

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

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

THURSDAY, 3RD FEBRUARY, 1955

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. F. D. Jakeway, O.B.E. (acting).

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

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

Nominated Members of Executive Council :—

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

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

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

The Hon. G. H. Smellie.

The Hon. R. 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, Q.C.

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

Mr. C. A. Carter.

Rev. D. C. J. Bobb.

Mr. H. Rahaman.

Miss Gertie H. Collins.

Mrs. Esther E. Dey.

Dr. H. A. Fraser.

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

Mr. R. B. Jailal.

Clerk of the Legislature—

Mr. I. Crum Ewing.

Assistant Clerk of the Legislature—

Mr. E. V. Viapree (acting).

Absent:—

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

The Hon. R. B. Gajraj—on leave.

Mr. E. F. Correia.—on leave.

Mr. Sugrim Singh—on leave.

The Speaker read prayers.

MINUTES AMENDED

Mr. Speaker: I would ask Members to look at the Minutes of the last meeting in relation to one paragraph under the heading "Announcements." As printed it reads:

"The Speaker, on behalf of the Council, congratulated the Attorney General—Honourable F. W. Holder, Q.C., on the honour of a Companion of the Most Distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George conferred on him by Her Majesty the Queen."

I suggest that the paragraph should be amended to read:

"The Speaker, on behalf of the Council, congratulated the Attorney General—Honourable F. W. Holder, Q.C., on the honour conferred on him by Her Majesty the Queen to be a Companion of the Most Distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George."

The motion is that the Minutes, as amended, be confirmed.

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Thursday, 27th January, 1955, as amended, were confirmed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

LEAVE TO MEMBERS

Mr. Speaker : I have to announce that Mr. Sugrim Singh has asked to be excused from attendance at this meeting. The hon. Member for Labour, Health and Housing (Mr. P. A. Cummings) has been granted leave from the 29th of January to the 13th of February. The hon. Mr. Gajraj has also been granted leave from the 29th of January to the 8th of February.

REPORTS AND DOCUMENTS

The Financial Secretary (Mr. W. O. Fraser) laid on the table:

Minutes of meetings of Finance Committee held on the 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th. and

17th January, 1955, considering the 1955 Draft Estimates of Expenditure.

Sir Frank McDavid (Member for Agriculture, Forests, Lands and Mines) laid on the table:

Statement of Accounts of the Drainage and Irrigation Board for the year 1953 together with the Director of Audit's certificate and report thereon.

ORDER OF THE DAY

B. G. CREDIT CORPORATION
(AMENDMENT) BILL

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

"An Ordinance to amend the British Guiana Credit Corporation Ordinance, 1954."

Sir Frank McDavid seconded.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

PUBLIC HEALTH (AMENDMENT) BILL

The Attorney General: On behalf of the Member for Labour, Health and Housing (Mr. Cummings) I beg to move the first reading of a Bill intituled:

"An Ordinance further to amend the Public Health Ordinance, 1934."

The Financial Secretary seconded.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

ANTIBIOTICS (AMENDMENT)
BILL

The Attorney General: Again on behalf of the Member for Labour, Health and Housing (Mr. Cummings) I

beg to move the first reading of a Bill intituled:

"An Ordinance to amend the Antibiotics Ordinance, 1951."

The Financial Secretary seconded.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

ADOPTION OF CHILDREN BILL

Mr. Farnum (Member for Local Government, Social Welfare and Co-operative Development): I beg to move the first reading of a Bill intituled:

"An Ordinance to make provision for the adoption of children."

Mr. Tello seconded.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

BUDGET DEBATE

APPROPRIATION BILL 1955

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

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

Mr. Speaker: The position is, the second reading of the Bill has been moved and seconded. If no other hon. Member wishes to speak, I shall have to put the motion for the second reading.

Mr. Jailal: Mr. Speaker, I would like to comment on several phases in respect of this Bill, and in the first place I would like to say that my remarks are not directed towards the hon. the Financial Secretary. My comments will be for the most part constructive. I want to feel that in commenting on the

various Heads I should not be mistaken as trying to make it difficult for Government. I would try to bring out pertinent points that should be reckoned with in the general scheme of things. I feel, Sir, that in order for a country to go forward, in order for us to remove doubts, in order for us to progress, we should commence to cultivate what seems to be a lack in this country — a deep sense of honesty. We need that in British Guiana, and I say so without any doubt. We have lost in the course of time men of integrity, men of stature. It is time that the whole country look upon goings-on here and try to build out of the ashes and ruins of the past a better country for ourselves and our children. I fear for the future of this country, because of what seems to me a lack of truth, a lack of honesty, a lack of confidence. This is probably the most reasonable time to bring before Government the feelings of the people, because whenever you are going to plan expenditure it must carry with it a certain amount of comment and criticism. It is a life-blood of the Colony and the people, therefore, are inseparably wrapped up with any Budget.

In the Budget Statement there were two pertinent points. One was the increasing of the duties on certain items of liquor, which I wish to commend openly. The other is the proposal, which has not been fully implemented but is being studied, for the removal of duty-free gasoline. This latter I cannot commend and I wish to say so openly, because it aims a direct blow at the life-blood of two of our major industries of this country. In the case of timber, if we were to place a duty on gasoline and we were to do this now, I visualise a death knell in that industry. I have had very close contact with the very large producers in the industry, and I have had extremely close contact with the small pro-

[Mr. Jailal]

ducers, and I wish to warn Government that of the two or three things that British Guiana can provide to make a livelihood a success here the timber industry is worthy of consideration, because from time to time in the past we have been continually fooling ourselves that we live in a magnificent country. I have begun to believe that we live in a country where we have to pitted ourselves against Nature and come out the stronger. And when we have an enemy to fight against, we have to fight with every bit of strength and to dig in with all the claws we have.

That we have been successful in recent years has only been due to the machine age. I want to tell you about the thousands of cubic feet of timber hewn down 20 years ago which are rotting in the Berbice River area because we cannot approach them with machinery. I want to tell you of the thousands of cubic feet of greenheart logs lying down in the Cuyuni and the upper reaches of the Mazaruni, because we cannot get them out with machinery. Hon. Members around this table, who know the timber business, would know that wherever it is possible the "sprinters" are the people who have been able to go out farther and farther afield as much as their limited opportunities for travel and for providing themselves with food and chattel have permitted. We have got to look at these things from the point of view that, while it is true and while I would want to admit that there are some few who have been Shylocks, yet there are those who have also meted out more than their fair share in order that British Guiana should produce greenheart and bring the wood out of the forest for sale to other countries. It is one of our economies,

The case of those who are "sprinters" is simple. The "sprinters" are ordinary people who would be a menace to the Colony if there is no timber to work at. They are that particular type of people who cannot find employment in Georgetown, who cannot find a place on the sugar estates, and who would never work at rice. I submit that those people are well employed if they continue to be the foresters they are, if they continue to bring timber down our dangerous rivers. But let us examine their case closer. These men can ill afford to provide themselves with boats, and they must have boats to reach the backlands of our country. It is quite easy to sit in an office and plan for them, but this is a case where one has to go out and see the ills these people suffer and find out what are their heartbreaks. They have to find boats which cost on an average \$300.00. If the boat is to be propelled by diesel power, it would cost \$3,000.00 to put in the motor. He may get a reconditioned gasoline engine — something that has become a part of us now and which a kid can operate—to take his boat across the falls. He may be endangering the lives of perhaps five to ten persons in his boat when his engine fails. I have been in the face of the falls, and I know the terror that strikes the hearts of the men in the boats when the engine fails while negotiating the falls. Believe me, if it is known the stark terror of the fear of death in those cases, it would be appreciated that until we are able to master the diesel engine, we cannot remove the gasoline engine entirely from the picture.

These sprinters have been able through dint of hard labour to acquire these small machines (as I said, sometimes merely taken out of automobiles that have been found in the dumps) and they work them on the rivers. But that is

as far as their capital can reach. They have had, therefore, to turn to the other man for help and aid. The other man has to provide means for sustenance for the sprinters family who, most likely, live hundreds of miles away. Until the Credit Corporation came, Banks never saw these men. It is harsh but true, that if a man did not have substantial property there was no opportunity for him. There is a little gleam of hope for him now, but even now he has got to have a property for a pledge, for it is still very difficult for him to get loans in order to be able to proceed to make a living. If we take away from these men the opportunity to obtain duty-free gasolene, I am saying that the livelihood of these men will be eventually cut off, our forest production will fall, and we will leave a section of our community to either beg their way through life, or to take on a criminal role—I would suggest that Government does not hold out this promise. If we turn, on the other hand, to the bigger men—men who have been able to raise enough money and to get trucks and so forth, and generally, to be better equipped—we will find upon close examination that these men are heavily indebted, and to remove something that has caused them to make these commitments would be iniquitous, and, as I said, would be robbing this country of another type of producer.

In turning to my 'pet', rice—I would like to say clearly that if we were to raise the duty on gasolene by two cents, we would still interfere with the production by our people. I have been at it only two years, but I have had a hand at urging the purchase, personally, of 254 gasolene-type tractors. These tractors were bought by men who could barely sell their cows in order to lay the deposits with the firms. They are people who are now cultivating land as small as ten acres, with the help of a

British machine—of a smaller type and this machine would be able to plough five or six acres per day, while animals would be able to plough only a quarter of an acre. Therefore, it would seem reasonable for men to turn to machines. As a matter of fact I doubt that if we withdrew machines today, we would find labour to plant the acres we now have placed under rice cultivation. I ask the question, is it that this is the first inroad towards breaking rice in favour of cattle? Rice producers feel that they cannot easily pay duty on gasolene for some time to come, because they are still at a stage where they owe on their machines, and the general public knows that, because I made an appeal to the firms in Water Street—those to whom this industry is indebted. We have suffered from floods not only last year, but the year before. Government knows that, because Government itself is unable to collect money which was lent them to plant padi.

How are we going to pay this? We are hoping that in process of time, if 1955 brings fair weather conditions, we will be able to meet some small moiety, but it doesn't augur well, for the rain is still falling. We are faced with hardships and I feel Government would be utterly ill-advised to adopt this measure of taxation. I feel the person who recommended the removal of the concession in his Report has been so ill-advised on the subject that I would want to say that this part of his Report should not be accepted at all.

British Guiana is not like Britain. British Guiana is not like South Africa. While machines can give 100 per cent in Britain for their horsepower rating, they fail to give 90 per cent. here. The reason? Tractors are put on land they are not designed for out type of terrain. I had placed an 85 horsepower machine on good, hard soil at 4 p.m. one afternoon. The rain fell for three hours, and next morning at 7

[Mr. Jailal]

o'clock we were unable to work the machine on the land. This happened no later than last week. If we had placed this new machine to work most likely it would have been completely ruined. Our soil becomes a conglomerated stuff—something that ruins the crank-shafts and the pistons. I have seen machines go on the land and before they have done two acres of work they have cost the owners as much as \$1,500. These are the conditions which exist in our country.

I feel that if Government finds itself needing more money to proceed with its normal business, then this is not the industry it should attack, or at least this is not the side of industry it should attack—I suggest it should attack the profit side. I know, and I believe others around this table will back me up, that if taxation were pressed on rice machinery, then combining of rice would be something we would have written off as history. It would be something of the past because we cannot put gas oil to run combines. Where we have labour, the cost is too high, and if we charge more money than we are charging now, it would be impossible to put these machines to work, and Government would have succeeded in breaking several hundred people and taking them back where their forefathers were over 80 to 100 years ago. If that is the ambition and the hope of Government, then Government can proceed. But I trust that this Government would not proceed with measures that would ultimately spell ruin for those who would make progress. To my mind, foreign companies aside, there are no local industries which have put British Guiana on a more sound footing than timber and rice, and it would be ungrateful, it would be unsound, it

would be most untimely to attempt that now since—I would say—the turning point has come.

The day has come when it would seem that what “Art” Williams talked about when he said ‘busting British Guiana wide open’ is just around the corner, and to press the new policy would be to kill the ‘goose that can lay the golden eggs’. I feel Government would be well advised, instead of trying and seeking to do its utmost to wring the life blood from the people to plan a Budget and with a programme that would give more satisfaction and spread more contentment among our people. Certain members around this table have seen and know of mass meetings in places like the Corentyne where people say “Last year, I had only three acres, and I get only 20 bags of padi from an acre.” There may be those who plant rice and live in the best homes and put money in the banks, because they were fortunate enough to earn large sums of money from rice; but there are still those to whom planting rice is merely a means by which they live, and if there was something else to which they could turn, they would have done so long ago.

If we are to place a duty on gasoline with its consequent effect on rice machines, I would have to cry out because I know rice. It is an industry which my forefathers and those of many others around this table have helped to a stage where it has become an economy and something on which this country can depend, and which, as I said last year in my remarks on the Budget, has ‘walked hand in hand with sugar.’ I feel—and I feel very strongly—we must not kill the rice industry. It is something which we must protect in every fashion and in every phase.

We should try to find every possible means of assisting the rice industry because it provides a livelihood for no fewer than 85,000 people, leaving alone their children. To my mind, it is wrong and anti-British to fail to bring a prosecution against the industry, so to speak, and yet find the prisoner guilty. It has been stated that duty-free gasoline is being abused, but I want to state that it is our system of inspection and policing that is wrong. We should not let the innocent pay for the guilty, and if a few persons have abused their privileges with respect to duty-free gasoline it would be wrong to penalise the majority for it. I think Government should be ashamed to admit failure in that respect, and I want to say that whether the system failed in the U.S.A., in England or in Kenya, we must remember that British Guiana's economy is not based on similar lines to that of those countries. We cannot say that we are in a position to accommodate 1,000 Jamaicans in this Colony, but England or Africa can do that.

I feel that if the privileges relating to duty-free gasoline were being abused, Government should have prosecuted at least one man, and should have taken their pound of flesh from him. I venture to say that if even one rice producer was fined \$200 for such an offence all the others would have taken warning. I would like to say, however, that the belief that people are filtering this gasoline and using it again is wrong. In order to do so they would have to use filtering cans, and I refuse to believe that a man would filter four gallons of gasoline in order to be able to travel from the Corentyne to Georgetown by car. If any such thing was being done, I think Government could have traced it by means of close inspections on the people who used duty-free gasoline. These inspections could have

been carried out by the Agricultural Officers in the various districts. I do not think there would be any collusion between these officers and the rice farmers.

I want to suggest to the Council, therefore, that the picture presented to Government in this respect is not a true one. We have to remember that in 1953 and 1954 rice lands had to be worked at least three times each year, and Government could not expect the gasoline that was sufficient for dry weather conditions previously, would also be sufficient for wet weather conditions. I can say that whereas Case trucks might be able to work 15 acres of land a day with a certain amount of gasoline in dry weather, they would only be able to do a few rods a day in very wet weather. One sees, therefore, that there was, very probably, misrepresentation to Government in this question of the use of duty-free gasoline. I think Government should be forewarned that they should not put any pressure on industries that are now growing up in the Colony, as that would serve to hinder our Development Programme. The \$44 million which we expect to spend on this Programme is something that we have to nurture and use to the best possible advantage.

We have few gold mines in British Guiana, and I cannot see that columbite and such other minerals would become an economy, such as rice, in the near future. If our sugar market fails the burden of this country would rest on rice apart from bauxite. I must warn this Council, this Government and the people in general, that sugar might fail and rice might also fail in the future. I think it is our duty to protect the rice industry—to cover it with a blanket as it were—so that it would not be hurt. If we permit the industry to get damaged we ought to be charged

[Mr. Jailal]

with attempted suicide. As a matter of fact, if Government entertains the proposals for the introduction of a tax on gasoline used for industrial purposes, I feel that it would be striking a death blow on the rice industry.

At the outset I want to say that the Estimates, as a piece of mathematical work, represent a wonderfully good job and something which shows skill and knowledge. I cannot commend the Estimates, however, as something worth while in terms of development and in terms of making a bigger and better British Guiana because, to my mind, they lack imagination, truth and confidence. This imagination is not something that comes to a man who was in a cloister all of his days. My father used to say that a caged bird cannot know winter winds, and now that I have become ripe in age I know what he means.

I feel that I should comment on the various heads in the Estimates, one after the other, and try to show where some imagination could have been used. I wish to reiterate, however, that this is in no way a personal attack on the author of the Estimates. I think it should be realised that the author is only a servant, and that he has to do what his masters say. Therefore, nothing that I would say is intended to reflect upon him in any way.

Under the head "Agriculture" I want to say now, as I said in Finance Committee, that I would urge Government to make sure that every facility, travelling or otherwise, should be given to the officers of the Department of Agriculture. I do not refer to the officers at the top; I mean the fellows who are doing the job down below: the officers in the districts who are doing the field work. They must be given

every facility to enable them to do their work well. If we expect them to ride bicycles 26 miles at a time we are not going to get the job done. I know that no man without pretensions to possessing the endurance of a mule can ride 26 miles on a bicycle and do a job well. Those bicycles should be abandoned and the officers concerned provided with adequate means of transportation. They should be given motor cycles, and in cases where their salaries warrant it, they should be provided with motor cars. Make them comfortable and then demand good work from them. If such travelling facilities were provided for those officers I should be very happy.

I have complained about the insufficiency of agricultural officers on the Essequibo islands and of the inadequate travelling facilities. I think that another officer should be posted to that district and should be stationed in Wakenaam.

With regard to the new Rice Experiment Station I would urge Government to adopt a programme of promotion. Within the last few years I have had close contact with rice in an executive capacity and consequently very close contact with the Experiment Station, and I feel that there has been a complete lack of imagination in regard to that Station. I challenge anyone to tell me that there have been at any time 25 persons to see the experiment at the back of the Botanic Gardens, except they went in an official capacity.

Sir Frank McDavid (Member for Agriculture, Forests, Lands and Mines): I do hope that the hon. Member in his speech, which up to now I have really enjoyed, will confine himself to the wider issues of policy arising out of the Budget, touching shall I say briefly, departmental matters, otherwise it would be extremely difficult for me to

reply to his points. I would suggest to him that the remarks which he is about to make might well be made under the particular head when we are in Committee on the Estimates; otherwise he will agree that it would be very difficult for any comprehensive reply to be given. I do hope the hon. Member will continue along the line on which he began, which has been extremely valuable.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member is discussing policy. I do not know what he is about to say now as regards a lack of imagination in the experiment at the Gardens. At the moment I cannot stop him.

Sir Frank McDavid: I am not suggesting that he should be stopped. I am only suggesting that for his own sake, and for mine, he should confine his remarks to matters of policy, as I would like to reply to some of his points.

Mr. Speaker : You can make notes. For the present I cannot interrupt the hon. Member.

Mr. Jailal: My approach may be roundabout, but that is my method. I am sorry, but I am trying to develop the point; I am trying to say what I think about the new Rice Experiment Station which is to be built on the East Coast, and how I feel it should be run. If our representations are not accepted several thousands of dollars will be mis-spent. I was making the point that in the past sufficient publicity — and by that I do not mean G.I.S. publicity, but that Agricultural officers in the country have failed to urge people to come to Georgetown to see the experiments which were being carried out. I have talked with 85,000 people and I cannot say that 15 persons have gone to see how 52/37 rice was bred, and how long it took to do it.

Nobody knows. All they know is that it is a short grain padi. I feel that this programme, for which we are voting money, should be well publicised, otherwise we would be spending money on an Experiment Station which would not serve its purpose. I feel that extension courses should be developed. The Department of Agriculture is doing a good job in our schools, and as a country with an agricultural destiny we should urge that those courses be taken.

There is some lack of vision with respect to the Essequibo Coast. A large acreage is under rice cultivation but a fairly large portion of the coast is still under bush. There are large tracts of lands but the people are suffering through a lack of pasturage. I see no provision in the Estimates for pasturage, and I would urge that Government should provide a large pasture on the Essequibo Coast. All the privately owned lands are under rice cultivation, and their owners are not going to convert them into pastures. If we are to build farm life on that coast it is necessary to establish a second front. Milk could very well provide a second front, and for that purpose it is necessary to provide adequate pasturage in that area. Money is being lent for the building of houses all over the Colony while there is need for a large pasture on the Essequibo Coast—not one of 50 acres but one large enough to accommodate all the cattle on the Coast.

I see nothing on the Estimates that would be helpful to the people in the Pomeroun—absolutely nothing. Some thought should be given to the development of another economy there. The Pomeroun is actually a flood basin, and I feel that since attempts at the cultivation of rice in that area have been very successful Government should encourage and foster the development

[Mr. Jailal]

of rice growing in that district. Last year there was some extension of rice cultivation there, and the people are making use of their back lands, but in the absence of a Government programme, and through the lack of funds and an officer who is keenly interested in that phase of activity I feel that the development of rice cultivation in that area will not be as rapid as it should be. We have huge stretches of waste lands in the area and, if Government were to assist to drain these lands, quite a large number of acres more would come under production and help the economy of that particular county.

I want to tell Government, it must be well aware that we still have discontent and ill-feeling existing among the people. If we do not help them, if we do not give them the means by which they can prosecute a normal living, then we are always going to have trouble, always have political upsets, and there will be general dissatisfaction for many years to come. There is provided in these Estimates a sum for a Milk Pasteurisation project, which is extremely commendable. It is something that is done in all modern countries. But where are we going to get the milk? That is the question. It is my turn to suggest once more. I may be termed as "living in the skies", but only this morning I saw in the newspaper where people are going to come down here to find out where we can use helicopter planes. In the Block III area we have large pastures, and the Corentyne should once again produce milk. But our main sources of supply of milk are our three creek areas. There is very little milk coming from Leguan and hardly any from West Demerara. The point of supply lies between the Abary and Georgetown.

We have not had criticism on the milk situation because maybe we were not looking in that direction; maybe we had so much that we were tired of it, and we around this table have not been looking at it critically because we know we are voting something to put down a plant and the milk is something that can be easily got. Let me say that this has been a bother to me, because our people are not getting enough milk. We have had to accept the charity of a foreign country. I am ashamed of such a thing because I do not like charity. If we do not embark upon a programme that will give us our own sustenance, then this pasteurisation plant may also be a "white elephant", since the Creek areas are our source of milk supply, about 40 miles from here over rugged roads. People who have been dealing with milk will tell you that milk cannot stand rough treatment; it cannot stand the churning which conveyance in the trucks gives, and consequently we are still losing more of the milk that we should normally get. We have to pay for the launches to bring the milk down to the creek mouth, and then pay for trucks to convey the milk into Georgetown. I feel we are paying too much, and consequently the consumer has to pay more money for his milk than he normally should. I want to suggest that instead of buying launches and paying trucks to transport our milk supply, Government should plan ahead for the transportation from the point of view that the present method is not adequate.

I feel that helicopter planes should be introduced to fetch our milk in from the country areas. I see some hon. Members shaking their heads, but I know it is quite possible. If we can fetch people by plane, we can fetch milk by plane. I have seen in Trinidad planes spraying the canefields with a liquid stuff. If they can do that, cer-

tainly they can fetch milk. One plane can bring all the milk from the creek areas into Georgetown, another plane all the milk from the Corentyne and even from places as far away as Morawhanna. We can even bring milk from the Rupununi to Georgetown.

Is it that we are going to stick to ideas that are familiar for the purpose of progressive establishment of industries in this Colony? I feel that these are things that require planning for the future. I feel that this is something that should be given very serious thought. We are bringing beef from the Rupununi, and there is no reason why we cannot get the milk too. Why should we not get planes to do it? If the one Company that has a monopoly cannot do it, what is the reason for not getting another company to do it, or Government running its own plane service? Those are questions that worry my mind. I think that if we were to look into it, there would be found much more than could be seen on the surface. It would serve as an encouragement to the people on the Corentyne who do not want to rear cows, since after they have produced enough milk for New Amsterdam there is no where else to sell the surplus of milk. They feel that it is no use to turn all the lands into cattle pastures because they are not going to make money out of it and, therefore, they turn to rice. I cannot blame them for so doing. Cattle-rearing is not an economy to them. I urge that Government give very serious thought to such a type of development.

Speaking about pastures, I want to refer to it, although it comes under another Head, as I am talking about cattle. In Block III, Corentyne, Government is pressing the frittering away of thousands of dollars. If they were to

follow the original recommendation and carry out the pasture at the point now planned to carry it out, Government would be well advised that they would be throwing money down the drain. There is an area behind the Whittaker Line where there are sand reefs where cattle can thrive. There is no reason why those lands should be left not beneficially occupied. In years gone by the people used those lands. The cattle barons on the Corentyne were using those lands for pasturing cattle and, therefore, it is felt that they would be better lands for the purpose than the one Government now plan to use. Besides this, there is another piece of land in Block III where there are thousands of people living. As time goes by, year after year they are having to provide more land for their use. Many hon. Members around this table have gone out there with me and have heard the appeal of the people for more lands.

I do not want to preclude cattle from the area. I feel that if these lands which are natural rice lands were given to these people and the pastures retired beyond the Whittaker Line, Government would be doing its best in the interest of the people, because that is the only piece of land left. I urge that serious consideration be given to this. Private property is not adequate to supply the needs of these people, and so I feel that I should deal with this item when dealing with pastures. I am told that so great is the clamouring that several meetings have been held on the Corentyne and petitions have been already sent to the Government in the matter. I feel that if it should continue the people are not going to be able to make a living. There is going to be continued frustration and we would not be one inch farther away for all the monies spent in the Block III area, because we have only provided a living

[Mr. Jailal]

for a limited few and not enough for the rest. I want to say that in this Block III area Sir Gordon Lethem had told the residents that he would bring water to the road. There are people that can verify that, but there is no record and, therefore, Government has not or will not accede to what was told them by the then Governor. Government does not accept the unrecorded statements. Sir, this is a sad case, because it is similar to what has happened in the case of the Rice Development Company and the private proprietors in that area,— a series of broken promises. I remember now one of the remarks a certain man made to me. He said, "In this country if you do not have it on paper you do not have it at all."

But when people like Governors and when people like the gentry of the country go out and tell the poor farmers, "If we pass this canal here you are going to get right of way: I am going to see to it; Government or Parliament or whosoever, we'll do it," and then about three years after some committee says, "Where is that promise in writing?" and the poor people do not have it then they have to be called liars, and told that the promise never was made. Those things hurt. The case has come before me, and although I was not present when the pledges were being made I believe that the Governor did say he would bring water to the road. Corentyne has had much to quarrel about and the people were right when they took the stand they took. They are people who have not been given the things they had been promised. We are charging them drainage rates for every square inch of land they own, but there is no water supply. The people cannot plant their gardens — and there is an economy in gardening. Why should we prohibit them? I am told the reason is

that the pumps would not give sufficient water. Let us then have the pumps working 24 hours — or pump water into the trenches and fill them whenever the water is not available. I know that whenever Government talks about the Canje being salt, people from the Corentyne do not believe, because they ask, "What is the use of Torani?" I do not see why we should charge people rates and yet do not provide the means for them. It is a wrong policy, and as long as we have wrong policy, we are going to have trouble in this country. Land in this area can be developed by introducing gardening, coconut planting, and, generally speaking, we can improve the livelihood of the people in this area. It behoves us to see to it that this wrong is righted.

Under the Head, 'Fisheries', I want to congratulate the Department for its vision in this particular sphere. I feel it has taken a step forward. I feel that there are plans extending a long way off that will be to the general welfare and interest of the people of this Colony, with a few modifications. Our sea foods, for Georgetown at least, if not for the other areas, should be well-supplied, and therefore, I am not going to raise any strong objection because I am satisfied it is a good plan.

But, as I said, I reserve the view that there should be few modifications and I am willing to accept that if we cannot do certain things this year, we can do it next year. But I would like to say to the Department of Agriculture that every facility, every effort should be strained to allow the inland Fisheries Officer to build up fish farming. From the literature I have read, and from the wee practice of it that I have seen, I feel that in a land where we do not have enough work to go around for everybody, we can build up some industry like this to provide a means of living for some of the people, and fish farming should be encour-

aged. The attempts being made now are good, but they need acceleration. We are fortunate to have an officer who is one of our own, and, from what I am told, he is very well qualified. We have got to see that we get every bit of his qualifications to work. This Colony needs all the qualified men, and we cannot afford to waste them, or we would be going further downwards every year.

Now, I charged that there is a lack of vision and a lack of planning. When I was a little boy — my father was a civil servant — I raised chickens, and I believe that everybody here, at some time or other, has had an opportunity to raise chickens. In this country it has come to a state where we have to import chickens in order to allow the people of this country to eat poultry meat at a reasonable cost. Sad. Very sad. I commend the Financial Secretary on his first move by way of a committee to have the matter gone into, but I do not see, except what I read in the newspapers this morning, that Government can do anything to give a 'holiday' from duty on poultry feed, or, if necessary, to see to that. Rather, we should commence to see to it that we make our own poultry feed in this Colony. Nobody at all can convince me that we cannot make our own feed and achieve a balanced poultry diet. I urged in Finance Committee and I am urging again it is absolutely necessary that we pursue this and build it up to an ordinary economy. Our basic is there. Our 'rice bowl' will supply all the broken rice, the Rice Development Company can supply all the bran, and I see no reason why we cannot have the corn, and, if we've got to have minerals, why we cannot import them. Let us manufacture the feed here. I cannot see Government telling importers of feed that it is going to restrict them, because it would be

wrong to remove any chances of cheaper food for the population. But I can see Government giving help, and I have seen nothing in the Development Programme or any programme urging this. I think it is necessary—it is one of our heritages. If we are not fit to raise chickens, then what are we fit for? Four years ago Trinidad was importing chickens, and today in that Island chickens are ready for export — and Trinidad does not produce as much grain as we do. That is a shame, and therefore I feel that the onus must rest on the Department of Agriculture. I am not criticising the Department. I am saying it is not as productive as it should be. I saw this morning that the new Director spoke of new skills, new hopes and new ambitions. Poultry should be one of these ambitions. The story of poultry in this country is one that is sad, and we must protect the producers. Let us not save just one or two people, but have a long-range plan for the industry.

In the Estimates there is an item reading "Bacon and ham", and I wonder why we did not include sausages also. What is moving in my mind, however, is the fact that in our agricultural programme we have not made provision for the production of pigs. I want to know whether British Guiana is not capable of producing pigs. It is ridiculous to think so but there is, apparently, no definite plan in that respect, and without such a plan no progress can be made. People are complaining that they cannot raise pigs because the feed is too expensive, while consumers of pork complain that the price of that commodity is far too high. If we want to produce things like bacon, ham and sausage where are we going to get the pork from? Are we going to produce them with pork that people cannot afford to buy, or say to the public that we are waiting on the pigs? That would be a very sad state of

[Mr. Jailal]
affairs, and if we cannot raise the pigs there would be no point in getting an expert to take charge of the production of those articles.

I feel that Government should embark at once on a programme for the production of pigs and subsidise the feed if necessary. Coconut products used for pig feed are very expensive, and many people cannot get them to buy. A pig can produce far more profit than a chicken, and I do not think the production of pigs should be discontinued merely because people are howling against the cost of the feed and so on. Owing to the great drop in the production of pigs we have broken the economy of the people at Ann's Grove, East Coast, Demerara, and also those of Seafield, Western Berbice, and one cannot say how we are going to set them back on their feet. It is essential, to my mind, that the pig industry be given some encouragement, and that trained officers of the Agriculture Department should be made to go out and meet the people concerned so that they may be properly instructed. These officers should also visit the primary schools and create a bias in the minds of the children there. If this is done our people would take a greater interest in the question of farming generally. If one goes into the country districts he would be able to identify easily the people who are engaged in pig rearing, owing to the condition of the houses occupied by these people. I think we should find out why these things take place.

Is it right to find that pigs could be exported by people in St. Vincent and also in Grenada while people in British Guiana cannot do any such thing? I feel that that is because this Government is not doing enough with respect to the

production of pigs. These problems cannot be handled by politicians as some people seem to think; they have to be handled by officers of the Government. Politicians should be the missionaries as it were, and I want to urge that the Agriculture Department should be made to implement a pig-rearing programme as early as possible. I cannot but feel that the Colony has not enough as regards pig and cattle rearing. We have not even protected the economy that was built up long ago by the poor people in these two fields. One can well remember, Sir, that on driving past Pln. Washington and other places in the County of Berbice one could have seen large flocks of sheep some years ago, and that was possible up to a few miles within the city of Georgetown.

It has been said that increased rice production is causing damage to the pig and cattle industries, but that is not the only factor. There is a lack of enterprise and a lack of enthusiasm on the part of the people who are concerned with these industries, and there is an indolence which this Government must wash away. In other words it must create new zeal and new enterprise in this direction. Sheep that were formerly sold at \$3 per head cannot be obtained at present for less than \$18 per head, and I cannot see where British Guiana is drifting to. Mutton is being sold as high as 84 or 96¢ per lb., the reason being that people are not producing sheep any longer. Very ill fares the land, I say. There is an abundance of land in this country and there is no reason why we should not produce these things. Our forefathers raised sheep on the coastlands, but there is no reason why this generation should want to continue to raise them there. What is the use of sending people to Australia and New Zealand if we are not going to urge them to come back and do what the people there have done with respect to these problems. What is the

reason why people in Barbados and other parts of the Caribbean find it possible to do so many different things on a piece of land? Our land is very prolific, in a sense, because if we look at our foliage we would find that our quantity of vegetation is probably the highest in the world.

I am saying, however, that there is little vision and foresight among our people. Some of them have been to England and Scotland, and even to places as far as Australia and New Zealand, but have not put to good use the knowledge they brought back. In some of the West Indian islands there are very few trees, yet sheep rearing is being done successfully on the hills in those places. In Aruba, for instance, there are hills with no vegetation except growths of cactus, and yet we find a certain amount of production taking place there. In British Guiana there are hills in places like Bartica, the Caburi and other districts, but there is no rearing of sheep or other such industry there. We can populate these hills with cattle, encouraging private enterprise to take part in starting even a small export trade. I heard some one saying that I would like to see the whole country occupied by cattle, but that is not so. We can rear cattle on the hills. In the report of the Geological Department much has been written about sand hills in this Colony, but I do not know whether it has been stated that these sand hills cannot be used. I am sure that the sand hills at Bartica and other places in the Essequibo can be used, and if through lack of grass we cannot get 100 per cent production from them, we should be satisfied with 50 or 60 per cent.

I feel that Government should commence to think in terms of sheep. Government has not even urged private

enterprise to see that sheep rearing would be a good proposition. Government has no stock available. If the scrub animals from the coastlands were taken to the back lands they would take disease with them. We have developed a particular type of semi-aquatic sheep which has no fat and no wool, but in the hills I have seen a private company rearing sheep that grow wool and I told them I believed that those animals could be shorn, and that the wool would grow back. I believe they are going to try it.

Those are the things which we need to boost. For too long our people have been talking about elaborate schemes of drainage for which we know we have not the money. Those are the little things which would put people on the land and instil confidence in them. People do not want to have the best houses equipped with radios and pianos. I am sure that 50 per cent. of the population in the country districts are not happy about all the houses that are being put up. In spite of the housing schemes they are laughing at Government. They are going to take the money as it comes but there will be no development. All we are doing is providing houses but no living.

A similar tale can be told about goats. I observe that several Members have left their seats, but even if all leave I will continue to speak.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member must not notice that. We have goats and sheep. You can discuss both kinds of animals which are similar in their habits. We are not all sheep.

Mr. Jailal: Let us concede the argument that we have lost our pasture lands to rice cultivation, and therefore cannot feed all the cattle on the land. It would seem, therefore, that resorting

[Mr. Jailal]

to goat rearing and goat milk would be a good thing for this Colony. Goat milk is wholesome and it is free from tuberculosis. I know there are goats which give as much as six pints of milk per day. Some Members are urging that we should put on the back lands now under rice cultivation cows which only give four pints of milk per day. Is that what we desire to return to? I am told that some cows give even less than four pints of milk per day. Goats can use a small piece of land, but our Agricultural Department is doing nothing, just sitting complacently and very nappy that people do not rear goats, because it will be another trouble for the Department to deal with.

While we are grateful for the powdered milk sent to us from foreign countries we ought to be ashamed, because we should be able to provide milk for ourselves. I am ashamed. We can rear goats in this country and encourage our children to do so. The blame rests with the planners—the people who guide the destiny of this country. We are training our children to drink milk. How would we be able to break them off without being accused of breaking faith with them? The school feeding programme is likely to die after the supply of milk is exhausted, because I cannot see Government being able to provide sufficient money to continue that programme. Let us start now and import goats from Barbados and other West Indian islands. Let us encourage our Amerindian population to rear goats. Put some goats into the hands of the priests in the interior and they would teach the Amerindians to rear them. It is a simple and cheap system, and in a short while they would have enough milk, making it unnecessary for us to supply them with imported milk.

Children are being encouraged to plant coconut trees. It is just as simple to teach them to rear goats, and it would keep them out of mischief. It would be something new. A certain hon. Member wrote recently in the Press about the “penny dreadfuls.” I think the rearing of goats would be one way in which we could “kill” those comic books. It is being done in the West Indian islands. I cannot understand why some of us who do not have 8 or 10 hours’ work per day do not rear our own goats. I think it is due to a lack of vision. The Department of Agriculture should have stock of that kind at all times and should encourage the people in goat rearing. Those are things which build goodwill and good public relations.

If we do not follow the pattern that is being set by other countries we are going to pay for our neglect. Most of the West Indian islands are self-sufficient with regard to milk. Only the dairies and restaurants run short of milk and have to use evaporated milk. In rocky Aruba the Government has introduced cattle which are fed on imported fodder, so that in time there would be no necessity to import milk. I have had to suffer all my life on account of my teeth and I know the value of milk. We should urge our people to drink more milk and make their bodies healthier. It would help our Medical Department immeasurably if we could launch a programme for the rearing of animals to provide the milk we need.

Mr. Speaker: In one of the best hotels in Port-of-Spain no charge is made for milk. Patrons get free milk, but there are other things which they have not got.

Mr. Jailal: This world is made up like that, Sir. There is no comprehensive plan to increase the supply of

ground provisions. Does this Council know that Moruca is dying because there are no new farmers to take the places of the old ones who have gone before? The cost of labour is high; a man can no longer employ another at 60 cents per day with meals. A farmer must use machines and he must have money to purchase them. The Credit Corporation will not lend him money to buy machinery except he has transported property or goodwill in his district. If a farmer left Berbice and went to the North West District where the Regional Development Committee does not know him, he would be a "dead" man. There is no hope. Each man has to stay within his own orbit. The man on the Corentyne has to find land there because his Regional Committee knows him there. He has no other recourse, and so I feel that Government must rectify this situation.

We have got an Agricultural Machinery Hire Pool, but that is only a plaster on the eyes of the people. Those things were bought for the Drainage Board. The machines are being used on Government lands and are not being given to the farmers. It is wrong. I have kept this matter back particularly to bring it to this Council. It is a wrong policy. All the machines bought for land clearing must do land clearing and not sent on Government lands and not used for main drainage and irrigation works. If the machines are bought to give to the people, they should be given to the people; the private proprietors should have the use of them. It is impossible for small farmers to find the means to dig out canals that Sugar was not able to clean and maintain 80 years ago. The farmers are left with lands they cannot drain, they cannot work. All they can tell you is "This is my heritage." All the mis-spent money remains a spectre of the mistakes of the past. Those are the things that trouble the

people. Government purchases machines and the people are given the hope that their canals will be cleaned and they will be able to work their lands once more, but when they do apply for them they are told it cannot be done. It is utterly wrong, and therefore, I feel that if Government is buying machinery for drainage and irrigation works, they should buy them solely for that purpose. When I come to that Head I shall tell you what are my views on that subject.

I think that the farmers' lands must be cleared. They must be helped and not just told they can borrow \$500.00. I am wrapped up with the Machinery Pool, and no man with \$500.00 can urge me into saying I will work for him. He has to take his turn. Therefore I feel that Government should not only lend money but should actually do the work and then put the people on the land, and thereafter whatever residue is there, this residue should be given as a loan to help the farmer with his particular piece of land. What is the use of giving John Jones \$10,000.00 to fix up his estate, which sugar and cotton were not able to work successfully, merely for ground provisions. It is impossible for a man to clear with only money. The Regional Committees would only be fooling the Credit Corporation and this Government. But we cannot fool all the people all the time. I think Government must embark on a full scale programme. I see nothing is said about new plans. We spoke about tobacco. We know that tobacco grows in the Rupununi. I would say, find more money for it and help it.

None of our experts, or people whom we are training, has ever thought whether we can grow ginger or something else that would help the economy of the Colony. I cannot see why that is not done. And so I blame it on the people who plan for this Department.

[Mr. Jailal]

I feel that we should embark on a programme of trying out all kinds of tropical commercial plants which we have to buy from abroad at the moment, such as ginger, clove, onions, garlic. No one can tell me that we cannot grow onions here. Mr. Carew grew onions in the Corentyne at Hog Styx in quantum. But today our Agricultural Department which we pay does not do it.

That Department does not promote any programme. If you went there and asked for seeds they would not be able to give you or even to tell you how to grow onions. But that is the Department we have to vote a lot of money for. The same serious charge I have against the Department with respect to the coconut industry. I have never yet in my 41 years of life seen a Government Officer in a coconut plantation trying to show the people what to do, except when there was the locust infection and at which time I read of Mr. Cooper doing a lot of good work in this connection. I have not been able to get one officer of that Department in these last four years that I am back in the Colony to do so. I have worked day and night at Plantation Letter T and I have not seen one officer visit there. You put down the trees, the coconuts drop and grow, and as a result of this uncared for and unplanned growth, we have a large block of land that should be producing fully is not giving of its all.

This is a wrong policy. We have very few coconut estates and we have not very much land to plant. Therefore I feel it behoves us to see that those estates now in existence give everything that they are capable of giving. I feel—and I cannot say wrongly so—that our coconut-producers are not doing their fair share in an effort to better the fortunes of this country. Provided the coconut pro-

ducers have made enough money for a day they are satisfied. I feel that Government must either enact legislation or by some other means get them to bring all the coconuts out of the estates. There are too many coconuts lying on the land, while people are suffering for want of coconut oil. They are getting machinery duty free and this Colony is bearing the burden. It is a sad picture. Since we can legislate for rice, we can do the same for coconuts and force the estate-proprietors to bring their coconuts out. I know one particular estate where no cleaning is done whatever, and so there are thousands of coconuts left on the land there. It is wrong. This country should not be forced to buy fats from abroad when we can produce for ourselves here. Therefore I feel that the first step should be to make the Agricultural Officer visit these estates. I doubt very much if any Agricultural Superintendent in British Guiana can tell me exactly how a particular coconut estate is laid out. They never visit the estates, and if you do not visit, you cannot cure the ills.

I see a glorious opportunity for a business in the field of coconuts but, as I said, we are not doing anything; our Agricultural Instructors are not going around to the people. Another thing is, our drying system in respect of coconuts is wrong. We are spending too much money on drying. We have a false economy. We believe that throwing a few coconuts shells in an oven would produce good drying. That is wrong. It is time that we consider getting these people so educated that when they dry a pound of meat they get what other parts of the world are getting out of that. Instead of drying out half of it by overheating or losing by under-heating, I would encourage and exhort Government to try to help these people in the right direction. I feel that we should institute at least one

dryer or convert our Canegrove dryer into a coconut dryer and rent it to the producers for a period. If the people are shown what the results would be, they would naturally try to follow suit and acquire equivalent dryers which would procure for them the best financial results.

It is true that we cannot expect everything to be done all at once. I must admit that, but I want to say that I have not heard of any plan in respect of citrus fruits. All I have heard about this is the hon. Mr. Raatgever's passing remark that we have enough oranges in the North West District, and therefore, a cannery can be erected. I do not want to join issue with him on that. While I would reserve my comments on the canning of orange juice in this country, I want to say that we are not doing enough in that field. I have been told by an eminent agriculturist that ten acres of well planted oranges and grape fruit would procure for a normal family of five or six a good healthy annual income. This statement intrigued me.

And so, I made it my duty to go to a citrus estate, and, believe me, judging from the figures I got, we in British Guiana did not have one citrus estate with as much as 50 acres under full cultivation. Yet a lot of money can be made from citrus. A well-bearing orange tree can give 4,000 fruit per year at four cents per fruit—\$160. The people in the Pomeroun have a few estates, but these are not good enough. Along our river banks all the oranges we need for Georgetown can be produced, but our small clerks and other persons in Georgetown who might well take a lot of land and try their skill in spare-time farming are not willing to do so. Between Springlands and Charity there is no plan for citrus cultivation.

I asked the Department of Agriculture for 4,000 orange seeds for over a year. I asked again and again about them and was told "There are no plants." I went to Trinidad and saw their Director, who said, "Mr. Jailal, we have plants to sell to the people. I took a good look and saw a 'forest' of plants. We here do not want that. We are making enough money. We are complacent. We are looking for new enterprises and yet our courage is lacking. I remember being taught as a boy at school that navel oranges—seedless—are the best oranges, and I think people have grown up with that idea. If I had a plot of land, the first thing I would want to do is to plant seedless oranges on it. I feel the Department of Agriculture should at once try to develop sufficient citrus plants so that farmers may be able to procure them. Let us start now, and in three years we will have enough. In the Land Settlement schemes, there are people to build houses and leave them for wood ants to eat? I have seen that happen while I was still a boy when people left their houses at Buxton to seek their fortunes in the Mazatani. Are we not going to have plans at the same time for full-scale planting so that people who settle in these land schemes would be able to pay for their houses?

Sir, I was hoping to take in its entirety the subject of rice tomorrow, but I was faster than I thought and so I have now come to rice. The rice industry is at the crossroads and I feel that the time has come for the Government to make a statement of policy on rice. There are two factions in the rice industry now, and I feel Government must step in and hold the scales evenly. I think the time has also come when the fortunes of the country need to be examined. A few years ago when the development of this particular industry had begun, our own Sir Frank McDavid

[Mr. Jialal]

helped to introduce the idea of mechanisation, and that, I believe, was the primary purpose of the Rice Development Company. But, since then, Government has had merely a passing acquaintance with the results of that venture. Government should now have a definite examination of the results of this grand experiment if we are to benefit from it. I have seen, and I am willing to say that the Rice Development Company has served a very good purpose in the rice industry. Had it not been for this company rice would not have been mechanised as quickly as it has. The company encouraged and fostered mechanisation. I think no other organisation, save that company and the Rice Marketing Board is responsible for the quick mechanisation of rice. But in order to teach people new skills, we have to pay our way, and if the company has lost money in this direction I want to say now that I would not hold that against it. As a matter of fact, I would regard it as having paid so that 85,000 people might learn.

However, a new feeling has come about in recent times; we feel very strongly that if the land at No. 27 can be given up to land settlement, then the company can turn its activities completely into the milling of rice, and turn over other lands to farmers on a system of rental. We feel sure that if the company ceased to plan these lands and instead the thousands of acres were given to farmers on lease, these lands which are reasonably well-drained, on a hire basis, better results would accrue. It is true in practice that if a man were given 25 acres of land to control, he would do it better than if he hired 50 servants and planned a thousand acres, except in cases where he is absolutely sure that every servant is a

good one. The company cannot boast that—I am sure the company cannot boast that every officer is a very competent officer. There are some inefficient ones. If these lands are given to tenant farmers, it would be a step in the right direction. I feel Government should examine the business of this company, because, after all, it is a company formed with a view to the development of the entire Colony.

It has done its fair share in the field of mechanisation; it has saved padi belonging to the farmers in terms of milling, and I feel that it should stay in the milling business until our people reach self-sufficiency in that respect. Until then, the Company will not have completed what it set out to do. I should be grieved if I felt that the ultimate aim of the Company was to be concerned with making money. I feel that the Company intended to make a better economy out of rice, and I feel that it has done so to some extent. I feel also that the time has come—and we have had changes and machinations of all kinds—when Government should let the people know what course they ought to follow. That is what I meant by saying that we shall have, eventually, to make a statement of policy.

The R.M.B. has done its fair share, but it has not done enough. There are fields that the Board is about to enter that should add momentum to the work it is doing. We feel that there should not be any restraint on prices in order to be able to deal with the present situation. We should not allow time and tide to tamper with our policy. No country would allow normal rains to prevent it from reaping or storing its crops.

Sir Frank McDavid: It happened in England only this year.

Mr. Jailal: I said “normal rains” and I meant that. It is really only two years ago since the farmers started planting padi by mechanical methods, and they have been getting better yields. Therefore, the cries of the farmers were very much worse in certain places where the absence of mechanical dryers was felt very much. Government has not really helped the farmers as regards the question of duty-free gasoline, neither has Government helped the R.M.B. The Board has had to meet its own troubles from time to time. This year, 1955, the Board was able to stand up and hold its own but, without giving any secret away, I am assured that we have not had a bumper crop. The year 1954 was an exceedingly bad year. We had enough rice on the land but we did not have enough dryers. Our machinery was inadequate, due to lack of funds, and I feel that an industry that produces millions of dollars in revenue annually—providing food and clothing for thousands of people, including transportation through the T.H.D. by hundreds of residents in Essequibo—should be regarded as an important part of our economy and something that must be reckoned with. It is no longer an industry in which indentured Indians only are interested.

I have said before that we should wrap the rice industry in blankets and protect it, and I want to say so again. Out of this industry there should come a system of protection for our crops which would bring much benefit to the Colony as a whole. The Rice Development Company will soon be erecting a new mill in the Corentyne district, but I know—and the President of the Company knows also—that that mill will not suffice to meet the needs of the people up there. I therefore urge upon Government to assist the R.M.B. in getting dryers installed in other districts also. The mills are under the

control of the Board and the moment padi is taken to them it virtually becomes the property of the Board. If that is the case, the Board should never allow wet padi to come in and be piled up in any of its bonds. There is a lot of trouble that this Government knows nothing about in this particular respect, because there are people who are always able to mitigate certain difficulties.

I maintain that the R.M.B. has not got a full chance to control padi effectively, and I would suggest that that control should be the first step in the new improvement plans. If mechanical dryers are not installed in various areas, in addition to those already installed by the Company, and if small rice mills are bought out in areas where there are central mills—something which would have to be done as a fact—there would be a general uprising among the rice farmers. It is felt that the small mills should be allowed to stay along with the central ones and that a certain amount of cheating could be prevented. The farmers would sell their padi to the R.M.B. who would allocate it to the mills, and there would be an equitable distribution. I think that would tend to settle things in the rice milling business.

Mr. Speaker: I think this is a convenient time for the hon. Member to permit the adjournment to be taken, unless he wants to continue now. I propose to adjourn until 2 p.m. tomorrow, because I take it that other Members desire to speak, and there is no prospect of their finishing their contributions now.

Mr. Jailal: I propose to take a long time and will continue tomorrow, Sir.

Mr. Speaker: We are all willing that you should continue. Council will now adjourn until 2 p.m., tomorrow.