

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

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

TUESDAY, 8TH FEBRUARY, 1955.

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

PRESENT

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

Ex-Officio Members:—

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

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

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

Nominated Members of Executive Council:—

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

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

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

The Hon. G. H. Smellie.

The Hon. R. C. Tello.

Deputy Speaker:—

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

Nominated Officials:—

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

Mr. J. I. Ramphal.

Nominated Unofficials:—

Mr. T. Lee.

Mr. W. A. Phang.

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

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

Mr. C. A. Carter.

Rev. D. C. J. Bobb.

Mr. H. Rahaman.

Miss Gertie H. Collins.

Mrs. Esther E. Dey.

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

Mr. R. B. Jailal.

Clerk of the Legislature—

Mr. I. Crum Ewing.

Assistant Clerk of the Legislature—

Mr. E. V. Viapree (acting).

Absent:—

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

The Hon. R. B. Gajraj.—on leave.

Mr. E. F. Correia—on leave.

Dr. H. A. Fraser—on leave.

Mr. Sugrim Singh.

The Speaker read prayers.

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Friday, 4th February, 1955, as printed and circulated, were taken as read and confirmed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Speaker: Shortly before coming into the Council Chamber the hon. Member, Mr. Lee asked to be excused, but I cannot say for how long a period. He may or may not be here today.

The hon. Member, Dr. Fraser, has been excused from attending today.

TEACHERS PENSIONS (AMENDMENT) BILL

The Attorney General on behalf of the Chief Secretary gave notice of the introduction and first reading of a Bill intituled :

"An Ordinance further to amend the Teacher's Pensions Ordinance with respect to the rate of Pension."

PENSIONS (AMENDMENT) BILL

The Attorney General on behalf the Chief Secretary gave notice of the introduction and first reading of a Bill intituled :

"An Ordinance further to amend the Pensions Ordinance, 1933, with respect to the gratuities payable to Officers on retirement."

ACQUISITION OF LANDS FOR SETTLEMENT AND HOUSING

Mr. Phang on behalf of Mr. Lee gave notice of the following questions:

(i) **The Member for Agriculture, Forests, Lands and Mines:**

- (a) Is Government contemplating the purchase of Henrietta, Leguan, for a settlement scheme?
- (b) If the answer is in the affirmative, does Government propose to conclude the agreement shortly?

(ii) **The Member for Labour, Health and Housing :**

- (a) Is Government considering the acquisition of the lands at Osterbeck, Anna Maria, Success and Maryville, Leguan, for the purpose of housing?
- (b) If the answer is in the affirmative, will Government state when those housing schemes will be commenced?

ORDER OF THE DAY

APPROPRIATION BILL

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

"An Ordinance to appropriate the Supplies granted in the current Session of the Legislative Council".

Mr. Speaker: May I have from hon. Members who wish to speak this afternoon some indication to that effect? I see, for instance, the hon. Member, Mr. Luckhoo here. I do not know if he intends to speak.

Mr. Luckhoo: I am very anxious that we should complete this Bill as quickly as possible. I reserve my comments until such time as we are considering the individual Heads.

Mr. Macnie: I may speak, Sir.

Mr. Phang: I may speak, too, Sir.

Mr. Tello: At our last meeting I was commenting on the question of income tax revision, and now I propose to make a few remarks under the head "Services". I am certain that this Council has no need to be reminded of the services this Government has put into practice since its coming into being, and I want to make mention especially of the extensive service of the Mobile Dental Unit which is covering the entire coast, attracting much attention and reaching out to the children of great

need. The introduction of the Mobile Dental Unit has been something of great pleasure to the small man and the children of the small man. The elementary schools have become far more pleasant to the children of the small man than they were before the introduction of this service. I would like to point out these things because in the normal affairs of life one would not hear about them unless they are brought out by the people in the area concerned.

I think Members of the Council are aware that quite recently the Medical Department had the pleasure of opening a new wing at the Public Hospital, Berbice, thus extending its meritorious and commendable service in the County of Berbice. It is the desire of this Government to reach as many people as possible with all the services possible, and it must be welcome news to all of us, and to the public as a whole, to learn that the erection of the Cottage Hospital at Leguan is now nearing completion. I would also like to make reference to the very yeoman service being rendered by the officers of the Public Health Service, especially in the rural areas. As one moves around in these areas at the present time he must become conscious of the improvements in the sanitary and other public health conditions there. One must also become aware of the creditable work being carried out with respect to electrification and other amenities under the guidance and influence of a stable Government.

This Government was always anxious, if not excessively so, to probe into the general question of health and the Health Services in the Colony. Each of us here is aware of the fact that Government and the Ministry concerned have never faltered and never lost an opportunity to appoint, as quickly as possible, the Clark Com-

mittee to inquire into our medical services. Here, I must digress in order to pay a tribute to Government for the steps they have taken, and for the very expeditious way in which the Committee handled the question. It is quite true that the Ministry concerned has not yet seen it fit to publish the report of the Committee, but I do know that the Ministry has been under pressure, and that in due course it will be done.

I would also like to refer to the question of industries and the progress made within the last 12 months. The Government in power has always been conscious of the need of raising the standard of living of the people as a whole, and we are also conscious of the need for working in the best possible manner and with the best means at our disposal, to keep the cost of living down. Development is our watchword. We are doing our best to develop the resources of the Colony, and this must involve a great deal of heavy expenditure. One of the ways and means we see of meeting this problem of development, and of bringing a great deal of accupation for the Colony, is the encouragement of new industries. With this object in view, this Government has never lost an opportunity of introducing capital and offering every possible concession for the encouragement of new or pioneer industries.

There is a great deal of behind-the-scenes activity for the introduction of new industries, and every encouragement is also being given for the expansion and improvement of existing industries. We realise that there is a great and growing army of unemployed, and that we must try to reduce the size of this army by increasing our avenues of employment. As I see the situation, Government is certainly on the right track in introducing new taxation, new avenues and new forms

[Mr. Tello]

of employment, in order to raise the necessary funds for development, without increasing the cost of living. These activities of Government are never given great publicity, neither is it desired that that should be done. Government's activities have been accelerated very much by the Social Welfare Services, and we are grateful for the support given by that Department. Government has gone further by lifting that form of export duty in order to make the cottage industries more thriving than they have been in the past, and in order to create wider interest in them.

You will excuse me, Sir, if I make reference to the valuable assistance rendered to the small farmer—the provision growers who have been loaned money to purchase or hire machinery so as to enable them to improve their production quota for the open market. Government has also decontrolled the selling prices of ground provisions because it is confident this would encourage greater production, and encourage production itself to find a greater level in the open market. A principal source of satisfaction is recognised in the fact that an economic market price still exists. The farmer can now go into farming not so much as a gamble, but with the knowledge that there is a minimum price for provisions that has been economically fixed. From the labour welfare point of view, I think that this particular year, 1954, can be described as a year of industrial peace and progress. In that respect I would like to pay a special tribute to the Labour Department for the guidance and assistance rendered to the trade union movement, and also for its benevolent and fatherly attitude to the movement without ever attempting to dominate and control it.

In this atmosphere of freedom, this atmosphere of tranquillity, we find the trade unions free to agitate and to negotiate for better conditions of work and for better rates of wages, and as a trade unionist I am confident in saying that their technique has improved a great deal. With the co-operation of the Labour Department and the Resident Tutor of the University College of the West Indies, and with the financial assistance of Government and industry, it was found possible to send three trade union students to Jamaica for lectures by eminent lecturers from the United Kingdom and the U.S.A. They went through a wide curriculum, covering almost every field in industrial relations. Those young men have brought back knowledge, and, as far as I am informed, at least two of them are making great efforts to disseminate that knowledge to their fellow workers.

But the Labour Department was not satisfied with that. It did not entrust the future of industrial relations to just a few men who went out and had the benefit of the seminar in Jamaica. It provided an opportunity for educating even more trade unionists in British Guiana by arranging a local seminar in which 95 students took part, drawn from 14 trade unions operating in the most important industries — sugar, rice, bauxite, lumber, forestry, electrical engineering, building and Government services. Those trade unionists have benefited, the labour force in this Colony has benefited, and the trade union movement as a whole can approach its task far more enlightened, far more confident and far more balanced in its outlook.

This peaceful period we have passed through was not influenced by fear; rather it was influenced by confidence born of knowledge and experience. Because of that great confidence

the will power of those leaders is heightened, and the influence on the discipline of their members has also been greater. It is not surprising, therefore, that the sugar industry has had a very remarkable year in spite of the inclement weather, but I desire to speak on the events of that period as they relate to the worker rather than to the employer. I would like to inform this Council that two or three years ago the Man Power Citizens' Association, during negotiations with the Sugar Producers' Association, advocated and secured agreement on what is known as incentive bonus schemes. These incentives, I would like to say at once, were never regarded as a substitute for fair wages, because I would like it placed on record here that in the year in which the incentive bonus schemes were introduced the M.P.C.A., the union with which I was then associated, and which at that time was led by the hon. Mr. L. A. Luckhoo as President, obtained an increase of 13 per cent. on the basic wages of sugar workers through normal negotiations.

The incentive bonus was never meant as a substitute for fair wages, but what we on both sides of the table saw was that it was an incentive to greater pay for more and better service. The workers accepted it, but as the scheme was new to many, new to the mass of workers, their whole hearts were not in it, and they should be pardoned for not taking it to their hearts at once, especially when we recall the amount of opposition to the scheme.

But time heals many a sore, and is always the greatest judge. I have no authentic information or true figures, but from my own experience in the trade union movement I am convinced that 1954, that peaceful year when the labourers had sufficient time to think for themselves, to think of

their true relations to the industry, sufficient time to think of their economic conditions, I am satisfied that they took those matters into full consideration, free from outside influence or pressure; free to decide for themselves and to see things in their true light, in the year 1954, in which was recorded the highest rainfall, I am satisfied that the incentive bonuses received by the workers were justly earned by them. As I look back upon it I can give this Council the assurance that the incentive bonus payment amounted to something in the vicinity of \$2 million. It was money very much needed by the working man. I must pay tribute to those workers and to the industry as a whole, and I would remind those who question the vision of Government and its influence on the people, that it is because of the sober influence of this Government that those workers were able to reflect on their interests and render the best service for greater reward.

While the workers earned more money it was possible, through the Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Fund, for them to lay down the foundation of social stability by being able to obtain shelter under the roofs of their own homes. I am informed that in 1954 more than \$1,300,000 was distributed in loans to sugar workers, and that more than 3,000 houses were built. I think it is an achievement of which we can be justly proud. I think that the children of those workers who have received more in their pay packets by better service, and who have earned greater respect from Government and the public by acquiring their own homes, will live to bless their parents and those who sponsored the idea.

I suppose you will pardon me, Sir, if I make reference to what I consider very commendable conduct and a high degree of discipline on the part of our

[Mr. Tello]

Police Force. There have been many promotions recently from the ranks and mostly among the sons of the soil. I am satisfied that those promotions were well earned, and were just rewards for good service well rendered. But there are people who are deliberately misinterpreting that recognition of meritorious service, and trying to suggest that Government is playing up to the Police because it wants to establish a Police State in this Colony. Everyone around this table knows how far from the truth that is, and how anxious we are to pay tribute where it is due and to show our appreciation in a more tangible manner than by mere words.

From time to time we have heard that there is a great shortage of technical officers, and I want also to draw this Council's attention to the fact that the Government is not blinding its eyes to the fact that there is such a shortage. But I would like to point out that the Government is making every effort to fill these offices in the near future with our own people qualified to do so. The evidence I offer in support of this statement is the growing amount of scholarships offered to our workers, especially in the Civil Service, to qualify. We have scholarships in Agriculture and in the Medical and other Departments, but what I fear, Sir, is this. In the past many of these scholarship-winners on qualifying do not return to the Colony. They can certainly be excused for not returning because the salaries offered for those senior posts are not sufficiently attractive. At one time there was pressure and great speeches made in this Council forcing Government to make provision for the registration of American qualified medicos who were born in this Colony. In spite of the fact that Government made the required provision and it is now possible for American-trained doctors to register and practise

in this Colony, we find that the field is not lucrative enough and the salaries are not attractive enough to secure them. As we look through the Service we can see that very few, if any, American-trained doctors are here with us. All this I point out to the Council because quite an unfair rumour is going around that only certain salaries in certain brackets are considered. That is not true, and I am told that if we compare them with similar posts in the Service of other Colonies in the Caribbean we would find that ours are either together with them or behind them.

Though I see the hon. Member for Communications and Works (Mr. Kendall) present, still I would like to make reference to certain things that have come very forcibly to me in respect of communications. I would like to be certain that hon. Members of this Council are aware that the Transport and Harbours Services are working at a great disadvantage and also at the highest possible efficiency to make an efficient service of the railways and ships that ply in the services of the Colony. Perhaps I should let this Council know that quite recently new trains on the West Coast, Demerara, and the East Coast, Demerara, have already completed their trial runs. This is quite obviously an effort to improve the service offered the public. Further, it is also known to the Council that money is provided for two new ships—one to be built in the Colony. I think the decision to have one of the ships built in the Colony, so as to afford experience to our local ship-building firms and an opportunity for them to improve their technique and possibly put British Guiana on the world page of ship-building, is rather a very commendable decision to take by Government. And we must not forget the opportunity it will afford for steady employment for those people engaged in that trade and the increased

employment it will afford to so many of them who are now patrolling our streets in search of work.

There is another matter we should have some degree of pride about, and that is the new stelling that is being built at Stanleytown, New Amsterdam. It is almost bringing New Amsterdam up-to-date and bringing the whole wharfing system of British Guiana up to a point that can be regarded as being modern. This also applies to a very strong and beautiful stelling built at Leguan—a stelling that is worth making a special trip to see. Sir, as we are on Communications I may as well mention that Government has embarked on improving our internal air communications. We have within the last 12 months seen new air-strips prepared and older ones reconditioned and improved. I may as well mention a very burning question, that of the East Coast Road. I just want to say in passing that if some time is taken to make a thorough plan—to plan objectively and effectively—for a road that must be of real service to the traffic of the West Coast of Berbice, it is pardonable to do so rather than hastily to run into an expenditure that may range from \$4 million to \$7 million. I say that right-thinking men would thank one for giving a great deal of thought before venturing on such an expenditure.

Now I come to another very burning question—the matter of the Government Information Service. How often have we not heard Government criticized for its hush-hush way of doing things? Government has now gone out of its way to provide machinery to supply public information. However small that machinery is, it must involve the expenditure of money. In this case the machinery that is necessary must be of some reasonable size, because it must necessarily have a degree of influence on the general pub-

lic. The B.P.I. has been criticized in this Council, in the Press and in public from time to time, but I have had the honour of sitting in this Council and hearing the work of the present Government Information Service praised. I have heard experienced Members say that the money spent on that Service is money well spent. Without experience we cannot gain knowledge, and after these 12 months of experience it has become very apparent to us that in order to heighten the effectiveness of this organisation we must widen its scope and strengthen its staff. I go around the country fairly well, and I want to say that the broadcast programme of the Government Information Service is a complete success. It has made our people more Radio conscious. The fact that more people are buying radios, more people are listening to the Government Information Service programmes shows that more people are being educated by this Service.

The Government Information Service has not taken the pattern of cheap propaganda. It has gone out of its way to enlighten our people as well as to keep them informed. If this Service is to be a reliable service to which we can look for guidance and information, whatever goes from it over the radio or is written or printed in the Press must be reliable. It must be a source of reference to which we can refer with some confidence that we are referring to an authority. If this must be the case, then we must provide the necessary staff to collect authentic information. The information that goes to the Service must be reliable and authentic, and the information that comes from it to the public must also be free from impeachment, from criticism or any question as to its truth and accuracy. If this Service must be worthwhile, I say to this Council we must provide the funds to make it possible.

[Mr. Tello]

Is it not true that today visual education is striving hard to supersede the three Rs? Is it not true that today the youth and the aged are indulging in reading more? Is it not true that the Cinema today wields a great influence on the life and character of the community as a whole? If this is so, why should Government not employ this Service as a means of reaching the people and enlightening them? Can we afford to stand aside and allow the influence of bad books, the influence of obscene pictures, the influence of immoral pictures to take full possession of our youths and do nothing about it?

In order to combat that this Government must counter with the supply of healthy pictures for both young and old. I am saying that we are perfectly correct to ask this Council to vote money to provide projection units in order to further and perfect our education of the people. Forget it not, Sir, the people must be told, the people must be informed. If they are to be informed, they must be informed through every channel and means at our disposal. We must make it possible for the Government Information Service to have the necessary utilities, the necessary tools to do the job. They must have enough provision of money to provide themselves with the wherewithal of informing the public by the printed word, by the word over or through the radio and by projected pictures, and also by personal contact.

I now come to my pet subject, the Development Plan, but I much prefer to refer to the Development Estimates. This is the one last straw on the back of the burden-bearer of the criticism of lack of vision. The mere fact that through his own initiative, through his own conception, the hon. the Financial Secretary supported by his advisers saw the necessity of presenting

these Development Estimates apart from the current Estimates is indeed evidence of the greatest vision one can think of. It is true that the Development Plan is the most talked of subject in the Colony. We hear it bandied about. We hear a great deal of criticism and a great deal of praise in respect of it. But I know this. It is perfectly true to say that this two-year Development Programme has reached right down to the people, and there is more knowledge of it than of any other programme the Government had embarked upon in previous years. I myself have advocated in this Council speed in dealing with matters, and it is true that while there is criticism of the lack of speed, nothing can be done faster than it is possible to be done. We must allow time for planning.

I want to conclude by saying that if there is one ray of hope that has come to the small man in this Colony, it is shown to him through the Development Programme. He looks upon this era of development as a new opportunity for co-operation, progress and for self-help, and he looks upon it as an opportunity to test his own ability—an opportunity knocking at his doors—as well as a challenge to his own self and his interest in the Colony. I say, I am satisfied that this Government has done its best with the tools at its disposal in presenting these two Budgets — Development and Current. We will soon consider these Budgets head by head and I suppose more criticism might be made, but, on the whole, we welcome healthy criticism, and I am very pleased again to compliment the Financial Secretary for preparing these two great documents and presenting them in such an able manner.

Lt.-Col. Haywood: I was unable to attend every meeting of the Finance Committee when the Estimates for 1955 were under consideration, and, like

other hon. Members, I felt myself to be on the horns of a dilemma. One horn of the dilemma was the fact that almost every department of Government was asking for a substantially increased vote, leading to a heavier burden on the taxpayers. The other horn of the dilemma was that, by voting against the Estimates one might be holding up the necessary work designed to benefit the people of this country as a whole. I have heard more experienced Members, and I express the view that the problem this time was more acute than for many years previously.

I join with the hon. the Financial Secretary in regretting that he was unable to make his Budget Statement before the 17th of December last, and I am more regretful that it will have taken some eight weeks since the 17th of December to pass the Budget in all its stages. Surely, it is a handicap to all Government Departments and to the Members charged with Portfolios not to be able to know exactly where they are when the financial year begins on the 1st of January. Our tempo is not fast enough: we are wasting valuable time.

It is not in my mind for the first time that we will do very well to get away from making our financial year coincide with our calendar year. December is becoming increasingly every year the most important internal trading month of the whole twelve. December is a month when the public spends as freely and as heavily as it can. I think it has become unfair to the public and to the business community, even to the Government that this month of December should be overcast with uncertainty regarding new taxation. I suggest that serious consideration be given to the question of adjusting our financial year and making it end on the 31st March instead of the 31st of December.

I go on from that suggestion to say that it does not suit these modern times that the debate on the Budget should be the annual opportunity for hon. Members to speak at great length, individually and in the aggregate, on every phase of governmental activity. Once the Finance Committee has dealt in detail with the Estimates, then, I submit, the other stages of the Budget should be carried through very quickly indeed. At the same time I do agree that there should be one occasion in the year on which hon. Members should have a "roving commission" to speak as long as they wish on almost anything whatever connected with the work of Government, but I suggest the best time to do that would be before the Estimates of the ensuing year are prepared, and I submit that June is the most suitable month. I hope soon to get another opportunity to develop this suggestion in more detail.

I intend to refer only to very few points made by the hon. the Financial Secretary on the 17th of December in the Budget Statement, and so far as the detailed Estimates are concerned I have already given my votes in Finance Committee and will do so again when we go into full committee.

Speaking of the major water-control schemes formulated by Mr. F. H. Hutchinson the hon. the Financial Secretary made a serious statement. He said:

"Experience over the years however, suggests that until such schemes are embraced, agriculture on the coast will remain disappointing, difficult and unrewarding."

More recently still, hon. Members have stated that they consider many forms of agriculture to be in a sorry state. For myself—I have travelled extensively in British Guiana; in 1954 I covered much ground and I feel I have gained a useful

[Lt.-Col. Haywood]

general knowledge of the problems facing primary producers—if the Hutchinson schemes are of such vital importance, then that is one reason why loud, reasoned and persistent calls should be made for the many millions of dollars required to carry out these schemes in their entirety. Our population is increasing rapidly and with each year that passes, thousands of young people are leaving schools to seek gainful occupation. To raise a huge loan—a sum that is breath-taking—and so increase the Public Debt would be to pass on to coming generations a heavy financial burden, but, I submit, the real problem is not whether we can afford the schemes, but whether we can afford *not* to carry them out. I am an enthusiast for the development of the Interior, but I am also well aware that very large areas on the coast and near the coast cannot at present be used to the best advantage. I feel if the Hutchinson schemes would transform our agricultural economy, then the coming generations would be able to repay the loans and would thank us for opening up thousands of square miles for them to occupy and bring into good order—thousands of square miles that are “difficult, disappointing and unrewarding.”

There is this further point that, if we can find gainful occupation for the fast-increasing population in a few years' time, then we shall be able to introduce mining industries that at present have not got a sufficiently assured domestic market. I would be most grateful to the Financial Secretary or to the hon. Member for Agriculture if he would be good enough to make a further statement on the Hutchinson schemes as a whole.

I would like to quote another passage from the Budget Statement. The Financial Secretary said:

“The only other comment I would make in connection with 1955 provision is that the rise in expenditure, to which I called attention last year is continuing. I think in all the circumstances that it might be well that someone with a knowledge of methods and organisation should overlook the entire Service with a view to seeing whether expansion in Departments is on the most economical and efficient lines.”

How heartily I agree! And how much more heartily would I have agreed had the statement been more forcibly made. I hope I shall be given a chance to make some statements on that matter, and that I shall be able to do so without making any unwarranted attack on the Civil Service.

I now pass on to the new forms of taxation which increased expenditure has made necessary. I shall have little to say on the new taxes on non-essentials, providing I get the assurance, as indeed I will, that due consideration has been given to the representations that may have been made by those who are most intimately affected by the new proposals.

I am glad that a committee is to study the difficult question of duty-free gasoline. Abuses must be checked, but none of us wishes to see efforts to develop the country's wealth hindered in any way at all.

I find it necessary to speak on the proposed changes in the restrictions on the amount of deduction allowable from Income Tax and payment of Life Insurance premiums, and Deferred Annuities. I understand that the original proposals will be modified, so that those who had taken out life insurance before the date of the Budget Statement would not be affected so far as their present commitments are concerned. I

am grateful now for that adjustment, but I feel that more study should be given to the matter as a whole.

In this Council I have heard much said about the "small man". Good luck to the "small man"! I shall support every bit as wholeheartedly as any other hon. Member, any reasonable proposal to improve the lot of the "small man". I am not out of touch with his problems; I see them every day. I have helped many "small men" and I trust I shall help many more. I have had my own experience of hardship, particularly during the crisis in England in 1931, and I shall not forget my experiences or lose sympathy with the "small man". However, my task today is to speak up on behalf of the thousand taxpayers with incomes between \$5,000 and \$15,000, and I shall describe this group as the "medium-size man". I am one of them. Hon. Members may think that my 75 inches and 230 pounds disqualify me from the description of "medium-size man", but I am speaking not of weight but of income.

The "medium-size" man will get precious little sympathy from the "small man", but it is the "small mind" that I deplore. I am well aware that I am speaking for a group that has few champions, but the group is increasing in numbers every year, and it is well for the country that this is so. It is needed every bit as much as any other group. The "medium size" man is already bearing substantial direct taxation, and all in all he already has his fair share of worry. In 1955 he will be hit by heavier indirect taxation. That is accepted, but do not decrease the ability of the "medium size" man to save for his old age, or to protect his family.

In his report Mr. Nicholas quotes the man who earns \$30,000 as an ex-

ample. What an extraordinary example to choose, when in his own appendix he shows there were only 11 such fortunate people in the whole country in 1953! If Government feels it must strike another blow at those 11, why smite a thousand and eleven at the same time? I am prepared to go into this matter in great detail and I may do so at a later stage. At this juncture I will make only three more points. I repeat that I am speaking only for a few, but in that few are men who gave five or six years' war service, during which time they were unable to take out life insurance. Why should they be penalised because war service forced them to take out insurance later in life at heavier annual premiums?

Then there is the group of self-employed men who do not enjoy the benefits of pension schemes. One such man, a mathematician of integrity and repute, has worked out that to get on the same old happy level in his old age as his opposite number in the Civil Service, he needs to put by not one-sixth of his gross income in tax-free savings, but one-fifth. It comes with bad grace from Government to widen the gap between Civil Servants and their opposite numbers in "the outer darkness" in the very year that Civil Service salaries are to be revised upwards.

Finally, if we are to compare this particular proposal with those obtaining in other West Indian Colonies, then I reply that the comparison should be full and complete, taking into account taxation in all its branches. In any case, it is a pity that this country should follow the bad example of others who have placed a disproportionate burden of taxation on their middle class or "medium-size" men.

I have spoken at some length on this matter, because I regard a principle as being involved, namely that

[Lt.-Col. Haywood]

there should be no unfair discrimination in taxation. On the whole, I have tried to avoid going into the details of the Budget, as I bear in mind that when this stage is ended we shall consider "Heads" one by one again in Committee, and as far as it can reasonably be done, I maintain that that is the best time for hon. Members to give their views on details.

I would not like to take my seat however, without telling the hon. Financial Secretary how much I admired the hard work, patience and grasp of detail shown by him and his staff during the many and long meetings of Finance Committee in January.

Mr. Bobb: It is just convenient for me to begin where the hon. Member who has just taken his seat left off, and that is by paying tribute to the hon. the Financial Secretary for what has come to be known as a very bold and lucid presentation of the Budget. No one can deny that that is the standard to which we have become accustomed. I think one of the previous speakers described this Budget as a fine piece of mathematical work, but I want to go a step further and refer to it as a masterpiece both of mathematical work and a thorough grasp of the situation in which we find ourselves. From my point of view I am intimately aware of the difficulties which anyone in his position must face in endeavouring to present a Budget which, strictly speaking, has to do with the first half of the two-year Development Programme, because last year development was by way of introduction only and, so far as I know, the situation was one where many things had to be planned, not implemented. Therefore, we really ought to compliment the hon. the Financial Sec-

retary on the pains he has taken to make the Budget possible, and on the success with which he has come through.

There are, however, several parts of the Budget Statement which have caused some concern. Reference has already been made, of course, to the introduction of certain new taxation measures. Reference has been made also to one particular item which has worried not only us in this Council, but many people outside of it. That is, the news of the withdrawal of the concession relating to gasoline for industrial purposes. That news was greeted outside of this Council with a great deal of understandable concern, and had I not known that there were adequate measures in progress to give further consideration to the proposal I, in common with a good many Members who are undoubtedly connected with the industries concerned, would have supported the idea of making representations. I would have allied myself with one or two Members who have already spoken, and would have begun to appeal to the hon. the Financial Secretary to consider replacing that concession, because I think there is a misapprehension to the effect that the concession has been already withdrawn. Unless I am entirely mistaken, I think that this point of view ought to be corrected, because hon. Members, in my opinion, were told that the concession was not withdrawn. There was only a proposal that it ought to be withdrawn.

Further, since representations were made to Government, steps were taken to appoint a Committee to look into the whole matter. In view of that I think we ought to temper our remarks and leave it to the Financial Secretary to await the recommendations of the Committee. We all hope that the Committee, on the completion of its work,

will find that the concession should be continued for the benefit of those for whom it was intended. We are largely of the opinion that the concession was being abused in certain quarters, and it was indeed unfortunate that abuses of that kind took place. But I think a remedy was there, and that was to colour the gasoline which came within the category concerned — duty free for industrial purposes — with a vivid green. I am not aware whether this suggestion has ever been considered, but it seems to be possible to have that done. There must be dripping from the engine of cars in which this gasoline would be used, and that would be a means of tracing any abuses that might take place. That would be, however, a matter for the Committee to consider.

I hope that whatever step the Committee might decide to take, the concession would not be withdrawn altogether, and that some other means will be found to increase the revenue. The hon. the Financial Secretary has not asked for suggestions in that direction as yet. I hope that those of us who are here will let it go forth from this Council that the concession has not been withdrawn, but that the proposal has been put to a Committee which is examining it, and that the decision will come back before this Council.

Another matter to which I should like to make reference is the necessity for an increase in the production of livestock. My particular interest is not in cattle and sheep and so on, but rather in smaller things like poultry and pigs. It is good for us to remember, when we speak about the lack of an agricultural policy, that many things have been done within these walls to accelerate and amplify the policy initiated

by the Department of Agriculture for the improvement of our livestock. I am sorry I have to say it myself, but on the 19th of February last year I gave notice of a motion in this Council for an examination of the question of the development of the pig industry, with special reference to substitutes for pig feed. It is true that it has taken a long time for some action to be taken. The motion was not debated but I give credit to the hon. Member for Agriculture (Sir Frank McDavid) for asking me to consent to action being taken at once to appoint a Committee, instead of going the long way by having the motion debated. That Committee has been sitting and most valuable work is being done. I am a member of the Committee and I know what I am talking about when I say that very soon proposals will be put before this Council which will require the voting of fair sums of money in order to increase not only the feed but the number of breeds of pigs and other livestock in the country.

To those who have some fear of being left out in the cold I think this bit of information should go forth. We all know there has been very much distress about the inadequacy of the supply of feed produced in this Colony, and I hope that support will be given to the suggestion that feed needed in this country should not be exported. The figures show that in 1953 as many bags of copra and rice bran were exported from this country as were used locally for pig feed and other things. We hope that will not continue, because it is true that we are grossly inadequately supplied with feed for our own use, and that we should not be exporting it at this crucial time. I am therefore very happy that constructive steps are being taken to put our pig industry on a substantial footing. I am not permitted to anticipate the interim report of the Committee, or to disclose details of what

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has taken place in the Committee, but I am very much encouraged by the degree of agreement which has been reached on most vital matters in this connection, and I am sure we are on the right road in this respect.

There are two other matters to which I would like to make reference. One is very complimentary, and I think I should not apologise for referring to it, inasmuch as this section of the Government, which is not executive, is too easily assailed for doing nothing when something is being done, and often the executive is not given credit for what it has been able to do. Let it be known that considerable sums of money are being spent, or intended to be spent on education—not only on the improvement of our school buildings, which is a very great need, and we are glad that something is being done in that direction, as it will be a long time before we fully meet that need—but also, I am very happy to say, that provision has been made for increasing the number of Government County Scholarships this year by as many as were made available last year.

There were 49 Government County Scholarships last year and for 1955 there will be 98, unless this Council changes its mind, which I am sure it will not do. The significance of that is indicated by these figures: in 1954 about 181 children qualified at the Government County Scholarship Examination, but Government could only find places for 49. Private persons and organisations found places for about six. It means that this year 49 more of those children who were unable to find places last year in recognised secondary schools will have an opportunity to do so this year. I think that is something which should give great encouragement to parents and teachers, and to the pros-

pective candidates for those examinations. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the hon. Member for Education for moving in this direction and also for making provision for an increase in the allowances to Government county scholars.

The other matter, which is not a very happy one, has to do with our social services. We expressed concern in Finance Committee at the tripartite arrangement of social services which is developing in our country. We have the Social Welfare Division of the Local Government Department, the Social Assistance Department, and now there is developing another field of social service in the Housing Department. I am sure that this country can never benefit by an arrangement of this kind, and it seems to me—and it must seem in the eyes of our neighbours—that we lack a very elementary understanding of social services. These three sections of the same field of social services really ought to be combined into one Department, and the time has fully come, in my humble opinion, when there should be considered the setting up of an independent Department of Social Services with trained staff to operate in this important field.

If we must have more and more services of this kind in different directions then the time has come for us to set up an independent Department, and let that Department take care in a full way of the services that are required. My remarks are not intended to cast any aspersion on anyone—any Member or any Department now operating these services, but to indicate that if we dare to go beyond this point with this kind of tripartite operation we are going to find a great deal of difficulty in many directions. One is the failure to provide suitable posts at high level for competent people, to offer sufficient

attraction to those who are inclined to work along that line, and to convince people outside the Government that we know what we are doing and we have some direction in the acceleration of which we speak on this important and vital matter.

I hope that although I speak of something which really ought to be spoken of at a high level it is not a matter which is going to be dropped. I remember that on more than one occasion Your Honour expressed the view that Members should put their suggestions in the form of motions so as to ensure that they are taken up in the right quarters. That lesson has burnt deeply into me, and I think of that second string to my bow, but I believe the matter is so important that it should be ventilated here, and I hope there will be no need to bring a motion at a later stage, because if I know the hon. Member for Social Welfare (Mr. Farnum) well I think he will be one of the first persons to support heartily the suggestion of an independent Department of Social Services.

Finally, I would like to say a word of thanks and congratulation to the hon. the Chief Secretary for the manner in which within a short period of time he has been able to grasp the manifold problems confronting us in this Council and this country. I was particularly impressed with his desire to pilot through his own Heads in Finance Committee and his evident interest to see the best results are achieved. I want to assure him that we are behind him, but it is also necessary for him to be cognizant of one very important fact. There is a mounting cost of administration. The hon. Member who has just spoken before me made reference to that. I do not myself see that that cost can be reduced considerably. As I see it, it will go up because we are compelled to provide

adequate stipend for people in order to be able to attract the right kind of people for the right kind of job. But it would be equally satisfactory if we can see efficiency go hand in hand with economy and no overlapping wherever these are possible. So I strongly support the point made by the hon. Member, Col. Haywood, that very early that section of the hon. the Financial Secretary's Statement, which referred to attention being given to the examination of the efficiency of the Civil Service so as to see what economies can be effected should be as speedily attended to as the circumstances would warrant.

I feel, Sir, that if we desire the services of qualified people we must pay for them, but I also feel that these qualified services should be made available for the people of this country, and I would welcome any suggestion which would make more and more available for those persons in the Service as well as those who may come into the Service the opportunity to become as highly qualified as possible, so that they may be able to take their rightful place in serving the country to which they belong. In saying this, I do not desire to impute that I would like to see any unnecessary hindrance to qualified persons from outside, who have contributions to make which we desire, taking up positions in our Service. But I look at it in this way: we who belong to this country have nowhere else to go, and we ought to look as high as possible for the best opportunities in our country to serve our country. We cannot reasonably go to our neighbours and say "Open your top doors to us."

Our structure at the present time is limited enough compared with Trinidad where there is a wide top bracket of good salaried jobs. We are narrow at the top and wide at the bottom. In Trinidad it is just the reverse and the

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average Trinidadian can always look out for an opportunity for a good job with a good salary, a job that is close to his heart, and make good there. I have studied the figures of that country and its structure, and I can see the reason why there are so many Trinidadians holding good positions in their own country. We suffer by the reverse. We do not have so many jobs in the top brackets. Therefore it is not unreasonable for us to say, "not only good salaries must be provided but as many opportunities afforded for the people of local origin to qualify." I emphasize "qualify" because there is need for qualification. I am not in favour of paying unqualified people in positions which call for the highest talent. We should help them to qualify and give them a chance to serve their country. If they make mistakes try another one until we get the needed competence. Let them know that British Guiana holds something for them to which they can look forward. I close, Sir, not on a very high note, but in the hope that when this debate is concluded in this Council we shall have the satisfaction of seeing Departments streamlined with the determination to carry our country farther forward.

Mr. Macnie: Sir, I hope not to detain the Council for long. I was not prepared to speak now, but I have been called upon to do so, and I have made a few notes on some of the things which have been said by certain hon. Members and on which I feel I must inform this Council because of my connection with one or two of those matters. Before I close I hope that I would be able to say a few words on the hon. the Financial Secretary's most able Budget Statement which is really the subject of our debate.

The hon. Member, Mr. Jailal, must be congratulated on the tho-

roughness with which he prepared himself before coming to the Council for this debate in which he was the first speaker. I feel sure, Sir, knowing my friend as I do, it was not his intention to convey a pessimistic impression, but I must confess that I did acquire a sense of some pessimism on his part. I do not have any sense of pessimism; I am hopeful of the future. When I say that the hon. Member, Mr. Jailal, conveyed a sense of pessimism, I may put it more correctly by saying that to my mind he did convey the impression that practically nothing had been done by the past Governments, and that if anything had been done by the present Government it was not done quickly enough. Well, Sir, I do not share the view that nothing had been done by the past Governments, especially the Governments of the past 20 years. I will not go too far back, although I have no doubt, Your Honour, others in this Council than myself are prone to look back farther.

I think there is something to be said, if I may so interpret his criticism, that in some respects there is a sense of disappointment that things have not been done as quickly enough, but at the same time I for one recognize that the Government is handicapped in very many respects in finding the tools, the equipment, with which to proceed with many of their most essential schemes. One thing that is most important—and that I share wholeheartedly with the hon. Member, Mr. Jailal—is this. He made quite clear the view that I always maintain, a view which the hon. Mr. Tello, who is a Member of the Government, endorsed when he referred to those of us who have the privilege of being in this Council but not in the Government as "Floor" Members of this Council. My strong conviction—I know it is not accepted by everyone—is that there is the Government and there are Members of this Council who are

not of the Government. In saying that I do not refer to the Interim Legislature as the Government of this Colony, and I feel that is the correct view.

The hon. Mr. Tello had referred to us, the "Floor" Members of this Council, as making criticism when we had ample opportunity of doing so before. Well, Sir, I do not think it is quite fair to suggest that any hon. "Floor" Member has not availed himself of every opportunity of making criticism of Government, especially in Finance Committee and in the open Council, and I would say, Sir, that the Government itself, those other than the "Floor" Members, would agree when I say that 99 per cent. of the criticism from "Floor" Members has been constructive and frank. It will be my endeavour so long as I am privileged to be here to follow that line.

The hon. Member, Mr. Jailal, referred to the Block III area on the Corntyne. It has been my privilege to serve this Colony and to be associated with that area for five years, but long before the present Scheme was commenced. In fact, the Block III Scheme was thought of during that very time. As I am now connected with that area on the Drainage and Irrigation Board, as it has been made a Drainage and Irrigation area, I thought I should give the real reasons about the pasture areas there. It is my firm understanding that the decision to make the area at the rear of what is known as the Whitaker Dam and canal as a pasture area has been taken after very close observation on the spot and not in Georgetown but with the Local Authorities and other directly interested in the development of the whole of that area. That is my understanding. It is a matter which has been under consideration for some time. I know the dam very well. It was put down some 20 years ago with funds provided by the U.K. Government. I

would support the idea that the cattle be put beyond the third depth. I know the land very well, and I hope soon to be able to go back to it and walk there without being drowned. I would like to explain that as I understand it, and as a member of the Drainage and Irrigation Board.

Concerning the other point raised by the hon. Member, Mr. Jailal in relation to Block III, to the effect that a promise was made, I am not going to say whether or not a promise was made by the man who occupied the highest position in this country some years ago—I will avoid names. I have always asked persons in high positions not to make a statement which might be interpreted as a promise, unless they put it on record and see that it is fulfilled. That I did for many years of my life, and still do. But whether the promise was made or not is immaterial. What matters is whether there is any record of it. I have tried to find out by having the records of the appropriate department searched, and to the best of my knowledge there is no record of that promise—that the water would be brought to the front lands of Block III, that is, the land on either side of the public road, under the present drainage and irrigation system.

Furthermore, no provision for such works was made in the scheme as it was approved. However, knowing the area as I do, and the people as well, I agree wholeheartedly with the hon. Member, Mr. Jailal, that efforts should be made to bring water to the front lands, and my view is that the approach in this respect should be made by the Local Authorities to the hon. the Member for Local Government and Social Welfare through the proper channels, and I am sure that when the matter comes before the hon. Member he will give it his support. Because there is no question that the land to

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which the hon. Member, Mr. Jailal and myself are referring is in the vicinity of the public road and the Block, and which can produce remarkably good vegetables like tomatoes. There are one or two gardens there, and, as a matter of fact the Agriculture Department had a demonstration garden just behind the post office at No. 63.

Again, touching on drainage and irrigation, the hon. Member Mr. Jailal was a little restive, and suggested the Canje Creek had all the water necessary for providing irrigation, but in the same breath asked what was the Torani Canal for. Well, the purpose of the Torani Canal is to supplement the water supply and the irrigation facilities of the Canje Creek with water from the Berbice River, so that the irrigation of these large areas can be well looked after. It is regrettable, as a matter of fact it is a nightmare, to some people—and I mentioned this in Finance Committee—that there seems to be no urge to get the Torani job done. I hope my remarks in Finance Committee might result in a little more speeding up in the work and a little more urge in getting the job done, because until the job is done nothing else can be done.

I think it was the hon. Member, Mr. Jailal who spoke of delays people complain of in dealing with the Credit Corporation. As I understand it, and I stand to be corrected, the whole decision rests with the Regional Development Committees. If the loan of an applicant is approved, then he hears of it; if not, he is not always told that it has not been approved. The persons carrying out the programme of the Credit Corporation should consider whether it does not need a little examination—the functioning of the Regional Development Committees. We all know of 'influence' on these committees, regretably; 'influence' or whatever you

may like to call it. I will not go further than that: it would not be proper to do so.

The hon. Member, Mr. Tello, was at pains to expound on the work of Government, and in doing so he digressed for a moment and paid tribute to the Labour Department in which I wish to join. He went on to speak about the Sugar industry, and referred to the incentive bonuses and the increase in the cost of living. He told us that the things were done at the instance of a Union of which he is a member and in which he held office. It is very correct—what the hon. Member says, but the point I want to make is that, he said that in the year to which he referred there was an increase in the cost of living allowance of 13 per cent. The matter is rather in the forefront of the minds of sugar workers at the moment, and I would like to remind this Council that since that happened there has been a drop in the price of the sugar we sell to the United Kingdom under the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement, of \$6.40 per ton in 1954; and in 1955 a drop of five shillings per ton—and the world price is much lower.

I would not only wish to congratulate the hon. Col. Haywood on the resoluteness of his contribution to the debate which we heard earlier this afternoon, but I also wish to associate myself strongly with all of the remarks, and especially those in which he referred to income tax. I have his permission, Sir, to say one thing in connection with them—and this may cause some surprise—and that is, Col. Haywood, in speaking of a salary bracket, spoke in terms of £5,000 to £15,000 per month. I had a feeling that Col. Haywood was speaking of £s. per annum but he meant dollars. There are still people who think in terms of £s. per annum. I am not accustomed to gambling, but I

would take a bet that Mr. Nicholas and the competent head of our Income Tax Department would have to go far in income tax assessment to find any person in the bracket referred to in Col. Haywood's figures.

Mr. Speaker: I think that there is provision for £30,000.

Mr. Macnie : I have Col. Haywood's permission to make it perfectly clear that he was speaking in terms of dollars. I do not think I would be far wrong in saying that our friend, the hon. the Financial Secretary, must have found it extremely difficult to compile the figures in his Budget Statement, but he has done an extremely good job. I would like to refer to one or two of his statements. On page 12 of the Budget Statement he refers to expenditure in 1954 and the supplementary provisions that became necessary during that year, and this is what he says:

" On the whole available evidence suggests that the higher levels of departmental control and supervision of expenditure votes, leaves much to be desired".

Those are the words I would like to underline. I am one of those who acknowledge the difficulty in presenting a Budget as has been done in the past, but no sooner than the Budget was presented many Departments came forward to the Legislature with supplementary provisions for things which they must have foreseen. We have had Departments coming forward with supplementary provisions for things like office equipment—duplicating machines and so on. I for one intend, so long as I am here, to oppose very strongly any supplementary expenditure for this year, until I am supplied with details showing that the expenditure is essential and could not have been foreseen. I feel sure, in view of what the hon. the Financial Secretary has said in his statement, that what I have tried to add would be supported by the officials who sit in

this Council—senior officials of the Administration—and that they would do their utmost to avoid unnecessary requests for supplementary expenditure.

I heartily agree with what Col. Haywood has said with respect to the Financial Secretary's statement, on page 17, where he refers to the need for someone to examine the entire Civil Service with a view to streamlining it and improving its efficiency, and particularly with a view to avoiding overlapping for which we are at present famous. I do not want to prolong this question of overlapping, but I have spoken about it more than once in Finance Committee. We have the Public Works Department erecting Government buildings, and we also have the Education Department building Government schools. Then we have the Housing Department, Community Organisers and the like doing what I regard as welfare work, and we also have the Local Government, the Social Welfare Department and other officers doing another branch of the same work. I think we can have more efficiency and, possibly, reduced expenditure by trying to get a little bit more control and amalgamation, rather than having different officers going about the country, all sincere in their efforts to carry out their different responsibilities. When they do report, they do so not only to different Heads of Departments but to different Ministers of Government.

Finally, I would like to touch upon the question of land settlement. We note the very good efforts being made by Government and others with regard to housing, but I would go back to what some hon. Members may call my hobby horse, and say again that housing alone would not achieve anything. Housing must go along with other things—improved methods of living and a greater pursuit of gainful occupations. It is no use putting a man in

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a better house unless we can do something at the same time to help him towards living and working more gainfully. That is where I feel there will be an enormous burden on the Land Settlement Department, now headed by the hon. Member, Mr. Lord, under the hon. Member for Agriculture. I regard it as being of the greatest possible importance that action be taken and pursued steadily—month after month—to get on with land settlement schemes. It is going to take a long time before those areas which will be greatly improved by the Boeraserie Extension Project are put under cultivation. The contractors are now on the job.

It will also be a long time before Blocks I and II on the Corentyne are ready for inclusion in land settlement schemes, but there are other lands. There are lands on the river banks—the Demerara and Berbice Rivers and elsewhere which, if necessary, can be acquired. Let it be found out what the people who own them want for them. Those lands should be empoldered and given to those people who have no land. Do not let us give those lands to those who already have and would rent them and exploit their tenants. On this point I disagree with certain words in the Financial Secretary's Budget Statement. At the top of page 13 he says:

"Land Settlement on the coastal areas will require the completion of present drainage and irrigation schemes, but early action will be taken to establish a pilot project on the riverain lands.

I agree that these things have to be carefully examined and, as the Financial Secretary says elsewhere, that planning must be careful, but I submit that in the Government, and maybe outside, there is sufficient knowledge and experience gained from existing land settlement schemes that we should not be satisfied with just a pilot

land settlement scheme. What we need is a whole lot of land settlement schemes guided by competent pilots who can make use of the several reports available on the subject. The Archives are full of such reports. We have at the head of the Land Settlement Department an officer whose life has been associated with land and has great knowledge of the Colony generally. Let us get on with it; let us push on with what I regard as the No. 1 project in the development and future welfare of the people of this country.

Mr. Phang: The increased cost of administration has been the subject of considerable discussion among members in Finance Committee. It seems to me that there are some Heads of Departments who vie with each other to get as much money as possible which they spend unnecessarily and wastefully. There are other Heads of Departments who take umbrage when they do not get what they want. During consideration of the estimates in Finance Committee there were items which could not be considered as anything other than a waste of public funds.

I am glad that the hon. Member on my right (Mr. Macnie) mentioned the question of duplication of services. The lack of co-ordination and co-operation of Departments has been mentioned by him over and over again but no steps have been taken in the matter. One would have thought that a Member of Council having made remarks of that kind something would have been done. There is duplication causing irritation, delay and waste, and still nothing has been done about it. The Financial Secretary, as the watch-dog of the Treasury, has done as much as possible to curb expenditure, but it is still going up by leaps and bounds because of waste. I think it is time a halt was called to

this waste of public funds, for instead of balancing the budget by means of additioned taxation, I think there should be a surplus to relieve taxation. I wish to add my compliment to the Financial Secretary on the Budget he has presented which must have been a stupendous task, short-staffed as his Department is.

I wish to associate myself with the criticisms made by the hon. Mr. Jallal with regard to the Department of Agriculture. I do not think we get our money's worth, which amounts to millions of dollars over a period of years, from the services performed by this Department. I have been living in the North-West District for 40 years and I have seen agricultural officers come and go. With the exception of Messrs. Cole, Dowding and Matthews, of revered memory, there were very few others who were worth their salt. They were a breed apart. They did not help the farmers at all. Some 20 years ago the farmers wanted their own experiment station in the North-West District. They applied for and secured a parcel of land. On the foothills of the Wauna range there is a white sand reef. On that reef we wanted to know what we should plant. My particular job at that time was to experiment with alfalfa, clover, yuba cane and other fodder crops. Another man's job was to experiment with black and white hiari, a fish poison botanically called *Loncocarpus*. We wanted to know what to do with the white sand, because it contained considerable humus. We applied to the Department of Agriculture for help. An officer was sent. One sunny morning he appeared in immaculate white, solar topee, great horn-rimmed spectacles, and looking very wise. He looked at the land, asked many questions and took copious notes. He took away some samples and some time afterwards we were told that the soil was ideal for the cultivation of ground nuts. We

planted ground nuts but at reaping time we found we had empty shells. We asked the Department what was wrong and we were told that we should have broken down the fertility of the soil by planting a crop of corn. We had spent a lot of money on the ground nuts. There were many cases of that kind. The farmers suffered great loss of their crops of tannias year after year through the cockel pest and we applied to the Department again for assistance. An officer was sent up who went around with us, looked at the land and the crop which was all seared and yellow. He asked questions and returned to Georgetown and wrote a learned article which was published in the Farm Journal. But that was all; he could not tell us what to do. Now tannias are a thing of the past in the North-West District.

As regards the Hosororo Experiment Station I would like to say that at considerable expenditure of taxpayers' money they cleared a large area of land to plant mahogany which grew well. An officer of the Department of Agriculture came and wanted to plant cocoa, but instead of clearing another area of forest he cut down the mahogany trees! Vandalism. That is the sort of thing we get. I could go on telling stories like that for a whole day.

I would like to turn my attention to the Development Estimates. Once again there is not a single cent allocated to the North-West District. Government has shown a complete lack of consideration for the people of the North-West, but it is said that behind every dark cloud there is a silver lining; we are going to be helped by foreign money. On this point I would like to quote from the hon. the Financial Secretary's Budget Statement in which he states on page 3:

"Looming in even greater importance than tantalite/colombite is manganese. A new local Company, the North West Gui-

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ana, was registered this year. The Company is a subsidiary of the Union Carbide Corporation of New York and will engage in the production of manganese ore in the North West District. This area, as Members know, is one with a long record of depression."

This is a district with a long record of depression and nothing has been done for it.

Mr. Speaker: Would the hon. Member indicate if he could say what could have been done? What about citrus?

Mr. Phang: That is the Hosororo Station, which is Government's. You have asked, Sir, what could have been done for the North West District. The people had been asking for a canal to be constructed from the Hemilana to the Amakura. There is a shortage of land for cultivation in the North-West District and the people have asked for the opening up of that area so that they can have lands to cultivate, but Government has done nothing about it. I think that when the Governor went there on the last occasion the people spoke to him about it, but I do not know what he told them.

Mr. Speaker: Why don't you make a motion. The hon. Member, Mr. Farnum, knows that district very well.

Mr. Farnum (Member for Local Government, Social Welfare and Co-operative Development): I may remind the hon. Member, Mr. Phang, that a Committee was appointed to go into the question of the North West District, the Roth Committee, and Mr. Phang was a member of that Committee. That Committee made recommendations for the improvement of conditions in that District.

Mr. Phang: That was one of the recommendations of that Committee and it has not been implemented. There are lots of things that can be done for the improvement of conditions in the North-West District, but it is a forgotten area.

Mr. Speaker: That Committee has reported and the Report laid on the table of this Council.

Mr. Phang: Some time ago I moved a motion in this Council and a Committee was appointed to go to the North West District and investigate the conditions there. They made a whole lot of recommendations very few of which were implemented.

Mr. Speaker: What was that Committee? Was it a Committee of this Council?

Mr. Farnum: Yes.

Mr. Speaker: Who was the Chairman?

Mr. Farnum: I think Mr. Roth was the Chairman.

Mr. Phang: I drew the Governor's attention to the fact that Tuberculosis was very rampant in the North-West District. I see the Tuberculosis Campaign is doing admirable work, but strange to say in the North-West District where this disease is rampant it has not reached there. I am hoping that something will be done for this area.

Mr. Speaker: Does any other floor Member wish to contribute to the debate? I would be glad to know.

Mr. Ramphal: I suggest that we take the adjournment now.

Mr. Speaker: I am going to do that.

Mr. Carter: I shall be speaking tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker: Not tomorrow! I propose to adjourn until Thursday. I

hope we will get through on Thursday and, Mr. Financial Secretary, you will be able to proceed with your estimates.

The Financial Secretary (Mr. Fraser): It depends, Sir, on when the speeches are concluded.

Mr. Speaker: I adjourn the Council to Thursday, 10th February, 1955, at 2 p.m.