

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**

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

FRIDAY, 6TH AUGUST, 1954.

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

**PRESENT :**

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

*Ex-Officio Members:—*

The Hon. the Chief Secretary,  
Mr. F. D. Jakeway, O.B.E. (acting).

The Hon. the Attorney-General,  
Mr. G. M. Farnum (acting).

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

*Nominated Members of Executive  
Council:—*

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

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

The Hon. W. O. R. Kendall (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. B. Gajraj.

The Hon. R. C. Tello.

*Deputy Speaker:—*

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

*Nominated Officials:—*

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

Mr. J. I. Ramphal.

*Nominated Unofficials:—*

Mr. T. Lee.

Mr. W. A. Phang.

Mr. L. A. Luckhoo, Q.C.

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

Mr. C. A. Carter.

Rev. D. C. J. Bobb.

Mr. H. Rahaman.

Miss Gertrude H. Collins.

Mrs. Esther E. Dey.

Dr. H. A. Fraser.

Mr. R. B. Jailal.

Mr. Sugrim Singh.

Clerk of the Legislature—

Mr. I. Crum Ewing.

Assistant Clerk of the Legislature—

Mr. H. H. Tross (acting).

*Absent:—*

Mr. E. F. Correia —on leave.

Lt. Col. E. J. Haywood, M.B.E., T.D  
—on leave.

The Speaker read prayers.

## MINUTES

**Mr. Speaker :** On page 3 of the minutes of the meeting held yesterday hon. Members will see it reported that for the full stop at the end of the title and enacting Clause of the Auxiliary Fire Brigade Bill which was debated, a colon and dash was substituted, on an amendment by the hon. the Attorney-General. The words "colon and dash" should have been substituted for the grammatical signs in inverted commas, which appear in the minutes.

Question put, that the minutes as printed and circulated be taken as read and confirmed, and agreed to.

Minutes confirmed.

## DOCUMENT LAID

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

Annual Report of the Geological Survey Department for the year 1953.

## PROPOSED REMOVAL OF CONTROLS

**Mr. Luckhoo** gave notice of the following motion:

"Be it resolved: That this Honourable Council recommends to Government the removal of—"

- (a) Controls on all imports except from hard currency areas;
- (b) Livestock and meat control."

POST AND TELEGRAPH  
(AMENDMENT) BILL

**Mr. Kendall** (Member for Communications and Works): I beg to move the second reading of a Bill intitled

"An Ordinance further to amend the Post and Telegraph Ordinance."

This Bill is the result of representations made by the Airways Com-

pany in this Colony asking that the Master's Declaration Form for Inward Overseas Mails be abolished. After consultation with the Department concerned coupled with an Act Of Parliament of August, 1953, known as the New Post Office Act, it was decided that this Legislative Council should be approached to have two sections of the Post and Telegraph Ordinance of this Colony, Chapter 185, repealed so as to facilitate international transport and to minimize Government formalities. The relevant sections of the Ordinance are sections 36 (2), and 38 (1) and (2). For the benefit of Members I will read them:

"36.(2)—The master of the vessel shall, at the port where the vessel reports, sign, in the presence of the proper officer of the Post Office, who shall also sign it, a declaration of compliance with this Ordinance (which may be in the form in the Second Schedule hereto), and shall not break, bulk or make entry in any port until he has complied with this section.

38.(1)—An officer of customs shall not allow any inward bound vessel to report until the master has made the declaration required by this Ordinance with respect to letters, and shall not permit that vessel to break bulk or make any entry until the letters on board thereof have been delivered to an officer of the Post Office or at a post office as required by this Ordinance, and shall search the vessel for letters which may be on board contrary to this Ordinance, and may seize them and forward them to the nearest post office.

(2)—Any officer of customs who acts in contravention of or fails to comply with this section, shall on conviction thereof be liable to a penalty not exceeding two hundred dollars."

In the Objects and Reasons it will be noted that in the repealing of those

two sections it does not in any way interfere with the security of Her Majesty's mails. In view of that, I am asking that the necessary amendments to the Principal Ordinance be accepted. I would like to state that there are certain amendments to the Principal Ordinance which would include the word "Pilot" in order to make provision for aircrafts which were not previously in the Principal Ordinance.

Mr. Farnum seconded.

Mr. Ramphal: I would like to ask the hon. Mover if the amendment is to conform with any international convention on the question of the carriage of letters, or is it a West Indian arrangement? Further, if similar amendments to the Postal Regulations are being made in our sister Colonies in the West Indies.

Mr. Kendall: I will not be able to say whether these amendments are being made in our sister Colonies in the West Indies. But the new Post Office Act passed on the 31st of August, 1953, abolished the very form that we are trying to repeal in our Ordinance now, and I take it that other Colonies will do likewise. I cannot say now that that is so. It has been done in the United Kingdom, and from the request of the Airways Company we thought it fit that it should be repealed in this Colony.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

The Council resolved itself into Committee and considered the Bill clause by clause without discussion.

The Council resumed.

Mr. Kendall: I beg to move that this Bill be now read a third time and passed.

Mr. Farnum seconded.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a third time and passed.

#### SUMMARY JURISDICTION (OFFENCES) (AMENDMENT) BILL

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

"An Ordinance further to amend the Summary Jurisdiction (Offences) Ordinance with respect to the power of a Court of summary jurisdiction to impose corporal punishment"

For several years the Colonial Office has been pressing this and other colonial territories to take steps towards the abolition of corporal punishment in the case of both adults and juveniles. In doing so, the Colonial Office has drawn attention to the fact that in the United Kingdom and most countries in Western Europe and in the U.S.A. corporal punishment is not allowed as a punishment imposed by the Courts. In June, 1951, a local Committee was appointed under the chairmanship of Mr. Justice E. R. L. Ward with certain terms of reference and submitted its report in December, 1951. The Bill now before the Council implements some of the recommendations of that Committee.

It will be seen from the Objects and Reasons that under the Summary Jurisdiction (Offences) Ordinance, Chapter 13, a whipping or flogging may be ordered by a Magistrate where a person is convicted before him of—

- (a) praedial larceny in a proclaimed district (section 76);
- (b) praedial larceny, with aggravating circumstances (section 77);
- (c) unlawfully carrying a dangerous weapon in a public way or place (section 41);

- (d) practising obehah or aiding or abetting the commission of that offence, where the person convicted is a male (subsection (2) of section 148);
- (e) incorrigible roguery section 150); and
- (f) living on the earnings of prostitution, soliciting or importuning for immoral purposes, or loitering about or importuning in any street or other public place for the purpose of prostitution, where the person convicted is a male and where it is his second or subsequent conviction (subsection (1) of section 176).

This Bill seeks to give effect to certain recommendations of the Committee appointed by His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government on the 29th day of June, 1951, under the chairmanship of Mr. Justice E. R. L. Ward ("the Ward Committee") to consider the law relating to the use of corporal punishment by the Courts and as a penalty for certain offences committed by prisoners, and to make recommendations as to the changes which are necessary or desirable.

Clause 2 (a) of the Bill seeks to insert in section 76 of Chapter 13 the provisions of a notice published in the *Gazette* of the 28th July, 1917, at page 34, under the authority of that section. Copies of the *Gazette* of the year 1917 are not readily available to legal practitioners.

Clause 2 (b) seeks to provide that a proclamation declaring an area a proclaimed area shall remain in force for six months only unless reproclaimed.

Clause 3 seeks to make provision for the increase of the maximum penalties which can be inflicted for the offence referred to at sub-paragraph (c) —unlawfully carrying a dangerous weapon in a public way or place (section 141).

Clauses 4, 5 and 6 of the Bill seek to give effect to the recommendations of the Ward Committee by revoking the power of a Magistrate to order a flogging on conviction of a male person for any of the offences referred to in subparagraphs (d), (e) and (f), and by making provision for the increase of the maximum penalties which can be inflicted for those offences.

With those observations, Sir, I formally move that the Bill be read a second time.

Mr. Kendall seconded.

Mr. Luckhoo: I do not have a copy of the Ward Report with me but, if I remember correctly, the Ward Committee also considered the question of the establishment of a borstal, and one would have thought that its recommendations to that effect would have been implemented before this proposal to amend the law with respect to flogging and whipping. I must say that this Bill has come as a little surprise to members of the community as a whole at this period in our existence, and with the existing state of affairs, that Magistrates whose powers have been increased from time to time, and whose responsibilities are certainly much greater now than they were a short while ago, should have taken from them a corrective which — and I can speak with a certain amount of authority—I have never known to be abused. I do not think that any individual can cite any case in which a Magistrate has abused his power to order a flogging or whipping. On the contrary, that power has been exercised very rarely. I am not in favour of the amendments which seek to remove the power of a Magistrate to order a flogging or whipping.

I would ask the hon. Member what has been done in regard to the other

recommendations made by the Ward Committee relating to the establishment of a borstal institution. I was co-opted by the Committee and I know that much time and thought were given to that matter. The Chairman expressed the hope that the time would not be far distant before that recommendation was implemented. Yesterday, when the hon. Member rose to withdraw certain Bills of which he had given notice, I was under the impression that he intended to include this one also, but he made it clear later that he was not including this one. I feel that more thought should be given to legislation of this nature before it is brought before the Council. We must be realistic and face the fact that at this moment crime is rampant and people are seizing every opportunity to defy the law, and we must have the means whereby adequate punishment can be meted out to those individuals who defy the law and embark upon a course of unlawful conduct.

I do ask the hon. Member, with the aid of his advisers, to give this Bill further consideration. I submit that only where Magistrates have abused the right to order a flogging, steps should be taken to curtail their power to do so. I am not only expressing my own opinion on this point but that of a large section of the community, that this proposed legislation is not a very progressive step at this moment, and I feel that one should have the courage to stand up and say so. Because of what is happening, and what we are all aware of, we should see that these deterrents remain in our Statute Book.

**Mr. Sugrim Singh:** I rise to oppose the Bill and to endorse the remarks made by my hon. friend. The law must to some extent have regard to public opinion; it must not be static. I do not claim to have any knowledge of the Ward Committee's Report but I ven-

ture to say that it was written in normal times. The political barometer has changed; the needle points to a different climate to that in which the report was written. The entire country has been clamouring for more severe punishment for crimes of violence which are on the increase, but this proposed legislation is directly opposite to current public opinion in the country. There are hon. Members who are more familiar than I am with the reactions of criminals, but as a result of five years' experience I am able to say that the seasoned criminal is quite prepared to take an additional year or two in prison rather than suffer the ordeal of a flogging. I have been asked as counsel for an accused person to see that flogging does not come into the picture. The seasoned criminal is very much afraid of a flogging, and I am appealing to Government to have some regard for public opinion, and not press this Bill at the present moment.

Right now the country is proclaimed, and so serious is the situation that under section 131 (e) of the very *Summary Jurisdiction (Offences) Ordinance*, which this Bill seeks to amend, a person found in possession of a knife is liable to a very severe penalty. If, for instance, a shoemaker is found with a knife on his person, under that section he has had it. If Government is so conscious of the crime wave and is prepared to enforce that section of the law, how can it reconcile that with this proposed legislation to remove corporal punishment for certain offences? This Bill has been introduced, apparently, as a matter of course. Perhaps it has been long on the file, but I do ask that it be deferred to some future date when conditions in the country have returned to normal. The object of this Bill is to fall in line with the modern trend in progressive countries with respect to crime. The modern theory is that when a person commits a crime he needs

[Mr. Sugrim Singh] . . . treatment and not punishment. Unfortunately, however, British Guiana is an exception so far as that view is concerned. We cannot say that if you try a man again and give him plenty of things to do he would not steal any longer. I am asking my hon. friends in this Chamber to stand firm. Let us reflect public opinion and not pass this Bill. It is entirely and definitely in opposition to current public opinion in this Colony.

**Mr. Cummings:** I do not know if I have fully appreciated the proposed amendment. As I understand it, this Bill does not seek to remove the power of a Magistrate to impose corrective punishment for the offences referred to, or with regard to offences involving violence. As I understand clauses 4, 5 and 6 of the Bill, they seek to revoke the power of the Magistrate to order a flogging for any of the offences referred to in sub-paragraphs (d), (e) and (f) of paragraph 1 of the Objects and Reasons attached to the Bill, and by making provision for an increase of the maximum penalties that can be inflicted for those offences. They include the practice of abeah or aiding or abetting the commission of that offence; incorrigible roguery; living on the earnings of prostitution; soliciting or importuning for immoral purposes, or loitering about or importuning in any street or other public place for the purpose of prostitution.

Those are all reprehensible offences, but I cannot appreciate the force of the argument of the two hon. Members who have spoken, when they seek to connect the political climate with the objects of this Bill. I would have been able to appreciate it if this Bill had sought to remove these correctives *vis a vis* crimes involving violence

in the entire community, but the Bill seeks to bring our legislation into line with that of other places as regards such offences as the practice of obeah and crimes involving roguery. I think that if a person has been convicted of gaming in a public place, he can be deemed a rogue. After more than one or two convictions he may be deemed an incorrigible rogue and flogged. This is an effort to implement certain International Conventions with regard to whipping. While I appreciate the contention of the hon. Members referred to, *vis a vis* violence, I do not think it is very strong against what this Bill seeks to do.

**Mr. Speaker:** Has the hon. Mr. Sugrim Singh appreciated what Mr. Cummings has just said?

**Mr. Sugrim Singh:** I appreciate it, Sir, but I do not agree with him. He has completely missed the point.

**Mr. Ramphal:** I think most hon. Members have found themselves in the same difficulty that I have found myself in. We are dealing with a subject based on a report which we have not got before us. I remember having read Mr. Justice Ward's report quite a long time ago, and I want to suggest that unless there is some urgency in this matter, after Members have had something of a debate on it, the hon. Mover should be asked to defer it until we have had an opportunity of reading the Ward report. There is a good deal of force in the argument raised by the first two speakers, and we should give careful consideration to the points they have made. I think we have to be very realistic about the matter, and the hon. Member, Mr. Cummings, has just put an entirely different light on it. I do not agree, however, with the serious consequences he has predicted.

I would like to reserve much of what I would like to say on the severity of penalties of this kind for another

occasion. I would also like to join with the hon. Members to say that laws are not merely made by men, but by the circumstances and the times in which they live. If the amendment really goes to the root of what the two hon. Members spoke about—and that is crimes of violence—I shall stand square behind them. I have some notes on the matter but, for the sake of clarity, I suggest that we defer the Bill until we have had an opportunity to read the Ward report.

**The Attorney-General:** I do not think there is any necessity to make heavy weather of this Bill. I wish to emphasize that the only controversial clause in it is clause 3. This clause seeks to remove flogging as a penalty where a man has been convicted of openly carrying a dangerous weapon in public in a manner or with intention to cause public terror. As I understand the contention of the hon. Member, Mr. Luckhoo, he is opposed to any such relaxation in case of conviction for any such offence at the present time. Assuming that clause 3 may be deferred, the remaining clauses of the Bill should not unduly worry or excite hon. Members of this Council, because clause 4 merely seeks to do away with flogging as a punishment when a person has been convicted of practising *abeah*, and to substitute for that offence an increase of the penalty from \$100 to \$500; and the period of imprisonment from six months to 12 months. It seems to me that there is nothing new in this Bill, except that the practice of *obeah* in these modern times does not seem to be sufficiently heinous to merit the imposition of corporal punishment, or to make it an offence tending to undermine public security. Hon. Members will agree that clause 4 is not controversial at all, and that they should have no objection to it.

As regards clause 5, it seeks to remove the power on the part of a Mag-

istrate to order a flogging where a person is convicted of incorrigible roguery. Incorrigible roguery comprises many offences, and one of the offences that would cause a person to be deemed a rogue and vagabond on all is to be found on private premises for an unlawful purpose without any excuse. In that case the monetary penalty has been increased, as well as the period of imprisonment which can be ordered. While hon. Members may have doubts as to the wisdom of the proposed amendments or as to the wisdom of removing flogging from within the power of the Magistrate, I really do not see that clause 5 is so controversial as to require the deferment of the Bill.

Clause 6 seeks to remove the power of the Magistrate to inflict flogging for living on the proceeds of prostitution, soliciting or importuning for immoral purposes, or loitering about or importuning in any street or other public place for the purpose of prostitution. There again, the term of imprisonment has been increased, but I am sure no one would have any serious worry as a result of clause 6. The only clause, I say, which seems to provoke any controversy is clause 3; therefore I would suggest that all these matters be considered at present.

**Mr. Cummings:** May I be permitted, Sir, to correct something I said. I am grateful to the Chief Secretary for drawing my attention to the section to which this clause, 3, relates. I am speaking without the parent Ordinance in front of me, and that does deal with offences involving violence. As far as that particular clause is concerned, I must admit the force of the argument put forward by the Attorney-General.

**Mr. Raatgever:** I am sorry I cannot accept the argument put forward by the hon. the Attorney-General. I consider that the Administration

[Mr. Raatgever]

has been badly advised in bringing forward this Bill at this time. This is not the time to remove flogging; if anything, punishment by flogging should be increased. I join with the two hon. Members who have opposed this Bill and would ask that it be withdrawn because I do not think it would be passed here today.

**Mr. Speaker:** Before the debate proceeds any further, I should like to point out that two or three Members have suggested that the Bill be withdrawn. If hon. Members feel so strongly, someone should make a suggestion that the Bill be postponed for six months, which means that it would be taken off the Order Paper. I cannot put the amendment if the Bill is made to go through.

Again, before we go further, I would like to get a copy of the Report to Members who would like to see it. The hon. Member Mr. Luckhoo made a suggestion which relates to the last page—young offenders being associated with old offenders. You will see that until a Borstal is established young offenders and old offenders will be in prison side by side. A copy of the Report is available and I would pass it on. I am sorry to have to interrupt.

Mr. Raatgever, are you finished?

**Mr. Raatgever:** Yes, but I do not think any useful purpose would be served if the Report is passed around. I am sure hon. Members are not going to pass this Bill today, even if the Government attempts to push it through.

**Mr. Lord:** I rise to support what the last hon. Member on the other side has said, because I am certain that this is an inopportune time to bring forward this Bill. Every day we open our newspapers we read reports of crimes of violence, which are increasing. The only effective remedy for this is flog-

ging of offenders. With your permission I would move that consideration of this Bill be deferred for a period of six months.

**The Chief Secretary:** At the risk of just repeating what the Attorney-General has said, I would like to point out that except for one clause the Bill relates to offences which do not even remotely concern crimes of violence, and it is perfectly open to Members to speak on the advisability of that clause when we come to the committee stage. I am quite new to this Colony, but I am sure this Bill would be bringing the Criminal Code of Laws up to date with others elsewhere. There is the argument that crimes are increasing, therefore we must increase the savagery of the penalties. Easily, that argument can be turned around: if crimes are increasing, then it can mean that the penalties are not appropriate to the crimes. To inflict violent punishment for any non-violent crime is generally regarded nowadays as undesirable. Except for one clause the Bill merely seeks to modernise some parts of the Colony's Criminal legislation. In such circumstances I think it should be proceeded with today and we should further consider its clauses in committee stage.

**Mr. Luckhoo:** On a point of correction, if I may, the Chief Secretary said it does not concern crimes of violence, but I would refer to Section 150 of Chapter 13 which reads:

"Everyone who—

- (a) commits an offence against this Title which subjects him to be dealt with as a rogue and vagabond, he having been previously convicted thereof; or,
- (b) while being apprehended as a rogue and vagabond assaults or violently resists the police or rural constable or other person apprehending him is subsequently convicted of the offence for which he was being apprehended, shall be deemed to be an incorrigible rogue, and shall on con-



viction thereof, be liable to imprisonment for six months and to whipping or flogging”.

**The Chief Secretary:** Forms of assault rather than crimes of violence.

**Mr. Sugrim Singh:** Section 148 of Chapter 13 is one in respect of crimes relating to obeah, and the Chief Secretary said that Clause 4 does not relate to crimes of violence. What is obeah? We have an example of it in the “Cesspit” murder case in which there was evidence of violence of the most wicked kind. Recently as counsel in the “Professor Alexander Thomas” case I heard of violence of the worst kind and of the indignities people have suffered. Violence does not mean always the actual use of a weapon—look at what was done in the “Cesspit” murder case.

**Mr. Cummings:** In the “Cesspit” murder case—

**Mr. Speaker:** You are now speaking on the amendment?

**Mr. Cummings:** Thank you for the opening, Sir. In the “Cesspit” case one of the persons accused was convicted of murder. That is another offence.

**Sir Frank McDavid:** Three were convicted.

**Mr. Cummings:** Three. There may be a practice of obeah which contains a certain form of violence.

**Mr. Sugrim Singh:** Does my friend forget that violence or scourge in obeah means torture or all sorts of tortuous exercises? It is better to beat a man with a stick than burn him with hot water.

**Mr. Carter:** I tried to avoid speaking on this Bill, but as far as I am concerned I will support Members who have asked that this Bill be deferred

indefinitely. We cannot afford to build more jails by increasing the sentence from six months for incorrigible roguery to twelve months. As a matter of fact, some people get to like prison having been there once or twice. What we want to cure in the criminal is his mind and that is not done by flogging him. I will not speak any more on the Bill, because the time might come when I might have to bring a Bill of a more drastic nature before the Council, and that is when we can find employment for the unemployed and a man chooses to be a criminal rather than to work; then I can advocate not only flogging, but flogging in the public square.

**Mr. Farnum:** This amounts to an embarrassing position. The attack is coming mainly from the legal Members and I think the best course is to retreat. Under the circumstances, Sir, I, think I must ask the Council to defer the Bill with no time limit.

**Mr. Speaker:** Do you propose to abandon the Bill?

**Mr. Farnum:** No, Sir.

**Mr. Speaker:** For it has reached a stage where I cannot allow you to withdraw it now.

**Mr. Ramphal:** I think the seconder might withdraw his support of the amendment so as to allow the hon. mover to proceed as he wishes.

**Mr. Lord:** With the consent of the meeting I beg to withdraw my support of the amendment.

**Mr. Farnum:** I shall convey the views of Members to the current quarters.

There being no objection, consideration of the Bill was deferred.

## PRISON (AMENDMENT) BILL

**Mr. Farnum:** It seems that the Bill in my name, intituled—

“An Ordinance further to amend the Prisons Ordinance with respect to corporal punishment”

which was to be taken next, will share the same fate. However, I will ask that it be kept on the Order Paper.

There being no objection the Bill was deferred for the time being.

## INTEREST PAYABLE BY B.G. CREDIT CORPORATION

**The Financial Secretary:** I beg to move the motion standing in my name, which reads as follows:

“Be it resolved: That this Council approves of interest on all sums provided or allocated to the British Guiana Credit Corporation under the provisions of Section 20 of the British Guiana Credit Corporation Ordinance, 1954, whether such sums are provided from the proceeds of loans or otherwise being charged at a rate of 3% per annum for a period of three years from the date of the establishment of the Corporation”.

I gave notice of this motion yesterday, and if Section 20 of the British Guiana Credit Corporation Ordinance, 1954 is referred to, it will be seen that there are three sources from which the Government may lend money to the Credit Corporation — revenue; grants or loans provided by Her Majesty's Government and from the proceeds of loans. Now, sub-section (2) of Section 20 provides for the fixing of rates of interest by the Governor in Council on money lent from revenue or from loans and grants from Her Majesty's Government. The Governor in Council has already fixed that rate of interest at 3 per cent. As regards money from loans raised by the Colony, sub-section (3) of Section 20 provides that the Corporation shall meet the annual charges on such sums of money as may

be allocated from loans. But there is a proviso to this sub-section which states that the Legislature must approve of those charges, which will either be paid in full or in part, which means that the charges would be met from revenue. Now, the annual charges referred to in the sub-section relate to the interest and Sinking Fund, and the motion is asking this Council to approve of only 3 per cent. of such charges being met by the Corporation.

In other words, if a loan was raised and the annual charges on that loan happen to be 6 or 6½ per cent., it means that under this motion the Credit Corporation would meet only 3 per cent. of those charges and the excess over 3 per cent. would be met from Revenue.

The Co-operative Credit Banks which preceded the Credit Corporation were allowed to borrow from Government at 3 per cent, so the concession which I am asking this Council to grant the Credit Corporation is not a great one. The reason for it is to allow the Corporation, which is quite a young institution, to find its feet. It is hoped that after three years the Corporation would be able to so consolidate its position as to meet the full charges on all monies from Government or private loans. Hon. Members will realize that the reason for this low interest is to enable the Corporation in turn to lend at as low a rate of interest as possible. Therefore, if Council approves the motion the Credit Corporation would thus be able to secure its funds from Government or from all sources at 3 per cent. interest. I hope that Members will be agreeable and will approve of the interest being fixed at the rate of 3 per cent. per annum for three years.

**Mr. Raatgever:** When this matter was discussed in Finance Committee Members agreed to get this Credit Cor-

poration off to a good start by allowing it to have money at 3 per cent. for a period of three years. I think it was my suggestion that it should be for three years, when the hon. the Financial Secretary asked that it be granted for five years. I am sure that no Member would object. I would like to repeat publicly what I said in Finance Committee and which was supported by all the Unofficial Members present. I have the Minutes here. I said that I understood there was great dissatisfaction at the way the Corporation was being run, at the salaries paid the senior staff who are all Europeans, the policy pursued in making loans which I was told were being made in some instances without adequate or any security at all, and that the staff taken over from the old organization were anxious about their status. We were told that the staff taken over are treated very badly as far as remuneration is concerned, and on the other hand the European staff at the head of affairs are very handsomely remunerated. This is a feeling that is colonywide, and Members have been asked to bring this forward, so that the Administration would take steps to see that the complaint of the treatment of the local staff is put right.

It was also felt that no policy had been laid down with regard to the operation of the Credit Corporation. I would like these remarks to be recorded because they concern the public. The public have been complaining about the treatment of the local staff, and the only way Members can bring that to the notice of the Administration is by speaking here.

**Mr. Tello:** I rise to support the motion and I, too, want to place on record my appreciation of Government's move to make the rate of interest as low as possible. All along we said the Credit Corporation was intended to reach down to the small man, and un-

less it starts on the right foot it would not get down there. It was emphasized by the hon. Mover that a charge of 3 per cent. was intended to be passed on in the rate of interest to be charged to the borrower. I have great faith in the Development Programme as a whole and especially the Credit Corporation. I rise to support it, and I hope it will have the fullest support from this Council as a sign of our faith in this Programme and our wholehearted support.

**Mr. Sugrim Singh:** I, too, rise to support this motion. In Finance Committee we were told that Government may have to borrow money at a slightly higher percentage, but I want to say this: Even if Government has got to borrow money at slightly higher than 3 per cent., this country would be justified in taking care of the excess, but we must see to it, as my hon. friend has just mentioned, that the borrower gets the money from the Corporation at as low a percentage as possible. The object of this Corporation is to help in the development of this country, and this Corporation has got to take due risks as a lending body. If it is going to be in the same position as other lending concerns in this Colony, what incentive would there be to the common man to borrow from the Corporation, when just around the corner he could get better terms?

I also wish to support my hon. friend, Mr. Raatgever, on this question of the staff. I must say this: We have always in this country advocated that our own people be given a chance to be well represented and to be put forward in executive positions, and I do not know why we must have experts in certain directions where we have qualified local men. Where we are not quite competent, I admit, we should have them. I do not see why there should be this disparity in the treatment of

[Mr. Sugrim Singh]

the staff. These are things that do us no good. In British Guiana, where each one has equal rights, to travel along such lines would carry us no where.

On the question of security I wish to disagree with the hon. Mr. Raatgever. I think it was made abundantly clear in this Council—I am subject to correction by the hon. Mover—that we have to take a certain amount of risks, and I think the Chairman of the Credit Corporation also in a broadcast dealt with that point. Securities should not be the *sine qua non* of a loan. There are people in this country who have got laudable ideas, which with some financial assistance can go a far way to develop a particular industry, but unfortunately they cannot put their hands on the necessary securities to obtain that assistance. If the Corporation is satisfied that the venture is a *bona fide* one and would eventually result in the development of this country, I do say that the question of security, which should be the rule, must not be allowed to operate to debar that particular applicant, whoever he may be, from getting some assistance to put his ideas into practice in his industry.

My last point is, I may say, the public of this country have not been given a clear and simple outline as to how this Corporation is going to work, how loans are going to be made from the various offices. I am sure other Members of this Council know about this. I think something must be done to make this clear. People are going all around the place getting letters typed to make application to the Corporation. I think we should correct this thing and make it as simple as possible to the small man, because if it is made difficult for him he would just say it is a mass of confusion and

turn away and start to blame Government for abandoning the Co-operative Credit Banks.

**Mr. Macnie:** I rise to support the motion, but as I was one of those who raised the question of the operation of the Credit Corporation in Finance Committee, and one who was rather heavily critical, I wish to associate myself with some of the remarks made by the hon. Member who has just taken his seat. In the first place I think it is unfortunate that although the Credit Corporation has been in operation for a little while there is so much ignorance in the country regarding its operations. I feel that we should urge that there should be issued at the earliest possible moment in simple language a clear statement of the Corporation's policy, and in equally clear and simple language a statement as to how people should go about the business of applying for loans. That there is confusion in the minds of those who want to avail themselves of these lending facilities there can be no doubt. The Co-operative Credit Banks have gone, and there is doubt, misunderstanding and confusion as to what has to be done and how the machinery of the Credit Corporation is going to work.

The hon. Member also made the point that there is no clear indication from anywhere as to what rate or rates of interest the Corporation proposes to charge on loans. There may be different rates of interest charged according to the value of the security or the amount of the loans. I have no experience in that sort of thing but I hope that no one in this Council, or no member of the public, will think that, because Government is affording the Corporation the facility of advancing its money at 3 per cent., which is a lower rate of interest than anyone can

borrow money today, that the Corporation is going to lend money at 3 per cent. If I am wrong I would be glad if the hon. mover would correct me. I do not know if the hon. mover of the motion is in a position to indicate the rate of interest which the Corporation will charge. I see him laughing, and I think the answer is that he has the information. I hope the Corporation will not only announce as early as possible its rates of interest on loans but, having got advances from Government at 3 per cent., it will fix its rates of interest as low as possible and as near to 3 per cent. as possible.

**Mr. Lee:** I tried to get here in time to record my protest against the rate of interest to be charged on advances to the Credit Corporation. I feel that this Government should not subsidize the Corporation from funds held in reserve or otherwise. If H.M. Government feels that the Credit Corporation is necessary for the improvement and development of this Colony it should advance the money required by the Corporation. The motion proposes that this Government should advance money to the Corporation at 3 per cent. Assuming that this Government will be borrowing this money from H.M. Government, at what rate of interest will it do so? The motion says:

"...whether such sums are provided from the proceeds of loans or otherwise...."

Has this Colony ever borrowed money at 3 per cent? As far as I can remember we have never borrowed money in the London market at 3 per cent. interest.

**Mr. Raatgever:** Yes, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Lee:** If we did borrow at 3 per cent., how much did we pay the underwriters? The proposal in this motion means that this Colony will

advance money to the Corporation at 3 per cent., and pay the underwriters what they charge on the loan. We cannot borrow money in the London market at 3 per cent., and we are still to raise money on the £3 million loan for which we passed an Ordinance in 1951. If we could get that money at 3 per cent, we could lend it to the Corporation. We are going to lend money to the Corporation at 3 per cent., without knowing exactly what rate of interest H.M. Government is going to charge us on the money to be advanced.

The Rice Marketing Board has to borrow money from the Bank at 6 per cent. Government should also lend money to the Board at 3 per cent. Government is subsidising the Corporation, but what rate of interest will the Corporation charge people who borrow money from it? The motion proposes that 3 per cent. interest should be charged on advances to the Corporation for a period of three years, so that whatever rate of interest is charged borrowers from the Corporation it will only be guaranteed for three years. I think the public should know definitely what rate of interest the Corporation proposes to charge on loans.

I would like to know from the hon. the Financial Secretary what is the amount of this Colony's surplus balance. As far as I know it is only \$5 million. This Government has guaranteed \$5 million to the B.G. Rice Corporation for the purchase of machinery. I would like to know from what source will that money come. Isn't our surplus balance included in the \$44 million? In the interest of the public I do not think we should use any portion of our surplus balance, or any funds we may have, for the purpose of financing this Credit Corporation. I agree that the Credit Corporation is necessary for the development of this Colony, therefore it is in the interest

[Mr. Lee]

of H.M. Government that any funds required by the Corporation should be loaned by H.M. Government. If we want to create a National Bank of British Guiana we should inspire confidence in the people of the Colony for the establishment of such a Bank which they could call their own, and if such a Bank charged 8 per cent. on loans the people would pay 8 per cent.

**Sir Frank McDavid** (Member for Agriculture, Forests, Lands and Mines) : We are making very heavy weather of what is a very simple matter. I would like to make a few remarks, but before I do so may I recall to the minds of previous speakers that I was entrusted with the duty and responsibility of moving the Bill which became the Credit Corporation Ordinance, consequently I feel a certain personal responsibility with regard to the operations of the Credit Corporation.

Reference was made by one hon. Member to the question of security. I remember that when I was moving the second reading of that Bill I spent some time emphasizing the difference between the constitution of the Credit Corporation and that of the Co-operative Credit Banks which the Credit Corporation was going to replace. I said that the Credit Banks were limited in scope and in their facilities for lending money, by the strict provisions of the law and their Regulations; that loans had to be made in accordance with the security requirements of the Ordinance; that complaints had been made for many years as to the rigidity by which security was required by the Credit Banks, but now we were about to set up an organization which would not suffer from those limitations, and that the management of the new Corporation would be able to go outside of such strict provisions and lend money on less tangible security. The word which we

used during the debate was "credit-worthiness", and we referred to the possibility that there were many people who would require loans but would not have any security. We therefore felt we were right in setting up a Corporation not limited to lending money on security. I must take this opportunity to repeat that that was our intention—that the Credit Corporation will be able to lend on less tangible security or what is called credit-worthiness, and not necessarily on asset security.

Another thing that was referred to during the course of this debate was the question of staff. I recall that I said the Credit Corporation will be off to a good start because they will be able to take over, at once, the whole of the trained staff of the Credit Banks. I referred then to the public officers of the Agriculture Department, including a qualified Auditor, a Supervisor and Assistant Supervisors. I said that these Officers would join the staff of the Credit Corporation at once and that the provisions of the Credit Corporation Ordinance would protect them with regard to their pension and their other official rights. I shall be sorry indeed if the transfer of these Officers does not take place with the speed and with that measure of security to the Officers which was intended when we made that provision. Indeed, I think it very important that the Officers should have peace of mind and that we should put them in a position where they would be free from discontent. I cannot imagine the Corporation functioning properly, if it begins with a discontented staff. I do hope that my colleague (the Chief Secretary) will look into the matter and put it right.

When it comes to the question of interest, what this motion seeks to bring about is a simple thing. The Credit Banks borrowed money belonging to Government for many years at 3

per cent. These Credit Banks have now been superceded by the Credit Corporation and, as we understand it, the Credit Corporation is to carry on in the same way except that it is to lend more freely. It is inconceivable that the Credit Corporation should be asked to pay a higher rate of interest than that originally fixed for the Credit Banks. It is improper to impose a higher rate of interest on the new organisation than on the Banks which preceded it. It is a purely arithmetical matter, and if my hon. Friend, Mr. Lee, will pardon me, I think he is going too far. We are now going to borrow money and to the extent which we would have to borrow temporarily before raising the loan.

I, personally, do not feel that the charge of 3 per cent. to the Corporation during the next three years will create any burden on the Colony's finances at all. We are limiting it to three years because of the suggestion in Finance Committee that five years would be too long, and we have accepted it. We have three years to see how the Corporation turns out and I make bold to say that the burden on our finances would be very light, if there is any at all. So what are we arguing about? I think we should continue to apply the same rate of interest the Credit Banks have been charged. I think the new institution will be able to give even better terms than the Credit Banks used to give, but we cannot expect these better terms if right at the start we talk of imposing a higher rate of interest so as to be able to ensure that there would be no loss. I hope we will accept this motion, Sir, and get on with the business.

**Mr. Bobb:** With regard to this matter of the Credit Corporation, I think I have been able to assess the public mind correctly, and I would say that there are two points of view. One is that the Credit Corporation is the

Government, and while this might be an ill-informed opinion, it is quite understandable because of the circumstances in which this Corporation has been established. The second point of view is that the Corporation is an agency of the Government, particularly in these times, to make large sums of money available for the development of the country.

In my opinion, Sir, because of that basis of understanding, all the remarks just made are particularly relevant and justifiable. I refer to the remarks dealing with the question of security for the staff, and also to the question of the interest being charged to start with. I hope that the policy will soon be announced so that the people whom this Corporation is intended to serve would be aware of what is intended and of what its policy would be. I do not share the view of my hon. Friend, Mr. Lee, or his fear that it is going to be some sort of one-way structure. As far as Government is concerned we are doing a very foolhardy thing; that is what it amounts to.

**Mr. Lee:** I beg to differ from my hon. Friend. I do not like "foolhardy."

**Mr. Bobb:** I retract those words; I will say "a dangerous thing." I think the time has come for us to be a little risky for the benefit of the people. All along we have been too cautious. I welcome very much what is proposed by this Corporation in order to make sums of money available to the people. With respect to the reference that the Corporation has not, up to now, announced what its rate of interest is, I would like to repeat what the Manager of the Corporation said at a public function not so long ago. In answer to a question of this kind he said he would not be able now to say what the interest would be to the borrower until he knew at what interest Government would lend money to the Corporation. That, to my

[Mr. Bobb]

mind, made sense. I think we ought to reserve our criticisms on this question until we know what the Management or the Board of the Corporation proposes to do. I have no fear at all that the Corporation is going to exceed its function and impose a burden on the people of the Colony. Rather, I think it will function effectively and should be set up with the utmost possible speed.

My third point relates to the question of making known to borrowers or intending borrowers what the procedure would be. A couple of weeks ago I might have been in the same position as some of the hon. Members who have spoken and might have said that the Corporation has not made known what its procedure would be, but I think I am right in saying that it has begun to put its house in order and there have been public statements directing people just how they ought to proceed. What, to my mind, needs more attention, is the question of further publicity. I do not think that the statement in the three daily newspapers is enough to reach the eyes of the persons mostly concerned. It has been stated, briefly and clearly, that sums of money required, up to \$960, should be applied for at a certain point, and that sums above that amount should be applied for at another place.

I think, however, that one needs to have more publicity as regards this procedure and that it would be a useful thing for the Corporation to take immediate steps to get that information to the people concerned. I have no doubt that there will be another flood of applications and also a considerable amount of work for the Corporation to do. The Corporation did not seem to have any definite policy at the beginning, but I seem to have noticed a change from the time the seminars came into operation. When the members of the Regional

Committees met in seminars, there was an opportunity for free discussion as to procedure and so on, and from that time everyone noticed a clearer understanding on the part of those members as to how things would work. I think I am right in saying, Sir, that it is time that the Corporation itself should be able to make an announcement as to what its procedure will be.

We all hope that, having taken this step to seek the approval of this honourable Council of this measure, the Corporation itself is going to get down to business and avoid the delay and frustration, and, as one hon. Member said just now, confusion in the minds of the people. People are still saying, "The Co-operative Credit Banks have been taken away, and the Credit Corporation is to take its place, and so many months have passed and we cannot get anything." I think that is a reasonable complaint, and I feel that now we can see evidence of more speed and efficiency in the carrying out of the work of the Corporation.

**Mr. Jaijal:** In supporting this motion I want to say that British Guiana has an agricultural destiny. In recent times emphasis has been laid on housing. I am hoping that the Credit Corporation will lend impetus to agricultural development in this country. I feel—and strongly too—that emphasis must be placed on agriculture more than on anything else. My feeling is that if the \$44 million were spent on agriculture alone, it would not amount to money being spent wrongly, and I can only hope to see the day when at every turn of the wheel agriculture will get the aid it deserves. We need to have more employment and to impress on those who do not want to be employed that they must work to carry out their normal livelihood, and so help to 'clear the forest,' as quickly as we can.



It is only a few weeks since the Credit Corporation has come into being, but I must urge that it speed up every phase of its activities. It has got to whip up interest in various communities and stir them into action. The Development Committees, I want to say, are still in the lethargic stage, and it behoves us to help them move forward as quickly as possible. Many of the people who visit the people in the country districts to speak to them do not know, but I know that a large portion of the communities outside Georgetown cannot read and write, and those who are in remote areas, I venture to say, are the ones to whom the Credit Corporation should go out, as these people do not have sufficient knowledge as to how to make approaches.

It would all be well for someone to say, "We have our newspapers, our associations and organisations to present the facts," but I feel our radio programmes, our BPI papers and even posters should deal with this and reach people throughout the Colony. Brochures should be printed stating exactly what a man should do in order to get a loan and centres should be provided where such information would be available in the shape of forms, etc., as if the people do not get to know early how they should make advances there would be a lack of interest for some time. I do not believe that the Development Programme itself would solve the problems of the Colony; we have got to urge that more drive, more effort be put into everything.

**Mr. Ramphal:** I did not intend to speak on this motion but certain things have made me feel that we must begin to anticipate what might be said outside of this chamber as to the charge of 3 per cent. interest. I am positive that a great deal would be made of this point, that we are lending the Credit Corporation's money at 3 per cent. and

we are going to borrow from Her Majesty's Government and financiers in the United Kingdom at a much higher percentage, and we are therefore subsidising the Credit Corporation.

Be that as it may, whose Corporation is it? Is it the Corporation of Her Majesty's Government or is it a Guianese Corporation set up for the good of Guiana? This question I put to Members and the public. We have decided on the rate of interest and we shall crystallise it in a short while, giving the Corporation a start at a percentage no different from what we have been charging the Loan Bank for all these years. What, therefore can be the objection to 3 per cent., if it is such that we can still borrow money at a higher percentage? The answer is, we limit it to 3 per cent., and at the end of the allotted period the Credit Corporation would have been on its feet and able to bear a greater burden than it can stand at the moment, in its initial stage.

The word "credit-worthiness" appears to me to have a new meaning. We have been talking about Universal Adult Suffrage. It now seems to me that the word "credit-worthiness" means "Universal Adult credit-worthiness" because some people want to wreck the Corporation. It is expected that every adult can go to the Corporation and get money to borrow. This will, to use Mr. Sugrim Singh's words, be the same as throwing money down the drain. But I do not think it will be encouraged by the responsible group of businessmen heading the Corporation.

But I want to show I believe in my country. I believe we are at the cross-roads. I believe we are sufficiently indebted to Her Majesty's Government not to ask it further for any

[Mr. Ramphal]

money for the Corporation. If we have \$7 million or \$7, I say, give it to the Credit Corporation and let it be in our own interest, for we are the guarantors. God grant it that this alone we shall ask of Her Majesty's Government—that it have confidence that the money which it has given us to provide among other things new industries will be the means through which we can repay it for all it has done for us in these our trying times.

**Mrs. Dey:** I am exceedingly happy to have sat down and listened to Mr. Ramphal — I almost said I would not speak any more, having heard what he has said. I am proud and happy to support this motion, and when Mr. Ramphal posed the question, "Whose Corporation is it?" for a moment I imagined I was back in the schoolroom instructing pupils to say "It's a Guianese Corporation from which we will all benefit". But to get back to the Corporation, I must support the hon. Member Mr. Jallal in his suggestion to make the Corporation more known to the public. I am quite sure that all Members of this Council—Official and Unofficial—are being stormed by persons in need of loans but not knowing what they must do, and I also feel sure they have to be very cautious and tell them, as I do, "I cannot tell you yet what to do." Something more should be done.

But there is another side of the picture. Three persons—and the hon. Member Mr. Jallal would be happy to know they were peasant farmers—applied for loans from the Corporation, and within three days the smallest man was visited, at West Coast, Berbice, got his application approved, and as far as I know, will be receiving his loan next week. Those are the things the public should be made to

know about: that a small man can make his application and get his loan in quick time; and thus nail the lie that (1) there is no money, and (2) you can do what you like, you will never see it work. I, like the hon. Member Mr. Jallal, have great faith in the Corporation. I also say that British Guiana is at the cross-roads and the traffic cop is the B.G. Credit Corporation, who would give the "All Clear" to the difficulties with which we are confronted at present. I have great pleasure in supporting this motion.

**Mr. Gajraj:** Mr. Speaker, I rise also in support of the motion before the Council. There has been the fear expressed that the rate of interest which is proposed is too low in comparison with the rate at which Government may have to borrow the money in the course of time, but I think it has been very clearly pointed out that since the Credit Corporation is to some extent the successor of the Co-operative Credit Bank, which we had in this Colony, and since those Co-operative Credit Banks had been receiving advances of Colony funds out of revenue, surplus balances and loans at the rate of 3 per cent, per annum, it is only fair that the Credit Corporation should start off at a rate no less advantageous than that enjoyed by the Co-operative Credit Banks.

A lot has been made by my hon. friend, Mr. Lee, about subsidizing the Credit Corporation by agreeing to let them have the advances at the rate of 3 per cent. per annum. But, as I listened to him as he said that he was quite prepared for this Government to float a loan in London and charge the Corporation the exact rate of interest payable on the loan raised and the cost of underwriting borne by the Government of the Colony, it seemed to me only a question of degree; the principle remains the same. If we are going to say the cost of

underwriting must be borne by the Government, then certainly we would be subsidizing the Corporation, even though in his opinion the amount of subsidization would be less than what he seems to fear at the present time.

We have been told by those who know that within two years, during which the 3 per cent per annum would be maintained, there is hardly any chance or likelihood of any burden being thrown upon the general taxpayers or the finances of the Colony. I accept that statement but, even if I felt otherwise, I would say that in the initial three years of the Corporation we should go all out to assist the people for whom it is designed to help. I am asking my colleagues, especially the hon. Member, Mr. Lee, to be realistic. What have we set up the Corporation for? Have we set it up to operate as a commercial bank, or have we set it up to assist people who would not be able to get loans from commercial banks or undertakings run as commercial banks are run?

We have been told, and we ourselves have said it outside this Chamber time and again, that this Corporation is designed to reach down to the small man, to assist him by way of capital advances to get on his feet, so that he would be able to make his contribution to this country; and by being able to pay his way either as a farmer, or as a small industrialist or, perhaps, in some technical field he in turn would contribute to the Revenue of this country in proportion to what he may make out of his particular field of work. We want to strengthen the vast number of our people who form the broad base of our economic pyramid, and unless we start off by encouraging those persons by giving them as low a rate of interest as possible on their borrowings and remove them from the tentacles of the unscrupulous money-

lenders we have got all over the country, we shall not be doing our duty to the people of this country, as we have been telling them we propose to do.

I think, myself, that the Government ought to be complimented for deciding on a rate of interest such as we have before us in this motion. For myself, I would like to compliment the hon. the Financial Secretary for the speed with which he brought the motion to the Council, for those of us, who know how much work has been involved in arranging this form of interest since the Corporation opened its doors, know fully well that he has wasted no time in endeavouring to get the approval of this Council so that one of the complaints made by Members today—that the public does not know what rate of interest is to be charged—would be disposed of as early as possible. As the hon. Member, Mr. Bobb has said, the Corporation cannot fix a definite rate of interest on loans when it does not know how much it would have to pay on the money which is raised for it to dispense loans. That is commonsense.

I hope, and I feel sure the hope will be realized, that within a short time the Corporation will announce the rate of interest that it will charge, because I do appreciate that it is a very important thing for the people to know. We have been talking of the usefulness of the Corporation ever since this Government came into power, and ever since we decided to implement the recommendations of the International Bank which sent its team of experts down here. Everything cannot be done overnight. These things have to be properly planned. We would meet obstacles as we go along and would have to overcome them. When we pass this motion today, the Corporation would have no excuse for any further delay in letting the people

[Mr. Gajraj]

understand in what way it is proposed to help them and how much they would have to pay for the help they get.

I am very pleased that hon. Members have taken the opportunity to bring to the attention of this Council the fear which citizens have expressed in regard to the way in which the Credit Corporation has begun its work, because this Legislature sets the policy or approves of the policy that is proposed, but as we all know no Member of the Legislative Council is eligible for a seat on the Board of Directors of the Credit Corporation. We have very carefully ensured that no vestige of political pressure can be used in the Credit Corporation to assist any person to get an advantage over another. Since we have accepted that, we have every right in this Council to sound out the fears of the people and to say what we ourselves may feel can happen, so as to guide the gentlemen who have been placed in the position of responsibility to carry out the functions of the Credit Corporation.

I feel sure that those men, chosen as they are from very important walks of life—men of great experience—would welcome the information which they would glean from this Body this afternoon, because they themselves would not be able to know the full amount of public feeling and reaction. So this Council must be used by Members as a sounding-board to let the Directors of the Credit Corporation know what the fears of the people are, and in turn let the people of the country know their legislators are alive and awake to their interest, and are prepared, within constitutional limits, to place their views and their fears in the proper way and before the proper authorities.

It is very important, Sir, that the Credit Corporation should create a favourable atmosphere not only at headquarters but right through the country, and because of the necessity for creating such a favourable atmosphere contentment of its staff becomes a prerequisite. I was, however, very pleased to find that several hon. Members have made it clear that those persons whom we decided will form the nucleus of the staff of the Credit Corporation—I refer to those employed in the Agricultural Department as Supervisors of the Co-operative Credit Banks—should be happy in their position. I want to join my colleagues in saying that we expect the Board of Directors of the Credit Corporation to fix that particular aspect of their organization properly in as quick a time as possible. Unless those individuals are satisfied and happy, they cannot be expected fully to carry out their duties in making the people of the country satisfied and happy over what they may wish to do in making applications.

These District Managers, of whom we have been told quite a good deal while the Bill was being debated in this Council, must make themselves known to the people in the areas in which they work, and not only just sit in their offices and receive applications for loans. It is my view that these District Managers must go around their area and when necessary encourage the people how to get together in order to improve themselves economically. It is only by going out to the people and satisfying the people that we have an interest in their welfare, that we can hope or expect to have them continue to increase their confidence in us.

This Government, since it has been in power, has done a considerable amount of work. We have passed a good deal of legislation. We have been

building up the momentum for our housing, trying to get all things done so that this Development Programme will be implemented with all speed possible. It is true that we, as Members of this Council, do not blow our trumpet enough. That is how I come to the suggestion made by the hon. Member Mr. Jailal. We have in Finance Committee made it very clear that we are prepared to back the Bureau of Public Information to the hilt, so that they may carry to the people of the country as much information as they need regarding the work this Government is doing in the interest of the country. They have done a good deal since they started a few months now.

I join with other Members in expressing the hope that the B.P.I. would set up an increased tempo and get over to the people more of what we are doing here in their interest, because if every Member were to speak on every matter which comes before this Council, then certainly the business of this Council would be seriously retarded. We cannot do that all the time. When we find that the business before the Council is such that it should be accepted readily we just allow those who are moving, or those who may have any particular points to put forward, to speak, and thus get through the business as quickly as possible. I think we should ask the B.P.I. to increase their tempo and enlarge the scope of their activities so as to give as much information as possible to the people and let them realize that we do not merely come here and pass motions and Bills, but that we do these things absolutely with the interest of the country at heart and believing that we can raise the economic level of the broad masses of our people to a fairly high degree.

I would like to say too that I do not think Members of this Council

should endeavour to give the impression—as the hon. Member, Mr. Lee, did a little while ago—that this Government should turn to H.M. Government every now and again seeking further assistance by way of loans to carry out our projects. We have embarked upon our Development Plan and we have been assured of a certain amount of financial assistance from H.M. Government, and certain sums from our own funds have also been earmarked for development work, I think that, having decided upon what we feel is necessary, and being satisfied that the money is available, we should go all out towards reaching our goal, and as we proceed with our development projects I am sure we will find the revenue of this country increasing.

It would be a sorry day for us if, in spite of all our endeavours to put into production large areas of land which for years have been under forest or under water, to increase the size and value of our livestock industry, to increase the output of minerals which come from our soil—if we do all those things and the revenue of this country does not increase, then we would have to confess that we have failed in the task we have set ourselves. So I say we must get accustomed to the knowledge that we must stand on our own feet economically. We must abandon the peculiar habit of carrying our hats in our hands. We have expressed our gratitude for what financial assistance we have received from H.M. Government, but we must build ourselves economically and stand with our feet firmly planted in the ground so as to justify our return to that form of government which we all feel sorry we lost as a result of regrettable circumstances last year, and we hope we will do better in the future when we turn our attention once more to the achievement of what has always been the goal of all responsible people in British Guiana

[Mr. Gajraj]

—self-government within the Commonwealth. But we cannot hope to turn our eyes that way if we are continually going to be beggars and borrowers. We must build economically sound industries and have our finances so arranged that we could speak our minds and say what we feel without fear of losing a pittance here or there. That is the way I feel about it.

I am supporting the motion and I feel that we are doing our duty; we are doing the right thing in providing that in the first three years of its life the Corporation should operate on Colony funds, paying an interest rate of not more than 3 per cent.

**Miss Collins:** I associate myself with all that has been said by previous speakers, except the hon. Member, Mr. Lee, and I would like to say that whatever difficulties he appears to be anticipating, it would be in the interest of the masses if we could expedite the social and economic advancement of British Guiana.

**Mr. Lee:** I wish to move an amendment to the motion by the deletion of the words "whether such sums are provided from the proceeds of loans or otherwise" and the substitution of the words: "from loans by H.M. Treasury."

**Mr. Speaker:** Have you arranged with anybody to second that amendment?

**Mr. Lee:** I have not arranged with anyone and I do not expect any Member to second my amendment, but I have to put it forward and I think it explains what I mean.

**Mr. Speaker:** As there is no seconder I shall not be able to put it to the vote.

**Mr. Farnum:** I am going to support the motion but I would like to say that there was quite a great deal of misconception as regards the working of the Credit Corporation and as to how loans would be given to people, and I know that His Excellency was quite aware of that misconception. It was for that reason that the seminars were arranged, and I can say that they have cleared away those misconceptions. I had the privilege of declaring open the seminar held in Essequibo, and I knew at the time of the opening that there was a certain amount of tension bordering on antagonism to the Corporation by the members of the Regional Development Committee in that area, but after the Managing-Director explained the working of the Corporation and the lecturers had spoken, the situation was completely changed to one of general friendliness. The feeling had been that the Credit Corporation was usurping powers that really belonged to the Regional Development Committee—that all applications for loans should pass through the Regional Development Committee instead of being made direct to the Corporation. After the Director had explained the procedure the members of the Regional Development Committee were perfectly satisfied, and there was a very cordial atmosphere.

With your permission, Sir, I would like to quote some of the expressions of appreciation which came from people of the Essequibo Coast, the Essequibo Islands and the Pomeroun. I quote:

"The entire Seminar was a triumph of organisation. The programme was of a high standard and permitted good correlation, integration, following up active participation on the part of the members. The team spirit, enthusiasm and goodwill were ever present and manifest in the excellent camaraderie that pervaded the entire Seminar. The lectures given at the Seminar were wonderful. I never

expected to have such instruction from them."

"I feel I am privileged to say that the knowledge gained has enabled me to understand and appreciate the full working of the Development Programme and the Credit Corporation."

The success of the Seminar was due to the excellent arrangement by Mr Hockenhull, Director of Studies, and Mr. A. A. Thompson, Resident Tutor of the Extra-Mural Department of the University College of the West Indies.

**The Financial Secretary:** First of all, I should like to express my gratitude to those Members who spoke in support of the motion. What has been said today merely reinforces what was said when this matter was introduced in Finance Committee. I have noted the criticisms made by hon. Members and I promise that I will do what I can to resolve the difficulties which exist in so far as the Corporation is concerned. I should also like to make this point. The Corporation is quite a big body and like all big bodies it has had its difficulties in getting under way. Since we met in Finance Committee I have met two members of the Board of the Corporation and have had talks with them. Tomorrow I will meet members of the staff and I can give this Council the assurance that I will do all I can to resolve the difficulties that exist. I was a member of the old Credit Banks for over seven years, and if my experience over those seven years can be of any benefit to the Corpora-

tion, I shall certainly place it at its disposal.

The Credit Corporation, I believe falls within my portfolio and, therefore, it would be part of my duties to do what I can to help it along. I have no doubt that the Corporation is going to prove itself quite a constructive force in the life of this country, and that the officers and others who serve in it will do so creditably. I was sorry to hear the criticisms of my hon. Friend, Mr. Lee, but I feel that eventually he will come along with an open confession and say that after all the Corporation has been a Godsend to British Guiana. Again, I wish to say thanks to those Members who have spoken in support of the motion, and to renew my promise that I will do all I can to see that the Corporation gets off to a happy start as, I think, every body wants to see it do.

Motion put, the Council dividing and voting as follows:

For: Dr. Fraser, Messrs. Sugrim Singh, Jailal, Carter, Macnie, Phang Ramphal, Lord, Raatgever, Tello, Gajraj, Smellie, Farnum, and the Financial Secretary; Mrs. Dey and Miss Collins—16.

Against: Mr. Lee—1.

Motion carried.

**Mr. Speaker:** Council will now adjourn *sine die*.