the best of intentions, but without his consultation. He looks upon these deci-

sions with prejudice and they often believe that these decisions could have been more in their interest if they were taken into consultation.

In spite of the fear at the moment of the wrong people being on the Regional Development Committees, I still have great faith in them, providing they are not used as rubber-stamp committees. If the committee members are allowed to have free discussions and to express themselves as people who should have a stake in the land, I will have no fear. As regards the suggestion by the hon. Member, Mr. Raatgever and the "Daily Chronicle" that the hon. mover is wrong that time is against us and we must make haste slowly, my answer is that I am opposed to doing anything that spells slowness, I am against anything that would deter speed in the implementation of this development programme. Already our people have been kept long and in suspense, and if one moves among the people one would be struck by their anxiety and their impatience to have this programme embarked upon. I think the true solution lies in not making haste slowly but in taking the small man into full confidence and full partnership.

Mr. Speaker: When the hon. Member, Mr. Lee was speaking, I mentioned that the figure in connection with the Boerasirie project was between six and seven million dollars.

Sir Frank McDavid: I think I can help you out on that point.

Mr. Speaker: One moment, I want to find it. It is under the heading "Boerasirie" in the explanatory notes to the summary of the Development Programme. The International Bank has recommended the completion of this project at an estimated total cost of \$7.6 million during a period of construction of 6 years. It is \$7,600,000. Someone got up and said it was \$6 million,

[Mr. Speaker]

Is that what the hon. Member wanted to say?

Sir Frank McDavid : It was, Sir. I am not going to be drawn into discussion on the Boerasirie Scheme.

Mr. Rahaman : I beg to support the motion moved by the Hon. the Member for Agriculture. The last speaker said he had faith in the Regional Development Committees I have none. I have had many complaints about the members on the Committees on the Corentyne. There are two Committees on the Corentyne and there is dissatisfaction with the selection of its members because they have no experience to sit on them. Those Committees are to advise Government, but they have not got persons with the experience to do so.

The hon. Member, Mr. Lee was justified in saying what he said about the Boerasirie project. I do not know if he is aware that work is finished in certain areas and they have been put under drainage and irrigation areas. He is pressing for compulsory acquisition, but if payment of rates is not forthcoming, the rates can be collected: the lands can take care of themselves.

Now, one hon. Member said he anticipated a drop in the price of rice, but I would like with your permission, Sir, to read a passage from the International Bank Report at page 147:

"The outlook for world rice production to reach demand is not too bright, since world consumption is steadily expanding. Furthermore, the measures taken by the Rice Marketing Board and the British Guiana Rice Development Corporation are expected to result in a better average quality in the future.

Well, from that report I do not think we need have any fear because the demand is more than the supply at the moment.

Sir Frank McDavid: The speaker had said quite definitely he begged to differ from that.

Mr. Rahaman : Rice-growers are in great fear of being swamped with Burma rice in the Caribbean. But I would say I do not think the Governments of the Caribbean would show us ingratitude in that respect, because during the last war the rice growers of this country by their sweat and energy in the rice fields supplied rice to the Caribbean when the islands could not get rice to eat. The only people who have not got money out of rice are these rice-growers.

Mr. Raatgever : That is wishful thinking.

Mr. Rahaman : The hon. Member said that more flour than rice was being eaten in this Colony. I say no, because between 50,000 and 60,000 half bags of flour are being consumed as against 30,000 tons of rice.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Mr. Raatgever was pointing out the increase in potential of flour. He did not say that the people were eating more flour.

Mr. Raatgever : Thank you, Sir. That is what I said. The importation of flour has increased from 20,000 to 50,000 half bags.

Mr. Rahaman: The hon. Mr. Jaïal said that the people were increasing their cultivation of rice and not doing anything about cattle. It is so at the moment because there is no pasturage for cattle. People cannot eat rice alone; they must eat meat. Government should do something about cattle, and I hope provision will be made in this programme for the development of the cattle industry.

Dealing with the Development Programme I would like to remind the hon.

the Financial Secretary to provide sufficient money for miscellaneous or unforeseen works. I do not think this programme can be handled in the same manner as an ordinary recurrent budget.

He is an expert, but I am just throwing out a suggestion to him.

I have been stormed on the Corentyne for information about the Credit Corporation. I hope the Chairman of the Corporation will be able to make some early announcement. In the discussions in Finance Committee I propose to deal with several matters.

Mr. Speaker: As Speaker I am not supposed to enter into a debate, but before my recollection becomes dimmer than it is I would like to relate a personal experience which was also shared by the late Mr. E. M. Walcott, and Mr. A. E. V. Barton, then Comptroller of Customs. The three of us went as delegates to Canada in 1925 along with other delegates from Trinidad and Jamaica. The Trinidad delegates were Mr. Huggins and the then Collector of Customs, Mr. Walcott. There was a conference at which it was agreed to support the claim for an increase subsidy being given by Canada for Trinidad cocoa and Jamaica bananas, if Trinidad in turn would support a preference for British Guiana rice entering Trinidad. This Colony's rice industry was then in its infancy. On their return to Trinidad Mr. Huggins and the Collector of Customs honourably supported British Guiana's claim for a preference for rice, but as an example of the vagaries of politicians the Finance Committee of Trinidad failed to carry out the undertaking given by their delegates to support the preference for British Guiana rice, although Trinidad got its increased subsidy for cocoa and Jamaica got its increased subsidy for bananas. I have made an absolutely truthful statement, which shows that one can never tell what a Legislature will do.

Miss Collins : I wish to congratulate the hon. Member for Agriculture, Forests, and Lands and Mines on the able manner in which he presented the Development Programme, but I regret to find that no provision has been made to provide employment for the women of the Colony. I would like to see the establishment of new industries and factories in which our young women between the ages of 18 and 40 may find employment. I agree with the hon. Mr. Raatgever when he said that there is need for new industries. I am not against the expansion of the rice industry but I am worried about the future of our women who are faced with great hardship and temptation. I am not going into the details of the Development Programme but I respectfully submit that something should be done in the near future to relieve the large percentage of unemployment among women.

Mr. Carter : Rising to add my small quota to the debate on this motion I just want to do so for the purpose of trying to bring the debate to a close. I believe more can be done at another stage. It is a simple motion as far as I see, regardless of the magnitude of its call on the Council—to approve in principle of the expanded and accelerated development programme for the years 1954 and 1955 and of the financial arrangements for its implementation. There are quite a number of things, in my opinion, that may be wrong *in toto*, and at this stage one can very well say what is wrong and what is right.

Mr. Speaker : It might be useful if you do.

Sir Frank McDavid : I think if the hon. Member does indeed feel that a major aspect of this Development Programme is wrong, he may well indicate it. There will be a time when each detailed scheme will come before Finance

[Sir Frank McDavid]
Committee and ultimately before this Council. There will be many opportunities to criticize any particular scheme, and Members may throw it out and press for another scheme. But this is the time when the hon. Member, or any other Member who is not in agreement with some major aspect of this Programme, should say so.

Mr. Carter : There are a few things, in my opinion, which are wrong. It is known that I represent Upper Demerara and that I tabled a motion in the late House of Assembly relative to the construction of a road from Atkinson Field to Mackenzie. I see no provision made in the Estimates for it, though I see that \$1½ million is allocated to the re-construction and repair of the East Bank road. I do not consider that repairs are a form of development. The repairs to that or any other road should be normal maintenance provided for by the annual Budget.

Sir Frank McDavid: May I intervene for a moment to say that is not usual at all. In the Estimates Item 50 calls for expenditure on the extension of riverain roads, and there is a note which specifically speaks of improving the Islington to Mara road on the East Bank of the Berbice River and the construction of approximately two miles of road from Maripa to the Bonasika River and Road. When that item is being discussed in Finance Committee, if the hon. Member feels the work should advance along the Demerara River, he must press very hard for it. In point of fact he does not disagree with the expansion of riverain roads. There is nothing wrong with the Plan, but it is the details he is talking about.

Mr. Carter: I see no mention made of the Demerara River in Item 50. I can remember that some time about 1924 this country had a most wonderful

opportunity offered by Mr. Henry Ford to construct a road from British Guiana to Brazil, and as late as the last World War a similar but modified offer was made to the Government relative to the construction of a road from Georgetown to Atkinson Field.

Sir Frank McDavid : Would the hon. Member develop that? I have heard of this story about a road to be constructed by the U.S.A. Authorities from Georgetown to Atkinson Field and that the offer was not accepted. I was a Member of the Government and knew of no definite offer having been made for the construction of a road from Georgetown to Atkinson Field.

Mr. Carter : Nevertheless, Your Honour, those offers were not accepted on very flimsy excuses in my opinion. It was a matter of where there is no vision the people perish. Since I tabled my motion in the late House of Assembly I have got the assurance from the Management of the Demerara Bauxite Company relative to what assistance they are prepared to give Government in the construction of that road. Apart from what it would mean to the Colony, it would mean a lot to that Company situated as they would be at the southern end of that road. I have got the Management of that Company to agree, and they are prepared to assist this Government to the extent of hundreds of thousands of dollars in the loan of all available heavy road-building equipment in the construction of that road. When the time comes for me to speak on that, I shall earnestly implore the hon. the Financial Secretary not to lose that opportunity.

Mr. Farnum: May I at this point draw attention to what the World Bank Mission has said in respect of that particular road? It will be found at page 61,

Mr. Speaker: There is reference to it at page 61. I see the hon. Member had made a motion on the subject but it is not included in these funds to be approved of.

Mr. Carter: This Council is asked to approve in principle of the expanded and accelerated development programme which calls for an expenditure of \$44 million over two years. That, I feel, is a superhuman job. Before we should approve of these schemes *in toto*, I should advise Members to have before them the details of every scheme. Too much has been left undone in British Guiana for us at this late hour to buy a pig in the bag, as it were. Much may be expected to be accomplished by the Interim Government, and if we make it while the sun shines, which was not the motto of the past Government, I will try to see why the Interim Government should not use that as its motto. I think our motto should be, as the hon. Mr. Watgever has said, take time and go slowly.

Sir Frank McDavid : Take time and go slowly, not quickly.

Mr. Carter : His Excellency said to this same Chamber that he would like every dollar of this money to be profitably spent. I would like to support him 100 per cent. But to do so, I feel that committees should be appointed from among Members of this Council and they should be given the right to enquire and investigate into the administration or supervision of every one of these schemes and report back to this Council at least once every three months, because we know that much money is thrown away in or by certain Departments of Government. We have in the past suffered from graft, collusion and waste in respect of time and of materials, the property of the inhabitants of this country, and it is time that a stop be put to that form of administration

and supervision from Government Departments: If we are to give assent to this Programme and approve of the expenditure on the Plan, I think, very heavy responsibility rests upon the shoulders of the Members of this Interim Government, and for that matter I feel that we should take time and go into every minute detail of these schemes before we undertake to commit ourselves.

As I said before, we are wasting time; the longer we take in debating this motion at this stage, and I feel that we can do more if we go into Finance Committee. I do not know how far the hon. the Financial Secretary has gone in preparing the details of the various schemes, but I think that by now quite a number of these schemes should be ready for presentation, as he had a copy of this Programme in his hands since the 18th of February. Not only are we in this Council anxious to get these schemes working but the people outside also, because we have a very great number of unemployed on our hands. We regret that these schemes cannot give quicker relief to some of the distress and poverty, and so I move that the question be now put.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to point out at once that that particular form of question is allowed by custom and the Standing Rules in parliamentary practice for the Speaker to put at once, but I will not be able to do so on this occasion. I am not necessarily persuaded to make that decision having regard to the composition of this Council, but I would be wrong if I put such a motion now before the hon. Mover has had an opportunity to reply to the debate. I am prepared to take the responsibility for not putting the question. I am not going to allow proceedings of such importance to be interrupted by a motion of that sort.

Mr. Carter: By calling on you, Mr. Speaker, to put the motion, I was really pressing for the hon. Mover to reply and close the debate.

Sir Frank McDavid: I do not propose to reply until every Member has had an opportunity to speak.

Mr. Speaker: I think we should adjourn now until tomorrow afternoon at 2 o'clock.

The Financial Secretary: Before we adjourn I would like to state that we will not have a meeting of the Finance Committee tomorrow but on Thursday week, so it is possible for the Council to carry on the debate tomorrow.

The Council adjourned to the following day at 2 p.m.