

SECOND LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

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

Thursday, 5th November, 1959

The Council met at 2 p.m.

PRESENT :

Speaker, His Honour Sir Donald Jackson

Chief Secretary, Hon. M. S. Porcher, acting
Attorney-General, Hon. A. M. I. Austin, Q.C. } *ex officio*
Financial Secretary, Hon. F. W. Essex, C.M.G. }

The Honourable **Dr. C. B. Jagan** — *Member for Eastern Berbice*
(Minister of Trade and Industry)
„ „ **B. H. Benn** — *Member for Essequibo River*
(Minister of Natural Resources)
„ „ **Janet Jagan** — *Member for Western Essequibo*
(Minister of Labour, Health and Housing)
„ „ **Ram Karran** — *Member for Demerara-Essequibo*
(Minister of Communications and Works)
„ „ **B. S. Rai** — *Member for Central Demerara*
(Minister of Community Development and Education).

Mr. **R. B. Gajraj** — *Nominated Member*
„ **W. O. R. Kendall** — *Member for New Amsterdam*
R. C. Tello — *Nominated Member*
„ **S. Campbell** — *Member for North Western District*
„ **A. L. Jackson** — *Member for Georgetown North*
„ **E. B. Beharry** — *Member for Eastern Demerara*
S. M. Saffee — *Member for Western Berbice*
„ **J. N. Singh** — *Member for Georgetown South*
„ **R. E. Davis** — *Nominated Member*
„ **A. M. Fredericks** — *Nominated Member*
H. J. M. Hubbard — *Nominated Member.*

Mr. I. Crum Ewing — Clerk of the Legislature

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

ABSENT :

Mr. Ajodha Singh.

Mr. L. F. S. Burnham.

Mr. F. Bowman — on leave.

Mr. A. G. Tasker, O.B.E. — on leave.

The Clerk read prayers.

MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Thursday, 1st October, 1959, as printed and circulated, were taken as read and confirmed.

PAPERS LAID

The Chief Secretary (Mr. Porcher, acting): I beg to lay on the Table the

Report of the Director of Audit on the Accounts of the Kamarang Trade Store for the year ended 31st December, 1958.

The Financial Secretary (Mr. Essex): I beg to lay on the Table the following:

Report of the Executive Commissioner, Board of Commissioners of Currency, British Caribbean Territories (Eastern Group) for the year 1958.

Development Programme, 1960-1964 — Sessional Paper No. 5/1959.

Report of the Meeting of the Finance Committee held on 28th August, 1959, covering the Supplementary Schedules of Expenditure for July-August, 1959 — (Recurrent and Development).

Mr. Speaker: The question is, that the Report of the Finance Committee be adopted.

Agreed to.

The Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Benn): I beg to lay on the Table the following:

Review of the Fisheries of British Guiana — Bulletin No. 1 (issued by the Fisheries Division of the Agriculture Department).

The Trawl Survey carried out by the R/V "Cape St. Mary" off British Guiana, 1957-59 — Bulletin No. 2 (issued by the Fisheries Division, Department of Agriculture).

Copies of plan, specifications and estimates of the proposed works in the Fyrish Drainage and Irrigation area. (Laid in terms of Section 17(2) of Chapter 192).

The Minister of Labour, Health and Housing (Mrs. Jagan): I beg to lay on the Table the

Report of the Proceedings of the Registrar of Trade Unions presented pursuant to Section 36 of the Trades Unions Ordinance, Chapter 113, for the year 1958.

The Minister of Community Development and Education (Mr. Rai): I beg to lay on the Table the

Report on the Social Assistance Department for the year 1958.

GOVERNMENT . NOTICES

DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME,
1960-1964

The Financial Secretary: I beg to give notice of the following Motions:

"Be it resolved: That this Council approves of the schemes and allocations as set out in the Development Programme 1960-1964 — Sessional Paper No. 5 of 1959.

Exemption of Alumina and Manganese Ore from Export Duty

"Be it resolved: That this Council in terms of Section 7 of the Customs Ordinance, Chapter 309, approves of the amendment of Part IV of the First Schedule to the Customs Ordinance, Chapter 309, by the addition of "Alumina" as Item 9 and "Manganese ore" as Item 10 in the list of exemption from export duties of customs."

With your permission, Sir, and the consent of the Council, I would propose to proceed with the first of these Motions — the one dealing with the Development Programme 1960-1964 — this afternoon. I think Members were notified.

Mr. Speaker: They have been notified.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS OF
EXECUTIVE COUNCILPURCHASE OF MOBILE DIESEL
GENERATING SETS

The Minister of Communications and Works (Mr. Ram Karran): Govern-

ment has decided to purchase, at a cost of about \$300,000, two mobile diesel generating sets with a total capacity of 830 kw from General Motors, U.S.A., and Mr. H. G. Frampton, the Controller of Electricity, left this morning to inspect the sets before shipment. These two generating sets, which are mounted on highway trailers, are completely enclosed and self-contained, and can be connected to the Company's distribution system without any difficulty. Representatives of the Demerara Electric Company, Limited, have been approached, and they have assured me of their Company's willingness to purchase power in bulk from Government at a rate to be agreed upon in due course.

Installation of these mobile generating sets should enable the Company to reduce load-shedding very considerably. The sets will be shipped from America very shortly, and I am assured that both sets can be in use by the middle of December.

These mobile generating sets, which can easily be moved to almost any site, have been specially designed for simple operation and inexpensive maintenance under tropical conditions. They are not, however, the answer to the need for an adequate supply of power to meet the growing demands of the community. They will, nevertheless, give a measure of relief until one or more larger units are installed.

When the mobile sets are no longer necessary to supplement the supply of electricity for Georgetown, they can easily be removed to other locations to assist possibly in the first stages of rural electrification.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

The Financial Secretary: I beg to give notice of the introduction and First Reading of the following Bills:

Development Fund (1958 Appropriation) Bill, 1959.

Customs (Amendment No. 3) Bill, 1959.

Customs (Amendment No. 4) Bill, 1959.

The Minister of Trade and Industry (Dr. Jagan): I beg to give notice of the introduction and First Reading of the

Export of Timber (Amendment) Bill, 1959.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

ORDER OF THE DAY

BILLS — FIRST READING

The following Bills were read the First time :

DEVELOPMENT FUND (1958 APPROPRIATION) BILL

A Bill intituled "An Ordinance to make provision for the appropriation to the Development Fund of a certain sum of money transferred thereto from the revenues and funds of British Guiana".

CUSTOMS (AMENDMENT NO. 3) BILL

A Bill intituled "An Ordinance to amend the Customs Ordinance."

CUSTOMS (AMENDMENT NO. 4) BILL

A Bill intituled "An Ordinance to amend the Customs Ordinance."

EXPORT OF TIMBER (AMENDMENT) BILL

A Bill intituled "An Ordinance to amend the Export of Timber Ordinance."

DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 1960-1964

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Financial Secretary indicated soon after we commenced this meeting that he intended, subject to my consent which he has, and the unanimous consent of this Council, to proceed with the Motion standing in his name, of which notice has been given today, and of which Members have been aware for several days now. I now ask Members whether they agree that the Motion be taken now.

Question put, and agreed to.

The Financial Secretary: I beg to move:

"Be it resolved: That this Council approves of the schemes and allocations as set out in the Development Programme 1960-1964 — Sessional Paper No. 5 of 1959".

This is the second Five-Year Development Plan which I have had the privilege to introduce to this Council. The previous one was the 1956-1960 Plan which, obviously, has turned out not to be a Five-Year but a Four-Year Plan.

I would like to make certain general remarks about the Programme. I say "general" because I am sure that Ministers would wish, where necessary, to explain in detail their own parts of the Programme, and in the course of the debate to answer any questions which are raised. The Plan which has been distributed to Members represents the final result of a series of drafts which have been in gestation for over a year.

The basic data and departmental plans were first collected and collated in the middle of last year when, it will be remembered, preliminary discussions were held about them with the Secretary of State for the Colonies, when the Minister of Trade and Industry (Dr. Jagan) and I were in London in 1958. Work continued on this Plan in the Departments and Ministries throughout 1958, and a Programme of a feasible size was in draft form when Mr. Adler, a Senior Economist of the World Bank, visited this Colony towards the end of the year to make a general economic survey to see whether we were, as it were, Bank-worthy.

This tentative Plan, as it then was, was discussed generally with Mr. Adler, and in a public statement he said that though it would be presumptuous for him to comment on the Plan in detail, from what he had seen of it, it was clear to him that the top priorities had been correctly selected. He said that there was no question in his mind that the provision of more agricultural lands through drainage

and irrigation and the improvement and expansion of the transportation system particularly through better and more roads, deserved top billing. He referred to the difficult issue of finance facing the Government and pointed out that development programmes, like other desirable things, had the unfortunate habit of costing money, and the Programme which the Government was contemplating was no exception to this.

He hoped that as large a proportion as possible would be paid for from Government revenue, because if even grant contributions from the United Kingdom were to continue, there was bound to be a large part of the Programme for which loan funds would have to be sought. He went on to say that, in his opinion, it would be an error of judgment to burden the country's debt-carrying capacity to a point at which loans needed to pay for a series of Five-Year Programmes could not be obtained at reasonable terms.

Later on this Programme, which was still being altered here and there, was considered by Mr. Berrill, a Senior Economist of the Cambridge University, who was here in April and May this year, and after his visit this Programme was put more or less in the form in which it appears in the Sessional Paper. That is so far as the allocations and priorities go and, of course, the size of the programme, too.

Mr. Berrill's main conclusion endorsed generally that which Mr. Adler and I had separately arrived at. Mr. Berrill thought that on the assumption that the revenue of the country would increase at the rate of 6% per annum, and that borrowing would continue to be made at current rates, the borrowing which would be necessary to finance a Development Programme of more than \$135 million would put Government's finances in the late 1960's and 1970's under a breaking strain. Mr. Berrill thought that the target should be confined to a Programme of \$110 million and that this should be phased in such a way that

if things turned out better than we thought, it could be extended to \$135 million later on.

Therefore, as Members will see, or will have seen, from the Sessional Paper before them now, there is a proposed Programme of \$110 million. I should point out that the real difference between this Programme of \$110 million and the programme of \$135 million which Mr. Berrill regarded as a maximum size Programme is, first of all, that with the larger Programme a start could be made with the reconstruction of the East Coast road to the extent of about half the road in this period and, secondly, that a new Georgetown hospital could be built, and thirdly, that there could be the addition of another \$5 million to the Credit Corporation and industry. I will return to this question later, but I would say now that the Programme of \$110 million to which I referred, was that which was accepted by the Secretary of State in the middle of this year as one which the Government would be justified in embarking upon in this period with the finance so far foreseeable. It was also agreed, however, that we should examine the possibility of finding more money for the maximum Programme of \$135 million in the course of the next five years.

It was generally agreed with the Secretary of State that in a Programme of \$110 million priority must be given to major development schemes which would make the maximum contribution to the economy of the country even if that did not leave sufficient scope also for making an immediate start on projects of lesser priority. It was however decided that there should be a review of the Programme not later than 1962 to see if it could be expanded, and to see whether a start could be made particularly on such projects as the Georgetown Hospital and the reconstruction of the East Coast road.

I am sure that no Member will dispute the basic assumption that the

country should not overtax itself by taking on an excessive debt burden. I am also sure that Members will agree that in our present state priority should be given to Development Projects of an economic nature which will increase the productivity of the country so that we can sustain the ever-increasing burden of social services, particularly education, and find more employment for the increasing numbers of people on the labour market and those who will be coming out of our schools.

As I have said, both experts, Mr. Adler and Mr. Berrill, considered that the first priority must be the bringing into production of more of our vast areas of undeveloped and partially developed lands. I would like to take that first because doing this — developing these lands — does not only mean providing employment for those people directly engaged in agriculture. The increase in wealth that comes to the agricultural community will find its way into the very many and varied businesses which provide services for the community as a whole.

We have seen, on many occasions, the great stimulus which good rice crops produce on the economy generally. And we have, unfortunately, from time to time seen the reverse as the stifling effect of the economic ripples from a bad rice crop goes very much further than the area in which the crop is produced. This is obvious but it is sometimes overlooked.

However, hon. Members will have seen in the Sessional Paper that the economic proposals go far beyond just the provision of more agricultural lands and more incentives for the diversification of agriculture. Government proposes, also, to spend a substantial amount on a policy of industrialization. Though secondary industries do not, at present, absorb the same number of workers directly as agriculture, they are necessary if the living standards are to be maintained and improved, and the national income is to increase rapidly. I wish to deal with this later, Sir, when I refer to the

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highlights of the Programme; but I would like now to say something of the proposed financing of the Programme which had been agreed by the Secretary of State.

The first important element in the financing of the \$110 million Programme is the free grants which are to be provided under the new Colonial Development and Welfare Act. Members will have seen, I am sure, that under this new Act an amount of £4 million or \$19.2 million has been allocated to this territory for the five-year period. I do not think it can possibly be said that we have not been comparatively well treated in this respect — certainly not comparatively having regard to our population — because this allocation of £4 million is only exceeded in the case of three individual territories, one is Tanganyika, one is Kenya and the other Malta. In the case of Malta, of course, there are very special reasons. The others are much larger and more populous than our country

As regards loan assistance, the United Kingdom Government has agreed to make available \$19.2 million in the form of an Exchequer Loan towards expenditure in 1960 to 1962, and to consider a further possible loan of \$19.2 million in the remaining two years. Here again it will be seen—and I am not trying to advertise Her Majesty's Government—that comparatively speaking we have done very well, because if we are able to borrow this £8 million, it will be £8 million out of the £100 million which has been allocated by Parliament for the whole of the Colonial territories. Well, if we are to get this \$38.4 million in the form of Exchequer Loans and an additional \$19.2 million in the form of a free grant, and in addition we shall have to carry over from the previous C.D. & W. Act a sum of \$3 million and a further \$1 million from the Central C.D. & W. allocation, the total will be \$61.6 million out of the \$110 million required.

It has been stressed by many people who should know that the direct contribution which we make from our current revenues to the Development Programme is very small, and I think we must admit that. In the five-year period, 1955-1959, we shall have contributed about \$10½ million to development from current revenues, but we hope to be able to step this up to \$15 million in the 1960-1964 period. Even then, the proportion of direct revenue contribution will not be very high; but we must do all we can to achieve this \$15 million target.

The main difficulty of a heavy borrowing programme is that if something goes wrong in any particular year, and revenue falls substantially, debt charges on the revenue will still have to be met as a first charge, and that will mean that the current services provided by the Government will have to be cut severely.

If on the other hand there is a substantial direct contribution from annual revenues to the development programme, the programme can be temporarily slowed down, and normal services maintained. So it would be unwise to say that if we can find annual budget surpluses, those surpluses should be earmarked to service an even larger programme of borrowing. However, I think it is reasonable to try to find \$15 million from current revenues as a direct contribution in the next five-year period.

However, it will not be easy to do, because we are having a continually rising education bill; more children mean more teachers and more teachers mean more cost, and so it goes on. Members will be surprised, even though they are used to such surprises, how much more funds education will demand out of our current Budget next year. And the same with medical and other social services.

While borrowing from overseas during the period we shall continue local borrowing, and the amount we would like to raise locally is \$10 million. That

amount will not, of course, be entirely from private individuals, but also from sources such as the Post Office Savings Bank — a perfectly normal financing operation; and even with that \$10 million we will still have a gap of about \$23 million.

We find from experience that in any development programme, if you want to achieve a target of "X" million dollars, you have to aim at "X" plus something—a target which is higher, often as high as 10% more. In other words, if you want to achieve a programme, you have to aim at doing more than that programme. There is always a "slippage" in performance depending on all sorts of factors, the availability of staff and materials, the ability to plan and design and so on.

Even so, \$23 million as a gap is quite large; but we have hopes of filling some of that gap with assistance from international and national sources, such as the World Bank, the United States Nations Special Fund, the Colonial Development Corporation, the United States Development Loan Fund, and then there is our friend coming along next year — the I.D.A., an off-shoot of the World Bank. The Programme contains a number of schemes which are at least eligible for such outside assistance, and it is for us to explore this to the full.

I would like to emphasize here that in view of misunderstandings in the past, and to avoid accusations that this scheme or that scheme which had been approved as part of the Programme has not been carried out, the proposals now before hon. Members are essentially a financial plan, but it is not the case, as I said before, that all the finance necessary for the plan is secured. It is not the case, as I have already said, that the money is all available. But the financing plan is regarded as feasible, and we agreed with Her Majesty's Government that it is a feasible plan and a reasonable target.

This plan is, as it were, a blueprint for the agreed period. The expenditure

is phased in such a way that if there is any serious set-back, it will be possible to curtail expenditure in the plan and decelerate it. So we shall continue to live within our means, and it will be Government's obligation to see that we are not committed to expenditure which we cannot afford to pay for.

It is important to stress therefore that what we are seeking is a general endorsement by this Council of the schemes and allocations in the Paper; and, naturally, we shall have to come annually to this Council with yearly estimates of what we are going to do and with details of how we propose to finance what we are going to do.

In this Programme the emphasis is on the economic sector. The economic side of development takes up to about \$91 million and the social side about \$18.7 million. It is therefore weighted in favour of projects which will add to our productive resources, increase the national income, and the like. Agriculture, sea defences and drainage and irrigation take up nearly half the Programme, and about one-quarter is allocated to transportation facilities, roads and railways. About 10% will go to agricultural and industrial credits, about \$20 million to social services, \$8 million is for housing and \$4 million for education.

The reasons for the concentration on agriculture are fully stated in the Sessional Paper. Among these reasons are the expansion of some existing crops, the introduction of new crops like cocoa — for which the prospects are good — the resurrection of large-scale production of coconuts and the expansion of livestock, particularly beef cattle. An important feature in this Programme is the extension of the agricultural credit system and the introduction of bonuses. If agricultural developments are to take place we have to put more cattle and crops into new areas, and seeing that we hope to find ourselves with an additional 200,000 acres at the end of the period, we shall need substantially more fertility of soil

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and water control. In addition to providing for drainage and irrigation it is necessary to strengthen and improve the sea defences and to improve and settle new lands. Land development will have an allocation of about \$7 million, the main part of which is for surveying, clearing and laying out land into plots.

On the communications side provision is made for the construction of a through road to Lethem which we know by the three names Parika-Bartica, Bartica-Potaro and Potaro-Lethem. In the 1960/1964 Programme the Bartica-Potaro section should be improved to reasonable standards before we go on to the last link, the Potaro-Lethem road, half of which should be completed in the period. Preliminary work is being done in connection with a rehabilitated road from Vreed-en-Hoop to Parika, and I am sure no one will say that is not necessary. The East Bank road to Atkinson Field will be completed and when that is done we will have at least one very good road. Some money will be spent on the reconstruction of the Corentyne road, and again, I am sure no one will deny the necessity for this.

A ferry boat being built locally is to be finished off, and two new passenger boats will be bought. Additional rolling stock and locomotive will be got to keep the railway on the East Coast going until we have an autobahn down to Rosignol.

I said I would mention the East Coast road. The real trouble about it is that it is so expensive. We used to guess in our innocence something like \$13 million to do that road, but the first proper survey revealed that it would cost twice as much. It could be modified but anyway it is a very expensive job. However you look at it, there is a railway which goes there, and it is a road which does exist. It may not be an autobahn but on the other hand, despite the great cost of a new road, it is not opening up new country, and that is the reason why, with great reluctance, one has had to put

that into the second priority for this period.

Continuing with the Economic Sector we have provision for surveys—geological surveys, topographical surveys and aerial surveys. Finally, in this Economic Sector there is the intention to allocate \$4 million to assist in providing capital requirements for industrial development, whether by credit or by Government-operated plants. The Credit Corporation will continue to make loans for the development of industries, but Government intends in this period to begin a programme of industrialisation, to establish factories by private enterprise, but if this is not forthcoming, to establish factories by itself when it can be demonstrated that the economic prospects for some particular industry justify it.

Finally, I should mention, anticipating some little trouble, that although money appears in this Programme for expanding the Timber Seasoning Plant, the Minister certainly will not agree, and I am quite sure that Members will not, that it should be spent until it really can be demonstrated that the Plant is going to work economically.

Despite all this stress on economic development there is a very important element of social development in the programme. It is obvious that under Education we must have a continuing programme of replacement and extension of primary schools. We must build new schools for the increasing number of children, and we must improve post-primary education. Provision is also made for three new post-primary schools and for assistance to existing secondary schools.

On the Health side the emphasis is on prevention rather than cure. You will not see a great amount of money for new hospitals, but what you will see is what I think one must admit is a most exciting programme for **Environmental**

Sanitation. This is going to receive considerable assistance from the World Health Organization, and I am sure the Minister will tell you that it is going to be probably one of the most important health moves here since the eradication of malaria. In the programme too there are other interesting and important schemes for the eradication of malaria in the North West District, the Pomeroun and the Rupununi, and also plans for the expansion of the anti-filaria programme. It is now one of our most killing, directly and indirectly, diseases.

As an adjunct to this Health Programme nearly \$3 million is being provided for better water supplies. Half of it is for supplies where none exist and roughly the other half is for the improvement of existing supplies and for the extension of supplies where the population has overloaded the existing supply.

I could say here again, just as in the case of the East Coast road, the Government has given anxious thought to the question of the Georgetown Hospital, but as things are it just does not seem possible to fit in a hospital of this size at the moment. It is very much a project which is, as it were, a top priority on the reserve list along with the East Coast road.

Some sort of information has leaked out publicly about the absence of provision for housing in this Programme. I do not think that the Programme proposes to do anything drastic or reprehensible, and the Government proposes to spend \$5 million mainly in urban areas on direct construction of low income houses. You will have seen that the number proposed is 2,000, but in addition to this there should be at least \$6 million available through the Credit Corporation for house-building, which will be concentrated in the rural as opposed to the urban areas. I do not think it is fair to say that the provision for housing is small or, as has been implied in some public statements, non-existent.

For the rest of Social Services we have the preventive of Youth Welfare

and Sports Development, and the curative Borstal, for which people have been asking vehemently for some time, and also provision for a new prison. Whether that can be regarded as development or not, I think it is something we have to provide.

I do not wish to weary Members by going through all the things which they will have read for themselves, or things which fall more in the line of the Ministers responsible for those particular subjects, but I would like to finish up on the theme with which I started, because I do so keenly want Members to agree that the economic emphasis is the right one having regard to the present state of the country. At the risk of the Government's being accused of self-praise, I say that I think this is a good Programme. It is well balanced, it is integrated, and it has been a long time in the process of being drafted. I also feel very strongly that the priorities have been correctly assessed.

In the last six or seven years the economy of this country has shown satisfactory growth. There has been heavy investment in the basic section of the economy, in Agriculture, particularly sugar, and also in rice and in mining. We have had our temporary set-backs. The worst of these was the recession in aluminium in 1958, of which we certainly felt the effects. We have had a set-back this year which will have an effect on next year's revenue, of the disastrous fall in the price of sugar on the free market. Nevertheless, taking a broad view, production has expanded very satisfactorily and indeed substantially. In this period Government expenditure has also helped a good deal, especially in the construction sector. Government expenditure has gone up by two-thirds since 1952.

The value of exports in the last 10 years has about trebled. Half of this is due to better prices and the other half to more production. The effect of this has been bolstered by a large inflow of private capital, of which we shall feel the

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effect in the future, largely helped by grants from the United Kingdom, and helped by the injection of loan money. In the Programme which we are now discussing we have used the basic assumption that in 1960-1964 the rate of economic growth will be the 6 per cent. which it was in 1952-1957. If that happens we have good hopes — I say no more than hopes—of handling the increase in population and labour.

One cannot say that it is going to expand to the magic 6 per cent., but I think the prospects are reasonable. In the most important mining sector we have good prospects for bauxite and, of course, manganese. It is true that in the case of this sort of exports there are factors over which we have no control; world demand and world prices we cannot control. But we do see the significance of mining development, and that is why we have continued provision for the geological survey in the plan.

Turning from mining to our mainstay, sugar, here again circumstances outside our control can have a big effect on the crop, prices, world demand and so on. In this plan we have not assumed any spectacular increase in sugar production; we have not assumed that it will expand as rapidly as it has in the last 15 years. It becomes increasingly important for us to develop other agricultural products, and again I repeat that one of the major objectives is to continue to increase the acreage. We have assumed that rice acreage will continue to expand, but we do not expect it to be at a faster rate than it has expanded in the last 15 years.

I do not share the views of those who say that we should not develop rice because we might not be able to sell it. The whole point is that it is no use trying to find markets for rice unless you are sure you have got the rice to sell. The surplus has got to come before you can find the markets, so I do not think that the criticism is well founded. Never-

theless, there is urgent need to provide for different crops. Unfortunately, other worthwhile crops do not give quick results as rice does in going into production quickly and producing an early income. You will see there is concentration on cocoa, coconuts, beef and dairy cattle, but these are medium-term measures and that is why in this Programme we have provided incentives for those in the form of pasture bonus, planting bonus and more important than anything, perhaps, agricultural credit.

The improvement of agriculture is a direct provider of rural employment and livelihood, but as I have said directly and also indirectly it does provide a considerable amount of livelihood in trade and commerce generally, particularly in the urban areas. But despite these improvements in agriculture, we do also attach great importance to developing the manufacturing sector. The past development of this sector, if you take it purely on the national income figures, has been disappointing. The percentage is something like 4%. The difficulty of developing it is obvious. There is a small local market. Our raw materials are not all that varied although we have some that can be used.

However, Government does intend to do more in this sector than it has done previously, and it will, itself, embark on manufacturing industries which have reasonable economic prospects even though the apparent yield of them may not be sufficiently high to attract private industry. I am not suggesting that the Government is going to rush madly into factories and start to turn out things for which the taxpayers will have to pay in addition to having to pay for the products, but if there are things which appear to have a reasonable chance of being produced economically, then, after proper planning and economic appraisal, Government will do them.

It is quite clear, however, that private investment must continue at the level of the past few years; and the entrepreneur, we hope, will turn his thoughts

away from simple internal trade, more towards production if the economy is to develop at the rate it has in the past few years and, more important, if firm foundations are to be laid for continual development after 1964. Reference has been made in the Sessional Paper to the rôle Government will play in giving incentives to industry.

To sum up, therefore, Sir, we feel that the case for an increasing emphasis on the productive part of the Programme is unanswerable. We have had, Sir, a sobering warning from other territories of the effects of capital expended on the development of social services in which the territories have been unable to find the inevitable financial commitment which follows. This next five years is a period in which we hope the efforts of the Government and private investment in the previous four years—1956-1959—will support the inevitable and increasing recurrent expenditure. We hope they will keep the social services at their existing level.

The ultimate aim of any Development Programme is, of course, to provide for a healthier and happier community, but it will be putting the cart before the horse at this stage if we were to concentrate our finances, a large part of which will be borrowed, on social services which we cannot afford to maintain. The development of our major industries — mining and agriculture — will not have its full effect until after the 1960-1964 period which we are now considering. It should be possible then to turn our attention to more and better hospitals, many more houses and even better schools. But even in the meantime I think Members will agree that the Programme proposes to do a good deal in the social sector within the limits of the finance we can draw on and which we can afford. We feel we can afford the \$110 million proposed for the 1960-1964 Programme, with the generous help provided from overseas.

We also feel that if we achieve it, it will be good value for the money; and if

we can change the Programme as we go along so as to get better value for the money we shall not hesitate to bring those changes to this Council for the approval of hon. Members.

The Minister of Trade and Industry (Dr. Jagan): I beg to second the Motion. [*Applause*]

Mr. Speaker: Does the applause I have heard indicate that I shall put the Question? [*Pause*]

Mr. Gajraj: Sir, I do not intend to speak to the Question at this moment. I would formally like to make this observation: that it was my belief in important matters like this, the question of putting forward a Development Programme for the next five years, that Members would be given the opportunity of studying the speech of the hon. the Financial Secretary in much the same way as copies of the Budget Speech are usually made available to this Council. If it is that we would not be having that opportunity, then I suggest that we defer any further discussion on this matter until Wednesday of next week.

Mr. Jackson: I rise to support the view expressed by the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Gajraj, for in the speech by the hon. the Financial Secretary several points came out, details of which we would have had no prior knowledge, and it is not quite fair to us on this side to expect us to reply to those points on the spur of the moment when the matter is so vital. I support the suggestion that further discussion be deferred until next week when we shall have had in our possession the speech of the hon. the Financial Secretary.

The Financial Secretary: If it had not been unanimously agreed to go on with the Motion, I would not have started it.

Mr. Speaker: I cannot understand or fully appreciate the position at the moment. The situation is, that roughly

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10 days ago Members had had notice that it was proposed to take the Motion today; that was the first step; Members have had the Sessional Paper in their possession, so that they would have had an opportunity of studying it closely.

Secondly, before the Motion was proceeded with today it was clearly put to the Members, even though it had been indicated to them that it is desirable to proceed with it today, that it could only be proceeded with the unanimous consent of the Members. That consent was given.

Of course, the hon. Nominated Member who made the suggestion for a postponement was, perhaps, unfortunately not present at the time when that decision was taken. I do not know when he suggested the postponement whether he was consciously aware that he was given notice beforehand or whether he had been made aware of the decision of this Council. Members have asked for an opportunity to study the speech which the Financial Secretary made in moving the Motion for the approval of this Development Programme. I do not know whether Members intend to ask for the *Hansard* report, because I am not aware that the speech was written; however, that is a matter entirely for the Council. There is no motion before this Council in regard to the suggestion made, and I just thought I should make some remarks as to the nature of the suggestion as I understand it.

Mr. Jackson: Mr. Speaker, you quite rightly referred to the fact that this Council gave its approval of the Motion being debated today, and I think the intentions of the Council have been fully met, if not, then in part, for had we not agreed that it should be taken today, we would not have heard the Financial Secretary's speech. Now that we have heard his facts and his views, we should have a chance to consider how these fit in with what we have in mind concerning the Development Programme. I do not

think that a request for a postponement is in conflict with our previous decision to have the Motion taken today.

Dr. Jagan: What the Financial Secretary said in his speech was just an elaboration on what was set out in the Sessional Paper. I am surprised that the hon. Member for Georgetown North should suggest a postponement, because he earlier asked for a memorandum and he was given one setting out the whole thing. Now it seems he wants something more. I cannot understand how we are going to get along in this country if at every opportunity Members seek to delay matters that are urgent. Very soon we will have upon us the debate on the Estimates for the coming year. I really do not see the necessity for a postponement. I saw some Members scribbling and I thought they were making notes of the salient points in the Financial Secretary's speech.

Mr. Jackson: If I may be permitted, Sir, I asked in another place for a memorandum, but that is not a point to be raised in this Council. When the time comes, I will deal with that memorandum, and I will use it for the purpose for which it was intended. It relates to a matter very different from this one. I have made notes, and that is the reason why I am asking for a postponement. I see the need for turning over in my mind the things which arise from the notes I have made, and I am sure other Members will agree with me when I say that we are entitled to speak on any matter in this Council regardless of whether or not the Minister feels we are going to filibuster. Whether the Minister likes it or not, we are going to talk on matters before this Council from time to time.

A Member: Talk, talk, talk !

Mr. Speaker: Order! I understand that the Financial Secretary received over-all approval of the items, and that later on when they are reflected in the Recurrent Estimates there will be an opportunity for more discussion on them. I do not wish to prolong this talk

on the suggestion made. There is one thing which Members can do if they wish to crystallize this matter, and that is, to move a Motion, because we cannot continue to have discussion on both sides without one. If not, I shall continue the debate.

Mr. Gajraj: Having suggested the postponement and having listened to what Your Honour has said, I would like to make it clear that my purpose in making the suggestion was not to oppose the passage of the Motion and to delay the Government in its works. It must be appreciated, however, that while Members of the Government have been giving consideration to the many projects which are set out in the Development Programme—

Mr. Speaker: Are you crystallizing the matter by moving a Motion?

Mr. Gajraj: I am moving a Motion. There are those of us who would like a little more time to consider the matter in order to make a proper contribution to the debate. It is quite possible that even if Council is adjourned until tomorrow we might not be able to make our best contribution. When the Motion was moved that it be taken today I was engaged elsewhere. As Your Honour knows, the Georgetown Town Council started its consideration of the Budget for next year, at nine o'clock this morning, and this is still proceeding. The Member for Georgetown Central is presiding over that meeting. I have to return there to relieve him for a while. That is to some extent the reason why I asked for a postponement. For myself, I was out of the Colony last week and I had no time to study the Programme properly. I think, therefore, that I will be acting in the right way if I move

“That the debate on the Motion be deferred until next week Wednesday, the 11th of November.”

Mr. Jackson: I beg to second the Motion.

Mr. Speaker: If nobody wishes to say anything, I shall put the question.

Question put, the Council divided and voted as under:

For

Against

Mr. Beharry	Mr. Hubbard
Mr. Davis	Mr. Fredericks
Mr. Tello	Mr. Saffee
Mr. Gajraj	Mr. Rai
Mr. Jackson	Mr. Ram Karran
Mr. Campbell	Mrs. Jagan
Mr. Kendall—7	Mr. Benn
	Dr. Jagan
	The Financial Secretary
	The Attorney-General
	The Chief Secretary.—11

Mr. Speaker: The Motion is lost; we will proceed with the debate.

Mr. Gajraj: May I be excused, sir?

Mr. Jackson: I first of all congratulate the Financial Secretary on his having so ably presented to this Council the Programme for the development of this Colony during the years 1960 to 1964. In the course of his speech he made it clear, if I heard him correctly, that he does not expect any praise for the task which he had to perform, and therefore, if for no other reason, that is enough justification for me or this Council to place on record appreciation of the work which has been done by the Financial Secretary.

That statement is typical of the man himself, and while we hurl criticisms at him from time to time; while we condemn his judgment from time to time, and while we may still condemn his his judgment here on this Plan which has been prepared, those are not reasons to deny him praise which is so well deserved, and I am sure Members of this Council will agree with me that the time which has been spent on the preparation of this Development Plan is time which has been given by the Financial Secretary also. He has said that the Plan is a financial one, that in his opinion it is very integrated and the priorities have been carefully assessed, and that in its preparation it was his responsibility

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to determine whether the country's Development Programme should be based largely upon agriculture or not.

If I misunderstood him it is because we on this side of the Table do not always hear very clearly what is being said by some Members on the other side. If that is not a very fundamental error which has been made by him then it is very certain that the Financial Secretary will accept that as a very sincere compliment to him, not only for the preparation of this financial Plan, but a compliment to him for the very good work which he undoubtedly put in on the mission to London with the Minister of Trade and Industry (Dr. Jagan) and His Excellency the Governor who has just left this Colony for good.

It is clear that the Financial Secretary, with his very wide knowledge and experience of economic planning for development, and having studied very carefully the work of experts, was able to guide his colleague or colleagues, because I do not exclude His Excellency the Governor, Sir Patrick Renison, in what we must consider is a very sound approach to the problem. Unlike some other people, he could have been striking his chest and saying "I did it." Typical of some people who are very few in number in this world, the Financial Secretary did not put himself up in that position.

His simplicity — and I say this with all sincerity — has been brought forth here today in all its splendour, and I am sure that if he has a second opportunity — I think he was not here on the first occasion — if he has to introduce a third Development Programme I am sure this country will benefit considerably from his presence and his work amongst us.

I am satisfied that this Development Programme will be endorsed by this Council, having regard to the number of heads on the other side of the Table and those on this side who will vote for cer-

tain with those on the other side. So that Government need have no fear about the passage of this Programme, and even though the Financial Secretary has said that within the framework of the next four or five years there will be annual debates on the yearly provision, nothing that is said on this side of the Table will have any serious effect upon the implementation of this Programme. Whether we like it or not the decision of the majority, with their aides and helpers, will certainly carry the day. We are happy to know that that is the foundation upon which Democracy is practised.

In spite of the praise which I have showered upon the Financial Secretary I also want to give some praise to other Members of the Government, because even though there has been disagreement among them as to what items should be given priority, the fact that the Financial Secretary has been able to present this Programme today is proof that they have been able to settle their differences and arrive at decisions. I see the Minister of Trade and Industry showing his appreciation of the statements I have just made, and I wish to assure those on the other side of the Table that the praise has been sincerely given.

One acknowledges that in a plan for development one has to measure what one has actually in hand and what one can depend upon, and relate them to what is hoped to be the final stage of one's desire. So that while we have been presented with a plan covering \$110 million and a little over, there is no guarantee that the proposals contained in the Programme presented by the Financial Secretary will materialize in the next four years. For he said, and I think very definitely, that if the finances are not available then what might have been an acceleration of the Programme will certainly be a slowing down of the Programme. We have seen that that has been the pattern since we have been in this Council, and we suppose that is the reason why the Financial Secretary has made the comment, for we have on more

than one occasion criticized Government's policy with respect to its priorities and the failure of the Government to spend money on projects as were intended in the previous Development Plan or the one which is now coming to its conclusion.

For example, since we have been in this Council, every year during consideration of the Annual Estimates we have condemned the Government's failure to deal adequately and positively with the problem of roads. Those Members of the present Council who were Members of the "Interim" Legislature have joined with those of us who are newcomers in condemning the Government's policy because we and they believe that in the Plan which is now coming to an end provision was made for the re-building of the East Coast road from Georgetown to Rosignol. We have also condemned Government for not giving consideration to the reconstruction of the West Coast road. So that arising out of his experience the Financial Secretary has indicated that even though in the present Programme there appear many items which are desirable for the achievement of the development of the Colony we may not see them being put into operation at all.

That, Sir, is the reason, or one of reasons, why I did support the Motion which has been lost. It appears to me that one should question exactly why the road from Georgetown to Rosignol will not be given top priority in this present Programme; moreover, in view of the fact that it was earmarked for priority treatment in the first Development Programme which was projected during the term of the Interim Legislative Council.

The hon. the Financial Secretary has indicated that after many people had been indulging in fanciful thoughts as to the cost of re-building or reconstructing the East Coast road from Georgetown to Rosignol it has now been found that the cost of doing the job would be twice what it would have cost in 1953, 1954, 1955, 1956, 1957 and 1958. That is one of the reasons why we should condemn

the Government all the more; for if this East Coast road had been given priority the cost would not have been as great today or tomorrow as when it was first planned. Why must people who travel from Georgetown to Rosignol have to face the horrible experience of going over a road which cannot be said to be anything but bad and which gets worse every day? And when the rains come you feel as though you are travelling on a rice bed or plot under rice cultivation. Why should people have to travel on that type of road? Why must there be this uncertainty today as to when this road is to be re-built?

It is true that the hon. the Financial Secretary had indicated to Members that the reason why no attempt had been made to give first priority to the East Coast road is because of the fact that we have a railway which runs between Georgetown and Rosignol. Though that is a fact, a fact known to us not only today but ever since we have been born we have heard our parents talking about the railway stretching from Georgetown to Rosignol, there are people who still realize that the road from Georgetown to Rosignol is of vital importance and is a necessity to the lives of the people in this country.

The railway, some people advocate, should be scrapped. We do not know whether Government intends to ignore some of the views of its advisers and feels that the railway should not be scrapped or whether the intention is to rehabilitate the railway so that the people should use it instead of the road. If that is the case then it is an undemocratic approach to the problem, for it is my own choice to travel as I will. For when there is a breakdown one has to face the discomfort caused by mosquitoes and sand-flies. In such cases one should be able to resort to the alternative means of getting back to Georgetown.

It seems to me that the Government is ignoring the people who have to ply their motors cars on the East Coast road, the financial losses caused by the frequency of breakdowns, the frequency

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with which their cars require parts, the frequency with which their tyres give way and the frequency with which cyclists fall on the East Coast road. Perhaps, Government does not realize that on the East Coast road many cyclists actually fall because of its unevenness and roughness and because of Government's failure to make it priority No. 1. Perhaps, Government has not heard of the danger to people who use the East Coast road under existing circumstances.

Perhaps, we will be told that it has not contributed to any of the disasters which involve motor cars travelling on it, but it seems to me, as one who does not frequently use the road, that there is very much danger to motorists and all users of that road between Georgetown and Rosignol. There are some stretches of that road which are very narrow and which, to my mind, are very dangerous to traffic and human life and limb.

On the Corentyne there is no railway. I admit that the road there is bad and that there are no alternative means of travelling except by water or air. Unless these are possible there is need for a good road and there would be justification for improving the road on the Corentyne. But what is the justification for doing preliminary improvements to the West Coast road as against the East Coast road, when there is also a railway on the West Coast—a railway running from Vreed-en-Hoop to Parika? Can it not be said that the same circumstances which exist on the East Coast also exist on the West Coast? What is the reason the Government would give? What the Government does not realize is that every house owner on the East Coast road suffers because of the failure of the Government to give priority to the East Coast road. As cars pass along they throw up a lot of dust and the people's houses soon become untidy and their furniture get dirty very quickly.

People can also be seen watering the road to prevent dust from getting

into their homes and destroying their furniture. Also, children who pass along the road going to school have to inhale the dust and germs. One wonders whether Government's preventive treatment is real in its concept, for if there is preventive action one expects it to be preventive in all respects. Repair the East Coast road; let it have first priority, so that the children who use it to go to school would not have the unfortunate experience of inhaling all the dust and germs which rise from it at the moment. If Government's policy with regard to this road is pursued there is the possibility of these children becoming victims of tuberculosis, and then Government will be considering not only those who have already gained admission to the sanatorium, but the thousands more who will be entering as a result of such a policy.

They talked of providing for malaria and filaria, but one wonders which is the most difficult problem—malaria, filaria or tuberculosis? If they consider malaria and filaria as being the most urgent for attention, then it seems to me that tuberculosis has no place in the mind of the Government today. One would have thought that such a disease requires less encouragement than is being given; and I would say if the roads are given early priority consideration of the health of our people will certainly improve, for they would not inhale so much dust as they do at the moment and run the risk of contracting such a disease.

The hon. the Financial Secretary said that he disagrees with the people who say that we should not increase the production of rice because we have no markets or because we can find no markets. One would have agreed with him in the view that you should not want to find markets until you have the commodity to dispose of. Still, on the other hand, we see the negative or the opposing view uttered in almost the same breath.

Not so very long ago the Director of Agriculture, speaking on a very important occasion with respect to Government's policy on agriculture, said to farmers that the economic advantages

of growing cocoa were far greater than those which follow the cultivation of rice. He said that farmers will get \$500 return or income from an acre of cocoa as against \$130 income from an acre of rice. If the Government's policy is to encourage an increase in the production of rice with a view to finding more markets for it, this policy is certainly not going to succeed. Farmers are going to exploit the greater benefits to be had from cocoa cultivation and rice cultivation will in the very near future not have the incentives the Government expects it to have. If one may choose between a cultivation that yields \$500 an acre and another that yields \$130 an acre, which will be the more attractive?

One admits with the Government that if there is going to be progress in agriculture, its economy must be diversified, but I do not always accept that an agricultural economy is something always to be sought after. About 50% of the development expenditure during the next four or five years is to be spent on agriculture and drainage and irrigation. It is to be hoped that in connection with the schemes to be attempted and completed during this period the planners will take into account the perennial flooding which destroys the cultivation of farmers in certain areas which have not yet been brought into the drainage and irrigation areas. It is hoped that the Government will at some point of time let this Council have the details of any further schemes or improvements of schemes to be initiated in areas other than those already covered, so that we can say whether Government is right or wrong in what it is trying to do.

The Financial Secretary said that the Government will be offering bonuses—incentive bonuses. That is something about which we ought to have a very clear picture. Unless the schemes to be worked out in this respect are fully worked out, the bonuses will not have the results the Government has in mind. It is hoped that one of the bonuses will be offered to people who are going to leave the City to go into the country to take

part in the new agricultural projects. I do not know if the idea of bonuses is the brain-child of the Financial Secretary himself or that of his colleagues, but I think it will be one of the surest means of bringing success to the country and to the many people responsible for Government's programme for improving the agricultural economy.

If I heard the Financial Secretary correctly, \$5 million is to be spent on rural housing. That is what made me express the view that perhaps the policy of the Government is to reduce the over-population of Georgetown by offering incentives in house-building. If that is not the intention, then one must condemn Government for putting only \$5 million aside for this. Not so long ago there was a newspaper account of a controversy between the Minister of Community Development and Education and a Magistrate who sat on the Bench and condemned the authorities for the existence of squalour and sub-human conditions in one part of the City in spite of the efforts to remove slum conditions from the City. Apparently the circumstances were such that the Magistrate could not but make drastic comments on them.

Mr. Speaker: Just a moment. Must we go into what the Magistrate said in his wisdom or unwisdom? Must we take notice in this Council of those things?

Mr. Jackson: It was just in support of the points I was going to make, and that point was, that if indeed \$5 million is to be spent on rural housing, somebody has overlooked Georgetown, and somebody has to find money for housing the people of Georgetown.

Mr. Speaker: Yes, that is different. That is different entirely from stating what someone in his exuberance said or was reported to have said.

Mr. Jackson: I bow to Your Honour's ruling. I thought one could bring in illustrations when speaking here. The population of Georgetown is increasing, and I think that if people are packed like

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sardines in tins, then something urgent should be done about the housing situation. The Financial Secretary mentioned nothing in this respect and one must conclude that he did not want to cross paths with another Minister. One is left to wonder if the Minister of Labour, Health and Housing will say anything about what is to be done to provide for more housing facilities for the people of Georgetown. She is reported to have made a statement recently that there are no more houses in the Government schemes for rent or for sale.

We have in the past accused the Government of discriminatory actions; we would not like to have to do so again, instead we would like to be able to congratulate the Government for facing up to its responsibilities in this vitally important matter of housing. What is the difference between the sufferings of my child in an overcrowded house in Georgetown and the sufferings of another child in an overcrowded house in a country district? I may have misunderstood him, but I thought I heard the Financial Secretary say that this Development Programme is devoid of political considerations and is projected merely on the basis of Government carrying out its responsibilities.

If my information is wrong, I will perhaps be corrected, but I heard the Financial Secretary say that the Credit Corporation will still have \$6 million to lend for housing, but this will apply only to rural housing. Why is this so? There is no major effort on the part of anyone to relieve the housing situation in Georgetown, therefore we must ask why has Government determined that its projected expenditure on housing should be concentrated in the country districts?

The Financial Secretary: I said quite early that the sum of \$5 million was mainly for urban housing, which means the City.

Mr. Jackson: That is one of the reasons why I said earlier that if our

comments are not always justified it is because we do not hear very well on this side of the Table.

The Financial Secretary: It is equally clearly so stated in the Sessional Paper, Sir.

Mr. Jackson: I am referring to what was said here this afternoon, and if the Financial Secretary did say "urban" I apologize for having said that the Programme did not provide for housing in Georgetown. I know the difference in the meaning of the words "urban" and "rural."

I wish to say that it is a great pity that Government has not made provision for the erection of a new hospital in Georgetown, because if newspaper reports can be relied upon it would appear that a day or two before the Officer Administering the Government made his recent visit to the Hospital patients who were ill were sent home so as to make it appear that there was no overcrowding in the institution; that two patients were not kept in one bed, and that they were no floor beds.

If the Georgetown Hospital is to serve the needs of the people — I do not say the people of Georgetown, for we know that people who are ill come all the way to Georgetown although there is a hospital in New Amsterdam, and they come all the way from the interior, so that the Georgetown Hospital serves a colony-wide purpose — it should be given priority consideration in the Development Programme for the next four or five years. It is to be hoped that this aspect of the matter will be reviewed by the Government so that people who are suffering may be encouraged to feel that it will not be long before we have a new hospital in Georgetown.

I feel that the creation of agricultural and industrial credit facilities is a progressive step, and I must commend Government for taking this course of action. I also desire to compliment Government on its decision, if the need

arises, to lead private enterprise into industrial concerns, and one hopes that it will be a real feature of the Government, after it has surveyed the possibilities and found that certain undertakings are payable propositions, it will in some, if not in many cases, hand over the results of its research to private concerns, so that we may have not only an economy run by Government but one based upon the activities of private enterprise as well. I think the time is not far distant when almost all the industrial concerns run by the Government will have reached the stage when they can be handed over to private enterprise.

It is to be hoped that since we are now about to reap the fruits of the first Development Programme, those of the second will materialize, and that the hopes and aspirations of the Financial Secretary will be realized when he says that the third Development Plan is for the future emancipation or improvement of this country from its present economic plight. One shares his view and hopes that even if he is somewhere else he should be in a position to know that his prediction has not fallen to the ground, and that he will live to feel quite justified that he has taken this course of action and made a contribution to this country's economy.

We hope that under Education there will be improvement of our schools. We trust that funds will be available to see very early in this programme more schools being erected and more being improved upon, so that our increasing school population will not suffer as they are doing at the moment. One also hopes that the time is not far distant when our post-primary education will be expanded beyond the scope of our present programme as projected by the Financial Secretary, and that it will be possible to have post-primary education as free to all as in some other parts of the world, and that aid to private secondary schools will continue.

One also hopes that the health of the people of this country will be the primary

concern of the Government, and that the time will come when it will see justification for acting in accordance with some of the views I have expressed this afternoon.

Mr. Tello: I propose to be very brief, and I want to join my hon. Friend in complimenting the hon. the Financial Secretary for preparing the Development Programme in such an able manner and presenting it with his usual convincing speech in which he has reminded us of the geography and history of our country, physically and economically. I am especially grateful to him for his review of the developmental history of British Guiana, because some present-day politicians seem to think it is a tremendous credit to themselves to, as it were, wipe out the history of the achievements of their predecessors. They would like the voting populace especially to believe that progress and achievement commenced with the advent of the present Government, and I think it is one cause of the set-backs of British Guiana that history of this sort is not written and passed on, so that the rising generation could understand and appreciate what has been done for them over a period of years.

I am especially grateful to the Financial Secretary for the national income table he has prepared, which is set out in paragraph 7 of the Sessional Paper, and for going on in paragraph 8 to explain its true significance. The Financial Secretary was not here in 1948, nor was he here in 1953, but that did not prevent him from giving credit to and assessing the achievements of those who were in control in those days. He has shown that progress commenced probably just before 1948 and continued almost unbroken, so that this new programme is being embarked upon on the foundation of the achievements of the last 10 years, and with a great degree of encouragement.

I am no economist but I think the correct emphasis has been placed in this Development Programme, in my humble

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opinion. It is regrettable, I think, that the Financial Secretary departed from custom in not preparing his speech and distributing it to Members for purposes of record, because he made a significant statement when he said that it is a five-year programme, but as it developed from year to year and as we meet to pass the budget, those who are here will have the right to amend it according to the needs of the circumstances. I agree that the emphasis is correctly placed, and while many of us who are trade unionists would have preferred to see much more money spent on social welfare, we also acknowledge that if this Development Programme succeeds with the present emphasis, within a year or two it may be possible to shift the emphasis.

I endorse the Programme. I am happy to do so even though I have misgivings about a few things. First of all I think this White Paper should be followed by other White Papers from the Ministers concerned, giving some assurance that they fully support what has been stated by the Financial Secretary.

For instance, there is reference here to provision being made for marketing. Marketing would never come under the Ministerial control of the hon. the Financial Secretary, but if this Development Programme must be a success, the success of marketing must be assured. If marketing fails, then these large sums of money we are proposing to spend on land development and agriculture would have been invested on liabilities rather than on assets.

There are a few things that I would like to inquire about. Paragraph 18 states:

"18. Sea defences, drainage and irrigation and roads are therefore the key. Nevertheless there are other difficulties; the export figures. . ."

The particular thing I want to draw attention to is that sea defences, drainage and irrigation and roads are therefore the

key. No wonder my hon. Friend, Mr. Jackson, had been emphasising so much the need for re-building the East Coast road.

On page 11, paragraph 44 we see that for "Agriculture (including Sea Defences, Drainage and Irrigation and Land Development)" it is estimated over the period of five years the expenditure would be over \$49 million. If we are going to spend \$49 million over the development period envisaged, I think it is only fair to this Council and to the Colony as a whole that the hon. Minister, possibly the Minister of Community Development or possibly the Minister of Natural Resources should lay in this Council a White Paper making it quite clear what Government's policy is as to the ownership of land when it is developed and the necessary cost of distribution through Government sources. I feel that if the taxpayers of British Guiana must be called upon, at a subsequent date, to repay part of this money it is only fair that at this time when the Development Programme is being debated and the expenditure for the Programme is being considered, Government's policy as regards land ownership should be placed on record in this Council.

I am a strong believer in freehold land. I believe that people who dwell on land and develop it feel much happier in devoting their time and money on what they possess. I know of the problems of fragmentation and things of the sort, but I feel there are sufficient experts in matters of that sort in the world and possibly in the Colony, who can advise Government how to avoid these little obstacles without depriving man of his inborn right of possessing the land. I am asking — and I believe this is a very good Programme — the Minister concerned to give us the promise in this debate that he would bring to this Council a White Paper, for acceptance, with a clear policy on the matter of land ownership.

In paragraph 13 the hon. the Financial Secretary reminded us that an expert

investigation has revealed that there are still with us, if there is no increase in the percentage, some 27% of unemployment and under-employment of the labour force. Walter Reuther says 'the greatest local markets are in the employed workers'; and I ask this question, are we going to spend all those millions of dollars over a period of years producing consumers' stocks to help the producers when 27% of our workers are either unemployed or under-employed; and when, in this matter of marketing, the hon. the Financial Secretary says, and I disagree with him, what you must do first is to provide the commodity and then you will find the market?

That is good in theory, but I am certain if the farmer has invested all his earnings in producing his crop, then has to have it all tied up and possibly has to meet interests on loans and then there is this search for markets, that from experience the reverse would be the better thing. It is better to have the market first than to have the commodity first and the market later.

I am just giving my humble opinion, an opinion obtained from experience. While the Programme is a wonderful one, and while there is great need for assisting in the unemployment situation by making some of our artisans farmers, we must be reminded that only last year the co-operators in their magazine, had said: 'we fully co-operated and when the bountiful crop was reached it was Government's place to see that the bountiful crop is put into a bountiful market, and they failed to do so'. I am certain it is not the intention to start development with millions of dollars only to be called upon year after year to increase the vote for indirect subsidies to those farmers, because there is terrible loss of produce by dumping.

Mrs. Jagan : Dumping where?

Mr. Tello : There was loss within the Marketing Division because the Minister did not get up in time and find

markets. This is one of the things I propose to ask the hon. Minister of Trade and Industry — to prepare a White Paper and bring it here. I want to tell you that it is necessary to bring a White Paper here and show us how you propose to find local markets for the crops you are going to produce. If you cannot visualize markets for your produce now what would be the position when you multiply your acreage? It is my opinion that this Programme will be defeated. The farmer can tolerate losses from God — he could tolerate losses through floods — but to produce such perishables like tomatoes and to bring them to town only to find that he has to dispose of them for far less than they cost him to produce is very heart-breaking, and I can assure you that nothing discourages the peasant farmer more than that sort of thing.

I am pleading with Government to make this Programme a real thing — something all of us can work for wholeheartedly. Let us not put all this money for the development of land. What are you going to do with the land? Are you going to allow the people to own them or are you going to allow them to use it but they cannot bequeath it? When you ask people to leave their jobs that they are happy on and offer themselves as peasant farmers, what assurance are you going to give for finding markets for their produce?

I say again, there is the export market. There is no getting away from it, there is keen competition for this market, and over and over again experts have given their advice in this matter. I happen to know that the cocoa market is virtually a closed market. Trinidad is not having it very easy marketing its cocoa. I believe that because there was some doubt about the behaviour of the African producers, some people in Great Britain felt there would be a sliding off in supplies and probably British Guiana could find a cocoa market in the United Kingdom for a period.

I was in London the other day and I inquired. The market was still tight.

[MR. TELLO]

What happened was that hurricane Janet destroyed some of the crops in the West Indies, and they did not even miss the cocoa in the United Kingdom.

Twice in my time in this Chamber we were told, during Federation debates, we should not worry about our rice because there was a great demand for it; it was known as good rice and it had a good reputation. We heard that the Member for Eastern Demerara, when he was Minister of Natural Resources, was trying to obtain a market in the United Kingdom; I was told there, "investigate the market yourself and you will see that British Guiana's rice cannot compete." Perhaps the ex-Minister was informed differently.

If our intention is to reach out for export markets, my view is that before we reach for those markets, let us make sure that frustration does not take place locally and that all these projects are not white elephants. At paragraph 13 of the Sessional Paper it is stated:

"The Government intends to provide finance through the Credit Corporation for the establishment of industries by private enterprise and also to set up its own factories when they can be demonstrated to be economically sound".

I can cite one example, that of the Mahaicony-Abary Rice Development Scheme, where great success resulted when Government went into a precarious investment. In 1946-1948 the experts said it would be a tremendous mistake, but the Government went ahead with this concern, and by demonstrating the use of modern equipment showed the farmers the possibilities of mechanization. I was working there in those days, and I personally witnessed the enthusiasm of farmers who came to observe better agricultural methods. The firm of Messrs. J. P. Santos & Co., which sold agricultural machinery, had a rush for orders afterwards. Through Government enterprise in this case a contribution was made in no uncertain manner to the national income of British Guiana.

The Americans told me that they did not believe in nationalization, but where an investment was doubtful or tricky, or too risky, the Government, must nevertheless enter into it. Today we find that after some years of the operation of M.A.R.D.S. the necessity of improving on milling is very much appreciated and the present Government has before this Council a Bill prohibiting the operation of single-stage huller-type mills and encouraging the millers to pattern their equipment after those at M.A.R.D.S.

Coming to the question of agricultural credit, one must ask, "has the Government done enough, considering the tremendous Programme it is embarking upon?" We must remember that the Credit Corporation is an all-purpose bank with a very limited capital. Its administration is probably efficient, but the Corporation is one of those quasi-Government concerns with a slow-moving procedure. It is the sole bank that the Development Programme will be depending on for loans to farmers, and to peasants and industrialists they are hoping to assist.

It is interesting to note how Jamaica has gone about this matter of agricultural credit. From the study made by C. S. McMorris in "Small-Farm Financing in Jamaica", put out by the Institute of Social and Economic Research of the University College of the West Indies, I observe that there are many credit institutions serving small farmers, who can obtain short-term loans free of interest as well as from 2½% to 6% with security. Loans at 7½% interest can be obtained with a personal guarantee. There are the Agricultural Credit Revenue Fund, the Share Capital (Banks), the 1944 Hurricane Rehabilitation Fund, the 1951 Farm Recovery Fund, the Farm Improvement Fund, the Cocoa Expansion Fund and the Citrus Expansion Fund, as well as the commercial banks. In this way the procedure of giving agricultural credit must be quicker than would be the case

with a single all-purpose bank, and I know that the Credit Corporation has piles and piles of applications for loans not yet considered.

We find that in Trinidad, under the Agricultural Credit Bank Ordinance, Chapter 23, No. 5, and its subsequent Amendments the scope of the bank has been considerably widened. My Information is that,

“The Bank was established for the essential purpose of extending credit, at low cost, to persons engaged in agriculture to free them from the burden of debt and usurious rates of interest and thus enable them to contribute to the agricultural development of the Colony while maintaining and improving their own holdings”.

“To own, maintain and improve their own holdings”: I regard those are prime reasons behind the organizing of these banks, backed by the idea of freehold proprietorship. In fact, it would seem

that in the case of Trinidad, the first obligation of the bank is to ensure that freehold ownership continues; and I think that a policy should be worked out by this Government in British Guiana to see that freehold ownership is perpetuated here.

I will read another paragraph which says :

“The Bank provides credit facilities to Agricultural Credit Societies, Agricultural Co-operative Societies and Co-operatives at the economic interest rate of 3% per annum; most of these loans are of short term duration and repayable within a year.”

I see that it is five o'clock, Sir. I really started to speak before I was quite ready. If you have no objection I would like to have the Adjournment taken now.

Mr. Speaker : Council will now adjourn to tomorrow at the more convenient hour of 2.30 p.m.