

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

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

THURSDAY, 11TH FEBRUARY, 1954

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

PRESENT :

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

Ex-Officio Members:—

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

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

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

Nominated Members of Executive Council:—

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

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

The Hon. W. O. R. Kendall.

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

The Hon. G. H. Smellie.

The Hon. R. B. Gajraj.

The Hon. R. C. Tello.

Deputy Speaker:—

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

Nominated Officials:—

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

Mr. J. I. Ramphal.

Nominated Unofficials:—

Mr. T. Lee.

Mr. W. A. Phang.

Mr. L. A. Luckhoo.

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

Mr. C. A. Carter.

Mr. E. F. Correia.

Rev. D. C. J. Bobb.

Mr. H. Rahaman.

Miss Gertie H. Collins.

Mrs. Esther E. Dey.

Dr. H. A. Fraser.

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

Mr. R. B. Jailal.

Mr. Sugrim Singh.

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

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

The Speaker read prayers.

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Monday, the 11th of January, 1954, as printed and circulated, were taken as read.

PROCEDURE ON ESTIMATES.

The Attorney-General: Before the Minutes are put to the Council for confirmation, with regard to the note relating to the procedure to be adopted in respect of the Estimates I think it should be clear that although discussion may take place on the Estimates in Finance Committee, any such discussion will not interfere with or preclude discussion when the Appropriation Bill itself is before Council. That is the real point arising out of the hon. Member's question when we were here on the last occasion. In other words, as I understand it, the point raised by the hon. Member was whether discussion in Finance Committee would interfere with any discussion which would take place in the Council as a whole. I think it should be made perfectly clear that it is part of the procedure of this Council.

The Financial Secretary: If I may explain, after the Report of the Finance Committee I propose to make a full explanation to the Council of what the procedure should be and what the rights of Members are when considering the Appropriation Bill.

The Attorney-General: That is not the point I am making. The hon. Member's point is *in futuro*, but I am dealing with what took place on the last occasion when the matter was before the Council. It should be clear in the Minutes what was said in answer to the hon. Member's query.

Mr. Speaker: What are the particular words in the Minutes which do not disclose the true intention? The Minutes are the correct record of what actually took place, and the hon. Member is calling attention in order to make something clear as to what would be the procedure when the House goes into

Committee on the Bill. Do the Minutes lack any essential of what has been said? I do not think they do, though I have not had the opportunity of comparing them with the Hansard.

The Attorney-General: What I am seeking to point out is that the point drawn to the attention of the Council for clarification was whether the discussion which would take place in Finance Committee would preclude discussion in this Legislative Council on the basis of the Bill which was before the Council. That is what I want to make clear.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member would prefer that answer to be made if that is not actually said?

The Attorney-General: It was actually said by me, but I do not want it actually to be so stated.

Mr. Speaker: There is no reference to what you said.

The Attorney-General: I followed on what the hon. Member for Agriculture said. That is the whole point of the matter.

Mr. Speaker: Why did the hon. Member not direct the Clerk's attention to it?

The Attorney-General: I only read the Minutes just now. I am glad to know that the hon. the Financial Secretary proposes to make a statement on that.

Mr. Speaker: The procedure on the Estimates will be that each Member can speak as often as he likes and as long as he likes on each item. With that explanation I put the question "That the Minutes be confirmed".

Question put, and agreed to.

Minutes confirmed.

REPORTS AND DOCUMENTS

The Chief Secretary: I beg to lay on the table the following documents:—

The Annual Report of the Public Works Department for the year 1952.

The Annual Report of the Post and Telecommunications Department for the financial year ended December, 1952.

The Annual Report of the Social Assistance Department for the year 1952.

The Annual Report of the Commissioner for Co-operative Development for the year ending 31st December, 1952.

The Report of the Director of Civil Aviation for the year 1952.

The Report of the Board of Control, Atkinson Field, for the year ending 31st December, 1952, supported by the Report of the Auditors, Messrs. Fitzpatrick, Graham and Company.

The Report of the Board of Control, Atkinson Field, for the period 1st January, 1953, to 31st August, 1953.

Order in Council No. 94 of 1953 made by the Governor in Council under Section 16(2) of the Post and Telegraph Ordinance, Chapter 185, on the 30th December, 1953.

The Parcel Postage Surface Rates (Great Britain and Northern Ireland) (H.M. Forces) Regulations, 1953 (No. 39 of 1953).

The Report of the Registrar of Friendly Societies for the year ended 31st December, 1953.

The Report on the General Election of Members of the House of Assembly (April 27, 1953) by the Registration Officer, Mr. H. R. Harewood, M.B.E.

The Financial Secretary: I beg to lay on the table the following documents:—

The Trading Account, Profit and Loss Account and Balance Sheet of the Imbaimadai Trade Store for the year ending 1952.

The Report of the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council on the examination of the 1954 Draft Estimates introduced by the hon. the Financial Secretary in Council on the 6th January, 1954, in connection with the Appropriation Bill.

The Minutes of the Finance Committee on the 1954 Draft Estimates of Expenditure at meetings held from the 11th to the 22nd January, 1954.

PROCEDURE ON ESTIMATES

As I said earlier and with Your Honour's permission, I would like to explain to the Council the procedure which will be adopted in putting the Estimates to the Council. On coming to the Order of the Day at the first item—resumption of the debate on the second reading of the Appropriation Bill, hon. Members will be at liberty to debate fully the Budget Statement which I made to the Council in January last. At the conclusion of the debate on the Budget I shall then move that the Council resolve itself into Committee in order to go into the Schedule to the Appropriation Bill, head by Head. Attached to the Report of the Finance Committee is an appendix which is intended to be the Schedule to the Appropriation Ordinance. The Estimates will then be moved in according to the Schedule to the Appropriation Bill. When a Head is called I shall move into that particular Head any items that had been recommended and approved by the Finance Committee. Members will then have again an opportunity of speaking on any item under that Head on the Estimates and, if they so desire, also to move the reduction of any items on the Estimates.

If the motion for the reduction is put to the Council and is carried by the majority of Members, then the Appropriation Bill would stand reduced by that amount. I think that is all I may say now, and I trust I have made the position very clear to Members as to what their rights are. Nothing said in Finance Committee will bind a Member if he chooses to change any decision he made there. I hope, however, that Members will be guided by

the decisions which they arrived at in Finance Committee.

Mr. Speaker: The Report of the Finance Committee is addressed to the Governor.

The Financial Secretary: I may mention that His Excellency has authorized me to present it to this Council.

INTERNATIONAL BANK MISSION'S REPORT

Sir Frank McDavid (Member for Agriculture, Forests, Lands and Mines) I beg to lay on the table:

The Report of the Timber Mission to the British West Indies, British Guiana, and British Honduras (October—December, 1952).

The Report of the International Bank Mission on the Economic Development of British Guiana.

Mr. Cummings (Member for Labour, Health and Housing) I beg to lay on the table:

The Report of the Registrar of Trade Union for the year ended 31st December, 1952.

Mr. Speaker: I have also to inform hon. Members that printed copies of His Excellency's Address at the opening of the present session of this Council have been circulated to Members.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

The Chief Secretary gave notice of the introduction and first reading of a Bill intituled:

"An Ordinance further to amend the Friendly Societies Ordinance."

The Financial Secretary gave notice of the introduction and first reading of a Bill intituled:

"An Ordinance to amend the Customs (Consolidation) Ordinance, 1952." (No. 69 of 1952).

UNOFFICIAL NOTICES

INVESTIGATION OF LAND TITLES

Mr. Farnum gave notice of the following motion:—

"Whereas certain lands in the Colony and in particular those in the Pomeroon District are not held or occupied under any form of title, whether by way of transport or Letters of Decree;

And whereas the absence of any such title prevents persons interested in such lands from obtaining loans for the purpose of developing such lands agriculturally or otherwise;

Be it resolved:

That this Council recommends the appointment of a Committee to investigate and report on the measures to be adopted to enable such persons to acquire titles by transport to such lands in the cheapest and most expeditious way possible."

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

Mr. Speaker: I have received notice of certain questions from the hon. Member, Mr. Carter, but at the present moment I will not ask him to give formal notice of those questions. I will tell the hon. Member the reason after this meeting. Generally speaking in relation to questions I would suggest to hon. Members that questions which might readily be answered by Heads of Departments should be directed to them, as the information required might be obtained in that way without coming to the Council at all. Formal notices of questions involve paper and printing. The hon. Member is not in the position of an elected Member, and one of his questions, for instance, relates to a matter which might be under consideration. We do not need debates on questions. I hope hon. Members will find that they can get ready information by asking for it from Heads of Departments.

QUEEN'S VISIT TO JAMAICA

BRITISH GUIANA'S LOYAL ADDRESS

Mr. Gajraj: Mr. Speaker, before we move on to the Order of the Day may

I crave your indulgence to bring to your notice and that of this honourable Council the absence from our records of British Guiana's Loyal Address which was presented to Her Gracious Majesty the Queen when Her Majesty and the Duke of Edinburgh visited the island of Jamaica in November last. Hon. Members of Council are painfully aware of the manner in which the previous Legislature planned to ignore the visit to the Caribbean of our Sovereign Lady, the Queen, an attitude which created great disappointment and even resentment in the hearts of the loyal majority of Guianese, and it was therefore with much relief and joy that we received the announcement that Your Honour and the Hon. Sir Frank McDavid had been chosen to represent British Guiana on that memorable occasion.

I feel that it is but right and fitting that reference to that happy ending should be found in the records of this Council, so that it might in some way serve to blot out the disgraceful conduct of those who, at that time, had control of the policy of the Government of this country. I am sure that Members of this Council will support me fully in expressing to you, Sir, and to Sir Frank our high appreciation of the illustrious manner in which not only the Legislature, but the Colony of British Guiana was represented when you were in Jamaica on that occasion.

Finally may I request that a copy of the Loyal Address be incorporated in the records of this honourable Council. I understand that that Address was prepared by you, Sir, prior to your leaving this Colony, and I am sure I voice the sentiments of all Guianese in congratulating you most heartily on it. It was truly a magnificent Address. It was inspiring in its expression of loyalty, exquisite in its courtesy and dignity, and was sincere in its invocation of Divine

guidance. On behalf of the people of this country I thank you, Sir.

Sir Frank McDavid: Sir, may I say on my own behalf and also of yours, how deeply I appreciate the words which have fallen from the lips of the hon. Member. Speaking for myself I feel deeply sensible indeed of the honour which was accorded to me of being chosen to be one of the two representatives of this Colony on that auspicious occasion of the visit of Her Majesty to the Caribbean. I say Caribbean advisedly, because, as I have previously stated in an interview with the Press, the people of Jamaica regarded it as a visit by Her Majesty, not to Jamaica itself but to the Caribbean, and they treated us in that way. With your permission, Sir, I again thank the hon. Member, and if you will permit me, I shall take the opportunity of formally laying a copy of the Address on the table so that it can be incorporated in the records of this Council.

Mr. Speaker: I should be failing in my duty if I did not say how deeply grateful I am for the reference made to me by the hon. Member, Mr. Gajraj. I share with the last speaker the joy and honour of being present in Jamaica as one of the delegates from this Colony, and I would like an expression of our appreciation to be conveyed to the Legislature of that Colony. With the permission of Members the text of the Loyal Address will be incorporated in the Minutes of this Council.

Following is the text of the Address:

BRITISH GUIANA

Most Gracious and Sovereign Lady,

The inhabitants of the Colony of British Guiana would respectfully wish to be associated with Your Majesty's other loyal subjects in this island, and in the other British territories in the Caribbean, in the expression of their allegiance, devotion and

loyalty to Your Majesty embodied in the respective addresses presented by them.

We could have earnestly wished that it had been possible for you to have seen the celebrations that took place throughout the Commonwealth and Empire on the occasion of Your Majesty's Coronation, so spontaneously shared by the descendants of the ancestors, and of the many various nationalities in our midst, dwelling in amity and fellowship together and all united in paying their humble duty and due homage to Your Majesty on your enthronement. When we reflect on the fate that has befallen other dynasties, we cannot help feeling profoundly grateful to a kind Providence that Your Majesty has succeeded to the British Throne.

We recognise in this continuance of system of Parliamentary Government and the administration of justice prevailing in the Mother Country, the principles of which, in so far as local conditions will allow, follow the same pattern in your Colonies as that in existence in Great Britain, affording equal protection to the lives and property of all alike; and we are looking forward during Your Majesty's regime to an unbroken continuity of permanence in maintaining those principles—of such inestimable benefit to us—and in preserving the prestige which British Justice and fair play has always enjoyed, and which has for thousands of years been, and still is the envy of the entire world.

We recognised in this continuance of your long journey to the people of Australia, New Zealand and Ceylon—once so tragically interrupted—the redemption of your pledge to be of personal service to those whom you have been called upon to govern, to discover for yourself as a result of personal observation, the many and various habits and characteristics possessed by your peoples in their own homes and environment, their reactions to the personal liberty enjoyed by them under British rule, the benefit of the free existence of institutions in their midst, all of which are so intimately a feature of British nationality itself.

The pattern of your personal life and the record of your achievement in the discharge of your royal duties since your accession, have earned the widespread

admiration of your subjects: and in the anxious and uncertain changes which the entire world is now undergoing, we are comforted by the knowledge that as the acknowledged head of our Commonwealth and Empire our destiny is assured in your keeping, and well may it be said that never in history has one human being in the person of Your Majesty meant so much to so many.

We shall earnestly and devoutly pray that the blessing of Almighty God may dwell upon Your Majesty, your Consort His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh, Your Majesty's Gracious Mother, and other members of the Royal Family, and that under Divine guidance your health and strength may be sustained to bear the burden of your heavy responsibilities, and that your reign may be a long and prosperous one along the paths of peace and progress, and endure for many years to come.

EUSTACE G. WOOLFORD,

Speaker of the House of Assembly.

E. F. McDAVID,

President of the State Council.

ORDER OF THE DAY

BUDGET DEBATE

Mr. Speaker: Council will now resume the debate on the second reading of the Appropriation Bill. Any Member who wishes to speak on the Budget may do so now. There is no time-limit to speeches on a motion of this kind.

Mr. Lee: The details of the Estimate were explained to Members of this Council in Finance Committee by the Heads of the several Departments, and they have been submitted to and approved by His Excellency the Governor. Subsequent events and acts done by His Excellency cannot but be a beacon to this Council that we should act more and talk less, and that is what I intend to do. (Laughter). His Excellency has shown us the way and has secured for this Colony a free grant of \$21 million from the British Government. It is

left for this Council to assist him in the fullest way to ensure that that money is spent in a proper manner, and that the schemes and plans submitted by the several Departments and approved by this Government are carried out as early as possible.

I would like His Excellency to know that we all appreciate what he has done for the people of this Colony, and that he can be assured of the fullest co-operation which we promised in reply to his Address to this Council. I feel sure that any criticisms which may be made by Members of this Council will be only for the purpose of ensuring that the money he has obtained for us is not mis-spent, and anything we may say should be regarded as reflecting our interest in the successful outcome of the development schemes.

There is one aspect of the Budget to which I must invite the attention of the hon. the Financial Secretary. I would suggest that the revenue obtained in the previous year should be his guiding star in preparing his expenditure for the current year. That has been my experience in previous years in which the hon. Member who is now the Member for Agriculture, Forests, Lands and Mines (Sir Frank McDavid) succeeded in showing a surplus balance at the end of each year.

There is one item to which I should like to draw Government's attention, an item which I, personally, do not approve, and that is the expenditure on the B.P.I. I feel, although I am not learned in the affairs of Government, that to spend \$132,000, or any figure over \$100,000 to do propaganda work in order to combat the Communist idea or the ideas and policies of the late and last Government is not to spend money in the proper way. But we are all proud of the action taken by His Excellency and I would not be a stumbling block

in any way. I sincerely hope that the money would be spent in such a manner as to wipe out of this Colony all ideas of Communism and all ideas of the last and past Government. We have a task before us, and although we are branded "stooges" because we are nominated, we will show the public that we are going in the right direction. I for one, if the occasion arises, will tell the Government when it is going wrong.

I agree that we will need skilled and technical officers from abroad to carry out the policies and schemes of the Two-Year plan. I feel if we are going to sacrifice money in any way to engage men from abroad, the men should work on a contract basis; and during the time they are here our boys and girls should be given an opportunity of being trained by them to take up the tasks when they have left.

I would like to tell the two Members in charge of Agriculture; and Labour, Health and Housing that they have difficult tasks before them—very difficult tasks indeed. I know as a fact—and the hon. Member for Agriculture knows it as a fact also, that some of the moneys used in trial of land settlement have not been mis-spent, but used in a manner which the public would call 'wasteful.' I sincerely hope that will be a lesson to the Member in charge.

To my good friend, the Member for Health and Housing, I would say, in regard to Health, 'eradicate this practice of people sleeping on the floors of the hospital, especially, I have been told, in the Children's Ward.' I am saying this so that the public could realise that we are not stooges here: we are drawing hon. Members' attention to certain things than can be done as soon as possible. I would give this hint to the Government: in my opinion responsibility for certain matters rests with the Member

[Mr. Lee]

in charge of the particular department concerned with them, whether they be Agriculture or Labour, Health and Housing. We in this Council can criticise the administration of the departments also. I notice the Government has appointed committees in certain departments. I hope these are only advisory, and sooner or later Government would appoint someone to hold the responsibility, so that we could publicly or privately say to that person, 'You are going in the wrong direction.' I am not saying anything to interfere with hon. Members' action. If in my travels in this country; especially in Western Demerara and in Essequibo, I see nothing is being done to carry out the Government's policy, I shall speak privately also to the people concerned. Though I am not saying that everything we hear from 'outsiders' is correct, where there is a little smoke there sometimes is a fire.

Mr. Lord: As a very new Member of this Legislature I should like very much to congratulate the Financial Secretary on the Budget he has presented to this Council. He has been able to do so without recourse to additional taxation, and I think it augurs well for the future that we have in charge of the finances of this country an officer of his experience. I am glad to see he has included funds for the maintenance of the Rupununi Cattle Trail, which has been cause for some concern. This did not appear in the original Estimates. I think hon. Members will agree with me that the Financial Secretary should be congratulated.

Mr. Sugrim Singh: Mr. Speaker and hon. Members of this Council, I, too, wish to join with my esteemed and astute friend, Mr. Lee in most of the points raised in his speech. I wish particularly, to join with him in

congratulating His Excellency the Governor for, may I say, an historic achievement at this critical time in the political and economic evolution of this country, in persuading Her Majesty's Government, may I say again, to come to the rescue of this country.

I wish also to express my appreciation and the thanks of the people of this country — loyal Guianese: so many of them still exist in spite of the fact that they may have been assailed, front, flank and rear by Communist propaganda; they have stood the test of time and they still continue like the Rock of Gibraltar standing firm to ward off the waves. On their behalf I thank Her Majesty's Government for the magnanimous gesture in making grants for the improvement and development of this country. His Excellency has made it quite clear that we, Members of the Legislative Council are at liberty to express our views freely, even though we may part company with Government. I do not like the word "stooge" used by my friend (Mr. Lee). It has a particular connotation. But I wish to endorse the feelings of hon. Members of this Council that if at any time the cause of the working class people and the peasantry comes up for discussion even officials of the Government and Civil Servants in this Council, I am confident, will give of their best knowledge and experience, irrespective of whether this means parting company with Government.

We have a bulls-eye before us. We have a gigantic task confronting us, and we can only strike at this bulls-eye, or fulfill our task by co-operation, sympathy and genuine effort on the part of each one of us. Today, Sir, our once peaceful country, referred to by eminent historians and travellers in glowing terms, stands in the firmament of the Caribbean Colonies with a bowed head. British

Guiana — this Magnificent Province — requires a helping hand at this moment to purge itself of an epidemic which has, unfortunately, seized it.

And now, Sir, I want to add this: In this Budget, speaking generally, we have voted increases in various items with the best of intention, and I agree with my hon. Friend, Mr. Lee, that we should strike a note to the effect that these sums should be well spent — that they should be taken care of so that our objectives would be fulfilled. I do not wish to suggest, however, that I have any fear that they will not be well spent. We have a vast working-class population in this country who are disgruntled. You may not concede that point to me, Sir, but in my experience — travelling from one end of the country to the other, professionally—I have found that certain individuals have seized every opportunity to bring into prominence, for their own political kudos, those little problems which affect different groups of the population. I wish to suggest, if I may, that along with our general schemes, calculated to improve the Colony as a whole, that we take into consideration the difficulties and problems of some of these small people and try to see what help we can give them. It has been my experience, Sir, that we cannot achieve what we hope to do unless we are prepared to find ourselves on the spot and talk to these people — reasoning with them in their own way and trying to see their point of view.

Without any desire to cast any aspersion on previous Members of this Council, I think there has been in the past too much feeding of the working-class people with a barber's pole. Sometimes deputation come down to Georgetown and they are pushed around, with the result that they return in disgust. That disgust intensifies, chaos and disorder results and a fertile soil for Communist propaganda is created. I do not

say that we can hope to meet all the demands of these people because some of them may not be justified and may be without any foundation, but I do strongly urge that whatever money has been voted, whatever schemes are going to be implemented, we should adopt a policy of trying to meet these people on the spot. If Mohamet cannot come to the mountain then the mountain must go to Mohamet. If these people cannot come to Georgetown, then we must go to them.

If we hope to stay in Georgetown and pass laudable schemes and legislation feeling that that alone would meet the situation, I am afraid that we are building on shifting sands. Laws are good, but they are of no use and would lose their objective if they are not carried out. What we want to do, if I may say so, is to resurrect this country from the chaos that has been created. And, I wish to sound it here, Sir, that it is necessary for this Council—Government, the Civil Service and all the authorities charged with the execution of these schemes — to realize that they will fail unless the people of this Colony — the very working-class people—the workers on the sugar estates and the peasantry as a whole—put aside their political ideals which, I am sure, they themselves do not understand, and come forward and cooperate generously with this Government, to take the ship of Guiana through stormy seas and into peaceful waters.

There has been in the past—and I say this although I might appear to be unreasonable — too much emphasis on and consideration of various affairs in the City as compared with those in the rural areas. The people in the rural areas, with a few exceptions, have been left to solve their own problems. Every measure of assistance which comes into this Council starts in a place where

[Mr. Sugrim Singh]

there is strength. I maintain—and I am unshaken in the view—that we should give help first to those who are weak and not to those who are strong. That is my view, and I think that His Excellency, in his speech, has come close to that view. The people of Georgetown, he has said, will perhaps see less of him—I have not got his exact words before me now—but the point was that we must concentrate more on the rural areas. I want to repeat the old saying that God made the country and it was man who made the town.

What we have to do is to develop and improve the living standard of the rustics. They need every effort from the economic machine in this country, and without them there is no British Guiana. That has been proved in the recent strikes, and the people who have sought every means to destroy the tranquillity which prevailed in this country have spared no pains to put forward that argument. They planted their tentacles not only in the City, but they got hold of the rural population also and called strikes at their pleasure, and at once threatened and even crippled the entire country. I think every Member of this Council will agree with me, even though I may have exaggerated a few of the points I have made. If we want to solve the problems that are before us we have to go out into the highways and by-ways and appreciate the sufferings of those people who need succour from their Government, rather than leaving them to choose another road. They are lost children and we have to bring them back from the wrong path. I wish to appeal to employers also—all those who are concerned with the handling of these people—not to use big stick methods in doing so. I am not suggesting that they may have done so, but I would ask them to approach these problems with sympathy and understanding.

Sir, it is well known that every expert who has come here has told us, perhaps *ad nauseum*, of our mineral wealth and other possibilities. Report after report speaks in laudable terms of the potentialities of this country, but the basic fault of our Government seems to be failure to convert those natural resources in order to bring happiness, satisfaction and contentment to the people of this Colony. Money is coming into this Colony now and we are happy indeed; and I have no doubt that it would be used to bring about better living standards—better housing conditions, improved social services and so on—for the people of the Colony. But, I want to know and hear what accounts for the fact that there are discordant notes in several Government Departments which are receiving support from public funds. There are top-ranking officers who are not pulling their weight in this Colony. I shall not call names, but perhaps it is because they feel that they have been overworked and have not got their usual leave, and their reaction is that they should join and support people who are disloyal in their activities—people who are out to destroy the peace and harmony existing between the various sections of the community.

In England, when a similar situation arose in 1947, Parliament thought it wise to organize a special branch called the "M.I. File" of the Scotland Yard, and its object was to put an end to this form of sabotage. I hope I am not exaggerating, but it was because that special branch of the Police was organized in England to track down persons who were in good and confidential positions, that many of them were prevented from betraying secrets by passing them to people outside.

I sound a note of warning. I borrow the phrase of my esteemed friend—

there is no smoke without fire. I trust that those entrusted with the responsibility of being Heads of these Departments would be vigilant to see that those people, whom the taxpayers and loyal Guianese pay, do not seek every opportunity to destroy the very sources from which they get their bread and butter. I shall leave that point there. There are other Members to speak and they may refer to it.

I am going to refer to two Heads under this Budget before I take my seat. The first is Police. There is an increase of \$94,000—I speak subject to correction by the hon. the Financial Secretary who is familiar with the records. The Police Force has had a difficult task during the past six months and they have done their best to cope with the situation. But, Sir, there are some grievances which the Police are now facing. I refer specifically to Housing. A policeman is separated from his wife and family—they residing in one corner of the Colony and he is stationed in another. He actually has to rent two homes—when I say that I do not suggest, Sir, any question of immorality. With the barometer as it is, a policeman does not obtain that co-operation from civilians in any vicinity as he had enjoyed in the past. Nowadays every policeman is being looked upon as a secret agent who is to be feared and every opportunity is seized by civilians to make him uncomfortable. I do ask that some consideration be given to these people. Legislation has been introduced to improve the lot of Clerks and today we find that a clerk in Lombard Street gets a secured salary by law, but the policeman from whom is demanded a high standard of education, such as the Senior Cambridge, receives a salary which has remained at the old amount and he is expected to exist on that.

I leave that point and I turn to the other item. I hope, I have not stolen the thunder of other Members who are more equipped and qualified to speak on this subject than I, and I do ask them not to withhold their contributions on this point and to give some strength to it. I refer, Sir, to the miserable condition relating to the Magistrates in this country. Long ago, as it should be, a Magistrate was looked upon in this country as an Officer of Government in high esteem. In administering and dispensing justice he has got to live above-board. There is to be no question of contamination at all, yet what do we find? At the moment Magistrates are paid a dog's wages. They have made several representations to Government and have been put off from time to time with the result that the kind of Magistrates which this Government would like to handle the administration of justice in this Colony is difficult to be obtained. I say without fear of contradiction that the possibility is, in the immediate future, unless something is done to improve the lot of these men charged with such an important duty as the administration of justice, we may even lose those who now adorn the Magisterial Bench in this Colony. Government officers in every other Department have got increases while these men who have served fifteen and twenty years continue to earn a small salary on which it is difficult for them to exist. If my representation is considered an exaggeration it is not intentional. I know it is the feeling of all hon. Members of this Council to co-operate and join with His Excellency and team up with the rest of this country and its well-wishers to bring this Colony out of the rut into which at the moment it finds itself politically.

Mrs. Dey: Mr. Speaker, hon. Members and fellow-Councillors around this table. As a newcomer in this Council

[Mrs. Dey]

I do not feel myself equipped enough as the other speakers to tread the ground that they have trodden. But I would certainly be amiss in my duty if I do not first of all thank the hon. the Financial Secretary for the way in which we got through our work in Finance Committee under his guidance. It was to me, a new Member, an experience as a father guiding a daughter, for which I thank him. My first experience was one, I may say, I never would have wanted to miss. Although the hon. the Financial Secretary at times forgot to say "Ladies and Gentlemen" when addressing us, I know it was not intentionally done—he was so taken up with his duty.

I would like to thank His Excellency on behalf of mothers, wives, daughters and sisters of Guiana for the message he gave to us at the informal meeting on the morning of the 8th February. To my mind it was, Sir, a dead march to the disloyalty, discontent and disillusionment that my fellow Guianese found themselves to be suffering from during the latter half of 1953. It does not seem, Sir, that we shall ever cease to decry those three letters of the alphabet, unless we in this Council affirm by means of collaboration and co-operation the intention of His Excellency, really and truly, to put Guianese on the road to progress, so that when we are around this table we may truly be styled the Leaders of the Progressive Party with no mention of any "D's" but the "C's" I have mentioned. We can only do that by looking for the good in this programme. We find that which we search for, and if we search for good, we shall certainly find good in that programme which was announced to us on Monday morning.

There have been allegations. Why should we today try to say what must be done? Should we not take it page by page, chapter by chapter, and come along into this Council and let ours be the task to say just what should be done for our fellow Guianese and not jump our stiles before we meet them? We have been told that the rural areas will be given priority. That means our villages will be considered. If our villages are going to be considered, then Social Welfare which used to be the baby would now have to stand on its own legs. But it cannot do so as yet, and, therefore, will have to hold on to something and endeavour to step forward. Social Welfare would certainly come into its own by having institutions like the Carnegie Trade Centre established in the Rural Areas. When that is done we would not have an influx of our daughters into the City, but, as I saw at Bush Lot two Fridays ago, they would remain in their villages and get the same training as the girls in the City would be getting.

I will not waste the time of this Council any longer. I pledge myself, as a Member of this Government, to go all out to try and educate my fellow Guianese outside of this Council into what really and truly co-operation with His Excellency's plans would mean for our future and the future of those who follow us. I thank you.

Mr. Tello: Mr. Speaker and hon. Members, I want to associate myself with those previous speakers who have congratulated the hon. the Financial Secretary on his preparation of the Budget and the able way in which he has presented it. Indeed I am happy that provision has been made to increase the provision for expenditure on the B.P.I. I do not agree with my friend,

the hon. Mr. Lee, that the principal object of increasing this expenditure is to carry on propaganda. I look upon the B.P.I. as one of the best instruments to educate the masses of this country. I seem to think that the Governments prior to this one underestimated the importance of the B.P.I. and never actually asked it to get into harness and really make a thorough job of its own organization. But, Sir, I am a country boy and I know what the newspapers mean to us as an instrument of education. And I know what a boon the radio was in the extension of that field of education, and I can give the assurance that any money expended to widen this field of education by pamphlets, radio and otherwise employed by the B.P.I. would not be money wasted but would be one of the best investments of public funds.

I also want to express my gratitude to His Excellency for the formidable task he has accomplished in such a short time, and for the hope he has brought to many of us who had almost become frustrated and hopeless. He has certainly brought to the masses a new hope, a new confidence, and I would say new vigour to accomplish what British Guiana and British Guianese are capable of accomplishing. I think what won the people's hearts—and when I speak of the people I mean the common man, the working masses, the peasants and small farmers, the semi-intelligent and half-educated—was the emphasis laid by His Excellency in his broadcast on the benefits that must accrue to the small man. Whether we admit it or not the small man is still the majority of British Guiana, and a happy small man is a happy British Guiana. (Applause).

Perhaps I should now honour myself by conveying to this Council assurances of co-operation by the people of this Colony in the Two-year and Five-year Development Programmes which

are to be embarked upon. I was asked by large sections of people on the East Coast of Demerara, Mahaicony, West Coast, Berbice, and within the last two days by people of the lower Corentyne, to give this Government the assurance of their co-operation and collaboration in making the Development Programme a success. Personally I am confident that the good intentions of the Government and the people of this Colony can be relied upon. I firmly believe it is the intention of this Government to raise the standard of living of the people in close association with social justice. Our people have come to believe and to have faith and hope in this great Development Programme, and whatever we do now and in the future must have special regard for the opinions of the small man and of his interpretation of our actions.

I regret, however, to have to refer to an aspect of the Budget in which I observe that, in spite of the public expressions of Government's intention to take special care of the small man and to see that he benefits from the \$44 million programme, in the preparation of the estimates there is great anxiety to accelerate the salaries of two of the highest paid officers in the Audit Department of our Colony. I have spoken to the people and got their assurance of co-operation on the strength of the assurance given by Government that every effort would be concentrated on improving the conditions of the small man. But here we find undue haste to better the conditions of two of the highest paid officers in a Department which is well organized and is doing a fine job, when it is known that it is Government's intention in the near future to go into the question of a revision of salaries.

After this has been made public how can I go with confidence to the small man and tell him that this Interim Government is working in his interest?

[Mr. Tello]

Why embarrass ourselves in this way? Why this anxiety to put a hurdle in our way? Is it not true that we must seek the confidence of the working man if we are seeking progress for this country? Why, then, in preparing our budget and striving for the development of our country we deliberately put an unnecessary stumbling block in our way? Indeed our path is rough and strewn with all sorts of pitfalls without these unnecessary hurdles.

I am extremely hurt about this matter. For the better part of my life I have been associated with the Labour Movement in the Caribbean and British Guiana, and we have always fought for every man, the lowest to the highest, but the emphasis was always on the cause of the small man. We believe in justice and fairplay, and if I had seen in that particular Department a revision of salaries from the bottom to the top I would have thought that probably there was some special reason why that Department could not wait until there was a general revision of salaries. Perhaps some of the old school believe that the way to make a Department happy is to make those at the top happy, but that belief has proved a fallacy. It has certainly contributed to the chaos from which we have just emerged. It has certainly provided fertile soil for the breeding and cultivation of all sorts of ideologies and godlessness. I wish to sound a note of warning that unless we pursue a policy of development from the bottom to the top and not from the top to the bottom we will lose our fight to regain the confidence of our people.

In the Development Programme there is provision for land settlement, with which I am extremely pleased, for I know that many of our people are unemployed, and far too many are under-employed. I have gone into these matters and examined them impartially. I am

satisfied that in many cases the employers cannot do any more for their employees, neither can they offer any more employment under present conditions. Government has seen, like me, the necessity to absorb those people and has placed the land settlement scheme foremost in the Development Programme. It is my duty to say that Government's land settlement schemes up to the present have not embraced the small man.

Mr. Raatgever: I have no desire to embarrass the speaker, but I would like to know whether the Development Programme is now under consideration by the Council. I do not think so. I think we are debating the Budget speech of the hon. the Financial Secretary. The Development Programme is not yet before the Council.

Mr. Speaker : The hon. Member must be allowed some latitude in view of his inexperience. I have allowed reference to His Excellency's speech which is not quite appropriate. It is merely that the hon. Member has some point in his mind.

Mr. Tello: If my lack of experience has caused me to offend the Council I apologise, but I wanted to make the point that in this Budget provision has been made under Public Works and other heads to relieve unemployment and under-employment, and that land settlement will provide a great measure of assistance in the effort to solve those problems. I propose to speak more definitely on the Budget itself when we go into Committee to consider the Estimates in detail, but as permission has been given to make reference to His Excellency's speech I was more or less commenting on that speech and the reference made by His Excellency to land settlement. I wish to repeat that I am satisfied that unless Government can convince the under-

employed and the unemployed that land settlement is the ultimate solution of those two major problems, and unless we go to those people and explain to them that Government's experience should be a guiding light to them, the land settlement scheme will not be made the success we all hope for. If we do not succeed in this "mission to the people" I fear that the wrong people will take up land settlement, and again we will look upon it as failure, or at least a project in which the problems have not been solved—a project which has not fulfilled its purpose.

Sir, I want to take my seat but I would again warn this Council that our people are awaiting their guidance and help. Our people want to hear from them and they await their presence. All along, previous Governments have been criticised as sitting in an arm-chair, coming into this Chamber, taking part in the debates and returning to their leather-bound arm-chairs or office chairs. This criticism has been levelled and probably unduly so in many cases: but justly so, all the same, in too many cases. It is a challenge to the members of the Interim Government to convince the Colony that His Excellency the Governor is correct in saying he has appointed a National Government and a National Council. If it is true, we should go to the people and tell them all. We should go and advise and be advised.

In conclusion I again thank the Financial Secretary for the fine report he has made and the fine way in which it has been presented.

Mr. Speaker : Would any other Member like to speak?

Mr. Jailal: I wish to endorse what has been said by hon. Members. I wish to congratulate the Financial Secretary on an excellent Budget—well done. But while the presentation of a report, and the setting down of figures are part of

a Budget, yet the actual working of a Budget is a different matter. As I went through the various items in his Budget I had made several observations, and I would like to make some comments again.

On Agriculture I made several notes. I want to bring before this Council the fact that because of the failure of the last Government to implement certain things frustration has accrued in the minds of our people. This frustration is particularly evident among the people whom I serve—the people in the Rice industry. There are some 60,000 people engaged in the rice industry. They suffer from well-known "ills", mainly the lack of money and the lack of drainage.

If we develop full-scale drainage in this Colony we would be remedying one of the things which forced a change of heart among our people and made them choose a type of Government that was not good enough for British Guiana. We know that there are existing farms—thousands of acres of land on the shoreline of this country where people eke out an existence planting rice—with the exception of the Rice Development Company. Their venture is a hit-or-miss game because of the absence of a sound drainage scheme. I think that the money that has been put out to provide for this facility is far from being adequate. Not only does the rice industry suffer this way, but another main industry, which has spent thousands of dollars in order to meet the incidences of floods and dry weather. I refer to the Sugar industry. I have to correlate rice and sugar, because I believe rice is an outgrowth of sugar, and for a long time rice is going to be dependent upon sugar. Therefore, when I refer to sugar I incorporate in what I say the feeling of the people in the rice industry. The

[Mr. Jallal]

entire population of this country bases its economy on what revenue we get from the rice, sugar and Bauxite industries. But I submit that rice and sugar are the main economy of the people living on the Coast, and Government should provide them at some early time with adequate drainage. There are thousands of acres of land between the Pomeroun River and Crabwood Creek on the Corentyne that give 80 per cent. crops every five years. Thus it is easy to see that if the returns for one year are not good enough, one has to go on for another four years. Thus the economy of the rice planters fluctuates. It does not work, and as a result frustration sets in.

Let us look at this matter of frustration in another way. Where people cannot get enough land for planting they have to turn to other industries to seek employment. Since we have not got many other industries to turn to, a further frustration results. So one of the things that should be done is to give enough land to the farmers already settled. If we continue the policy that six acres of land are enough for one family we are going to be wrong. Six acres yield only \$120.00 per annum.

Mr. Farnum: To a point of explanation. I want to point out that six acres are not enough for a family, and that steps are being taken to apportion ten acres instead. Certain estates on the Essequibo are to be used.

Mr. Speaker : The Anna Regina Scheme?

Mr. Farnum: Yes, Sir; and some other estates like Lima.

Mr. Speaker: (Addressing Mr. Jallal) You are also thinking of cattle? Is that one of the problems?

Mr. Jallal: I will come to that. Let me expand on what I was saying. It is true that Government places land where tenants can get from 15 to 20 acres. These are limited areas. I am not talking about areas where people are living within ten miles from Government estates. I am talking about the wide open spaces to Rosignol, where the people cannot get enough land; where there is no land settlement. There is all the more a dilemma because a person cannot as formerly, own a milch cow, since the mechanisation of industry has meant more rice land taken up. The population has grown, too, and land would have to be available for cattle farming.

As an alternative for going to work on a sugar estate the rice farmer can grow small green garden patches. But this cannot build any type of economy because he is so far away from the city markets, and, the farmer finds himself precluded from marketing his produce early. He cannot bring greens from places like Hopetown, West Coast, Berbice, into Georgetown in a good condition. The greens perish and, as I have said before, he cannot even afford to pay the transportation fees being charged at present—the highest known, I think, in the world. I think there should be reasonable provision of pasturage for cattle in the various districts, but I do not propose to urge that rice fields and cattle pastures can mix.

I feel that Government should pursue a policy to the effect that wherever rice can produce more money than cattle it should stay and new room should be found for the cattle. To my mind, if lands are broken for the purpose of cultivating rice, Government should not pursue the policy of reserving some of that land and saying to the people "You must graze your cattle here." If rice does not prove to be an economic crop on any land, then the peo-

ple can easily use it for the benefit of cattle without any trouble at all. I feel that the simple policy in this Colony should be to get as much as we can from whatever pays the most. I do not feel that rice fields should be allowed to go out of existence and cattle pastures take their places.

I should like to point out that one of the disadvantages in this Colony and one of the hardships that City residents particularly have to contend with, is to find enough meat for the use of their families, although we have an organisation to deal with the control of meat. I have already suggested that this organisation should be gone through with a fine-teeth comb, and I feel that the time has come when meat control should be removed to a certain extent. I feel that price control of meat should remain, but as regards the question of butchers having to take their meat on a quota system from the Control Officer, I feel the time has come when that should go. People should be allowed to buy as much cattle as they like and to sell to whoever they like. If we do not permit that we would not be able to encourage the further production of meat cattle. It is well known that butchers come down to the City from certain areas with cattle, and that butchers from other areas would have been able to take some of the cattle if they were retained in Georgetown, but that is not allowed. Cattle rearers feel very strongly that they would not be able to improve their herds if such a policy is continued.

I would therefore like to recommend to Government that the quota system be abolished with respect to cattle, and that a similar change be introduced with respect to milk. I do not think milk should be controlled to the extent now prevailing. The War is over and an emergency is no longer existing, so people should be allowed to

bring their milk into Georgetown as much as possible. There is no use having control only to have it contravened. People are not bringing all their milk into Georgetown; they sell some on the other side of the river and if all they have there is not sold they take the remainder back home. I think that before pasteurising plants are set up in this Colony there should be "free lance" trading in milk, and I am certain that more people would go in for rearing milch cows.

During a discussion on agriculture some little time ago, I pointed out that greater use should be made of the services of a particular Officer whom I know to be a top-ranking man in his own field. I refer to the Economic Botanist. I asked the Director of Agriculture whether this Officer had any higher position to which he could go because he had done exceedingly good work, especially with regard to rice breeding. He has bred strains of rice which are lending themselves particularly well to machine handling, and I was told that he could not change his job because he is a very good man at it. I wish to point out, however, that that kind of treatment breeds ill-feeling and dissatisfaction. I know that this Officer could probably have bred his own rice and sold his methods as a patent to other countries with great benefit to himself. I feel that this Colony should recognize its own people especially when they show such outstanding ability, and give every possible opportunity to them. If Government cannot give them opportunities to climb the ladder, then Government should make their salaries worth while for them to stay in their jobs. I think it is unfair to keep an Officer the same place all the time just because he is good at a particular job. I have mentioned this case because of the principle involved, and I am afraid that if

[Mr. Jailal]

we pursue such a policy our sons and daughters would never qualify for certain posts because they would only find themselves stuck in them.

The Attorney-General: With Your Honour's permission, I should like to intervene and to say I think the hon. Member should appreciate the fact that it is undesirable to make this sort of special pleading with respect to any particular Officer.

Mr. Speaker: I myself should like to inform the hon. Member that he must not, in any Parliamentary assembly, indicate the name or the post of any particular Officer with respect to whom promotion is desired.

Mr. Jailal: I wish to apologise for having done that, Sir. As my hon. Friend said a short while ago, it is due to inexperience. I was only raising the point because I wanted to draw attention to something which I thought was wrong. That is the sort of thing that causes people to go the other way.

Under the head Lands and Mines, I desire to mention also that a considerable amount of money is going to be expended, and I cannot pass it without mentioning that one of the things which I feel this Department should do is to change its method of giving out lands for agricultural purposes. I feel that unless Government reverts to the policy of giving transport for land they are not going to be able to provide sufficient building sites on all the workable land in British Guiana. People, generally speaking, would never have a heart for land that is not their own. They want to know that when they have cleared the forests and secured amenities of life for living there, their children and their children's children will be able to enjoy

the benefits of the land. Therefore, my only comment in this respect is that Government should revert to their original policy of giving transport or title to those persons who beneficially occupy Government lands.

The Attorney-General: May I ask whether the hon. Member expects an explanation from the Member for Information (the Chief Secretary) or from the Member for Agriculture, Forests, Lands, and Mines?

Mr. Jailal : To be very honest Sir, I have submitted papers to both of them so that if one fails the other might be able to give me the nod. With regard to the Public Works Department, I think it is only fair to say that it is saddled with a tremendous amount of responsibility. I think the Department itself has too much to do, and that the time has come when we should consider dividing it into several smaller Departments. I feel that for one Engineer to be able to tackle all the problem is almost humanly impossible.

I do wish to refer to the money to be expended on Roads, and I want to say that while the hon. the Financial Secretary has done a good job with what he has, yet it is far from being enough. I think that more money should have been spent on roads. I do not believe that British Guiana would ever grow rich by railway development. I believe that motor transport is going to solve our problem and, as I said, I feel that our main road on the East Coast Demerara should be thoroughly reconstructed as early as possible, because it is a means by which all our agricultural products are brought to Georgetown. True enough, the railway does a bit of hauling of our agricultural products, but at the present time it only hauls one-fifth of

the cargo provided by such products. It gets no cargo from sugar and hardly any from rice, while cassava and corn are always transported by buses. Therefore we should look after that East Coast road.

I do not think that 11 or 20 miles of railway would do. It is not enough. We should look at what is happening. A lot of money is being spent in buying motor vehicles. Even though they are privately owned they represent capital that goes out from this Colony. Therefore, I feel that such equipment that runs on the road having been bought with local money should be protected. Any truck or motor vehicle that runs on the East Coast road can only give eighteen months' service as a result of the condition of that road. As a matter of fact our Traffic Inspectors generally harass the owners of those vehicles, which cost \$3,000 and in some cases \$5,000, until they are finally taken off the road after 18 months' working, nothing to say about the expenditure on tyres, replacements, etc., which constitutes a large amount of money going out of this Colony, and I do not see why we should continue to spend money like that.

It is time that the Government and the people in the offices that control these things know that the people living on the East Coast are not going to support fully the Transport and Harbours Department's trains with their produce that they are bringing to the Georgetown market. They may travel by the train when they live near to the railway line or when they want to put on their fancy clothes and come to Georgetown, but when they have to come to Georgetown on business, I am afraid, they are going to continue to use the buses and cars. The time has come when we must do something immediately for those people. Something

has been done for the Corentyne and something is being done for other places and, I think, we should tackle at once the East Coast road, because the people there are losing cash money expended on motor transportation equipment which does not pay off. I would suggest strongly that we recommend to the hon. the Financial Secretary that he try to dig up some more money for the reconstruction of the road on the East Coast.

Turning to the subject of Social Welfare, I am a great believer in meeting the man who is at the bottom of the ladder. I believe that all the local organizations, except the People's Progressive Party, have failed to meet the man on the lowest rung of the ladder and, I think, like my hon. Friends, we should now take off our coats and go down and meet him. One way in which we can meet him is through the B.P.I. and, therefore, I feel that any money expended in that direction, if given fair supervision and sufficient time, would give good results. I do wish to say I am not a believer in penny-dreadful stories on the Radio. I think that the B.P.I. should have educational programmes not only in respect of the higher classics and not only in respect of such subjects like "What happens on the streets of London." They ought to be able to tell the people how to grow corn. The B.P.I. should join hands with the Agricultural Department and make out programmes encouraging the children of this country to listen to them on the radio, so that by the time the children leave school they would have a good knowledge of some form of agriculture or forestry or anything that would be beneficial to people to learn. I am sure that if such a policy is pursued it would also have its political results as the people would certainly feel, especially the ordinary farmer, that the Gov-

[Mr. Jailal]

ernment is doing a good job for them. The farmer in the Mahaica and the Mahaicony Creek Districts does not care to hear what is happening in London; he would like to know how to rear sheep and where he can get good sheep from, and what better strain of rice is produced in Japan. I think that is one of the means by which the B.P.I. can solve some of the problems of this country.

I have made mention a good while ago about high licences. I wish to refer to that subject again. Transportation licence in this country has been given only to a few people. It has been so because of a war and the shortage of vehicles. I was not in the Colony at that time and so I am not certain whether there was any other fly in the ointment, but I believe the reason for that was in order to conserve auto-equipment. But the result of that is that today there are monopolists existing in British Guiana. It is a shame that on the East Coast there are only two buses that ply between Georgetown and Rosignol. Only five licences have been issued for general transport of goods, and the same thing applies to Essequibo and to the West Coast Demerara. There are no buses and the rice producers have no trucks to help them out. They have to transport their padi from as far as seven miles aback to the railway station. Those are things that ought to be straightened out. I feel that licences should be issued freely to everybody. Everyone should be able to get a licence to ply a vehicle for hire. There is nothing we want to save now.

If the Transport and Harbours Department is to be protected, then it should be protected by its own measures, by the facilities it can

offer, but not at the expense of the people. The people residing at Belladrum when the rain falls are never able to catch a taxi to take them to the railway station; they must wait on the buses and if the buses carry an overload they are in trouble with the Law Officers. I want to say it is a wrong thing to continue the policy of handing out monopolies. It particularly affects rice. Several lorries have to be used to transport rice to the Rice Marketing Board, and when those lorries do not have a full licence to take cargo to and from Georgetown the result is that the persons owning them only have a half-economy, as their lorries take padi or rice to Georgetown and have to return empty. I am sure that is no economy for the country and, therefore, I want to emphasize that it is my feeling and the feeling of thousands of rice producers who are behind me that transport should be a free enterprise. Licensing should be free to everybody without any quota.

I want to refer to something that is not in the Budget at all. I have heard all about the means by which we raise money—by taxation and several other things. I want to raise the question of the insurance companies. I do not know if I am in order, but I want to say that the foreign insurance companies come to this country, lodge a little bit of money in our Treasury and do nothing else but canvass people and collect premiums from them. They are taking money out of the Colony to develop Canada and other places and are not investing any money in this country or are doing so in insufficient quantity. I feel the time is ripe for these foreign insurance companies to be made to invest a certain amount of the premiums collected by them in this country, so that British Guiana can enjoy some of that money. The only insurance company in this

country that I know invests money in the Colony is the Demerara Life. All the others must be made to expend money in the Colony. That is going to be one of the means by which we will be able, when Government money for development is exhausted, to get money to assist the farmers and small industrial people.

The Bank has been reluctant to lend money to rice farmers. I say so because it is not only the great big fellow who invests money in the Colony. The small man with his one or two acres of cultivated land does so too, and he finds himself at times in a difficult spot for money to carry on. In other countries he is regarded in the same light as the man with 1,000 acres, but in this Colony he has but the Loan Bank that would lend him money and then he is required to provide some sort of security. It is a shame that we allow our money to go into the hands of foreign companies and we cannot get them to do any lending or anything in respect of industrial development. I think that is a matter which needs close attention, and I would recommend that Government review the situation.

Mr. Speaker : The hon. Member will have an opportunity when the Tax Ordinances is being considered, to make a motion on the subject. They pay a licence to trade.

Mr. Jailal: I was merely expressing the feeling of certain people on the subject since we are talking about raising money. I wish to pass on to the question of Customs revenue. We have recommended that certain duties should be removed for a period. I am not going to dwell on that point but merely wish to suggest that Government's control of duty-free gasoline for industrial purposes should be de-

centralized, because it is ridiculous to ask a man in Crabwood creek to send to Georgetown for one drum of duty-free gasoline when he can only afford to buy one drum at a time. There are other places not far from Crabwood Creek where Customs Officers are stationed and can facilitate the purchase of duty-free fuel. I also think there should be further concessions of duty-free entry. Machinery was allowed free entry into this Colony for some time, and tractors were among the items allowed free entry. I am submitting that the concession should be restored again, for while it reached saturation point some time ago, a new period has been entered upon. People have definitely gone all out to acquire machinery for ploughing and reaping. I do not only refer to tractors but to rice milling equipment. Millers who would like to acquire such things as mechanical dryers have never been given an opportunity to get them duty free. If we are going to allow one or two industries to have these concessions a third should certainly enjoy them. I feel that concessions of duty-free entry should be allowed to the industry to enable it to expand as the people of the Colony would like to see it.

There is also the question of import licences. We have learnt from practical experience that England and other soft currency countries have not been able to produce ploughing machinery which is entirely successful in this Colony. True enough the Ferguson machines have done a good job, but there are times when they cannot work. Even the B.G. Rice Development Co. have had to resort to American machinery. As I pass along I see quite a number of tractors broken down, and I believe the reason is that their owners cannot obtain import licences for replacements. I know that certain firms have told the people that

[Mr. Jailal]

they cannot obtain import licences for spare parts. I urge Government to grant the necessary licences for the importation of machines and spare parts from America, so that the owners of tractors may be able to keep their machines in working order. After all the cost of a tractor ranges from \$11,000 to \$44,000. The restrictions on import licences for machinery of that type should be relaxed to some extent. Where Government is convinced that a certain type of equipment has proved to be economical it should be allowed to be imported into the country regardless of its origin.

Sir Frank McDavid : I wish to give the hon. Member the assurance right away that the question of replacement of machinery and spare parts from the U.S.A. is being gone into.

Mr Speaker : I should mention that I heard in Trinidad the other day that the Government there were able to import two locomotives from the U.S.A. and to get delivery within two or three months. I mentioned the matter to the Manager of our Transport Department who said he was also aware of it, and I believe that efforts will be made here in a similar direction. But the question of currency is still a very important factor. I mention it because it was done in a neighbouring Colony. Has the hon. Member concluded his remarks?

Mr. Jailal : Yes, Sir.

Mr. Speaker : Does any other Member wish to address the Council? I know that the Rev. Mr. Bobb wishes to speak but he prefers to do so tomorrow.

Mr. Bobb: As I intimated to you, Sir, I would prefer to speak tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker: If the debate ends this afternoon the hon. Member would not have an opportunity, but he need not put himself to any inconvenience. I will bear his wish in mind.

Mr. Luckhoo : May I first of all congratulate the hon. the Financial Secretary on producing this very excellent Budget. It is because we in this country can produce individuals such as he and his predecessor that we are conscious that we have the ability and the men who can well guide the destiny of this Colony. In that respect it is pleasing to observe that in the Mills Report reference is made to the fact that the Colony possesses an efficient fiscal system on the British pattern; that the Budget is well administered, and that the tax system is as practical and progressive as circumstances permit.

The first observation I would wish to make is that this is not a rich country; that we have a country which is complex, a country in which there are many difficulties, and that an objective approach, a realistic approach to the Colony should not begin with the premise that this is a wonderful and magnificent Colony. It is only when one appreciates the position such as it is that one can well endeavour to improve that which is. We have a growing population on a narrow coastal strip facing intricate problems of sea defence and irrigation. Further in we have the hinterland, not easily accessible, with timber, yes, but timber not as we would wish but in sporadic growth. With this approach one looks to see—and the Budget presents an eminent starting point for one's observation—how this country is developing and how it will develop in the future. We have our major industries—rice, sugar and bauxite. One wishes that there were

other major industries to compete against sugar, because in that way I feel there would be less antagonism to sugar and greater benefit accruing to the Colony. In the International Bank Mission's report it is said that there is little hope of any major industrial development in the foreseeable future due to the limitations of the local market, the lack of raw materials and power. It means that one has to look not only to two or three major industries but to minor industries, new industries, and other industries which, though not of the magnitude of sugar, by their number might well be able to supply the deficiency which we can feel in this Colony.

In order that new industries might be established we must present in this colony some attraction for capital and for investment. I think in some portion of the admirable Budget Statement the Financial Secretary said that capital is knocking at the door. I venture to disagree. There is no capital at the door at all. The point is that in this world today every country is clamouring for capital, and that all want capital. The question is, how much can we magnify this country so that we will be able to attract capital. It seems to me that the first requisite will be a sound, stable government. Without it, all the airy nothings and sweet hopes must fail, and that is the end of it. From that there must necessarily follow opportunity for promoting profitable industry. Capital will be attracted when it sees there is possibility for the development of that capital and for that capital producing results—results out of which we will necessarily benefit. There must be, by means of legislation or otherwise, some vigilance from us, the Government, to assist in bringing the capital to the country.

In 1951 we passed special legislation to encourage the creation of new industries by means of concessions in respect of income tax and exclusion from certain import duties. Investors from the United Kingdom found that this did not secure them the full benefits which they had hoped to derive because income tax waived at this end was collectible in the United Kingdom. So I was pleased to observe in one portion of this report that Her Majesty's Government is considering proposals to remedy the disability—that is in respect of this double form of tax collection. We hope we can do something to expedite the carrying out of these proposals so that investors from the United Kingdom could really and truly derive benefit from the income tax concessions when they bring their money into the colony.

I remember speaking on the last budget in this same Council Chamber. At that time one met perhaps a crescendo of optimism—there were so many high hopes, well founded. Now we can see from this Budget Statement that within a very short time there were discernible failings and shortcomings, and our future not rising to our expectations. The reason is obvious, and one need not go over them again. Nevertheless, it is important that we should observe them.

The Financial Secretary said in his Budget Statement that the national income was some 10 per cent. lower than in 1952. He goes on to say that the national income and standard of living should be improved, and hoped that a more sound and stable Government should ensure that upward trends are resumed—a hope we all share. Then he goes on to say there was a substantial drop in our income from Customs. That is something in which we hope there will be an improvement during this year.

[Mr. Luckhoo]

Nevertheless I think the drop is a very clear case in point of what happens when people are not inspired with confidence in the Government of the time.

Reference is also made in the Budget Statement to the International Sugar Conference of last year, of countries whose economy is largely dependent upon the production of sugar. I do not think it is fully appreciated and realised by the people of this country that if it were not for the fact that there is a Commonwealth Sugar Agreement we could not sell a grain of our sugar, or sell it at prices which would bring profits to this country and keep labour employed. Because under that Agreement substantially high prices are being paid. That is overlooked or taken for granted, but it is one of the mainstays of the economy of this country. The country is dependent upon this form of subsidy, so to speak.

It is pleasant to observe that although during the strike period which ravaged the sugar industry that rice was unaffected. It is a pleasant feature to note the growing possibilities of the expanding rice industry—a peasant industry. If I may be forgiven, Sir, for drawing from memory, I remember coming back to vote on the question whether this Rice Development Company should receive the blessing of and inauguration by the Government of this country. One heard the most stringent criticism of the proposals. I remember saying that it is because we have people like the mover, the then Financial Secretary with such vision and foresight that we can look forward to a more prosperous rice industry. The time is not yet ripe when one can say there has been a fulfilment of several things in this connection. But the indications are there; establish-

ment of mills in Essequebo, Corentyne, Anna Regina, must necessarily make a contribution to the improvement of the quality of our rice and to the milling capacity.

Mr. Jailal: I wish to arrest the statement made by the hon. Member (Mr. Luckhoo) with respect to what he said about rice being unaffected during the strike period that ravaged the sugar industry. Rice was almost ravaged at that time. My reason for saying that is because the Autumn rice crop was ripening and rice farmers during the "off periods" usually seek employment with the sugar estates to earn funds to finance the reaping of the crop. Because of the strike, therefore, rice was terribly affected. To say the rice industry enjoyed tranquillity is wrong.

Mr. Luckhoo: Sir, having been released from my "arrest" (*laughter*) may I say that no form of suffering from the strike on the part of people in the rice industry can be compared with that of the people in the sugar industry. May I quote from page 5 of the Budget Statement where the Financial Secretary supports me in that view:

"The rice industry, by and large a peasant industry, was unaffected by the strikes which ravaged the sugar industry."

Mr. Jailal: I am afraid the Financial Secretary was wrong.

Mr. Luckhoo: Turning to another aspect. It is a very happy sign that a licence has been issued in connection with the provision of hydro-electric power, to the British Guiana Consolidated Goldfields, Limited who are setting up machinery at Tumatumari on the Potaro River. I remember in my very early years hearing talk about the harnessing of falls like Kaieteur to get cheap electric

power for this country. It has taken years of constant repetition to reach this stage. I remember also one legislator who is not with us now, the late Joseph Eleazer in his typical style saying to me, "Boy, you going to get electricity cheap—as cheap as you buy potatoes!" In those days potatoes were very cheap. In 1947 they took soundings. As a tangible step forward a licence has now been issued—from the potential to the kinetic. The benefits which we will derive from that may not be seen today, but the experience which they will gain and maybe from the mistakes which they will make, one looks forward to the time when we will have many more licences issued for the development of hydro-electric power in British Guiana.

Reference has also been made in the Budget to the reported deposits of iron ore in the County of Essequibo, and the Treasurer says that the area also appears to be oil bearing. This, at first blush, sounds like an old tune, since one has been hearing about the possibility of oil production in British Guiana for many years. Now that there are these stimulating investigations about development, however, and with Departments having experts to give us considered opinions on these subjects, we might know once and for all whether the areas which are suspected to be oil bearing are so or not, and if they are, whether it would be an economic proposition to proceed with further investigations.

There are several heads which I propose to speak on when we reach the Committee stage, but I would ask your permission, Sir, to mention two or three heads in particular at this moment. The first deals with the Law Officers' Department. I do not know if my hon. Friend is quite correct when he says that the Law

officers would charge people with overloading their vehicles. That would be a new and added duty to the already very heavy burden which they carry. There is no doubt about it, that with the growth in our population and the very conspicuous increase in crime, the Law Officers Department has not expanded in relation to all the existing circumstances. When one looks at the wealth of legislation which has been enacted from time to time in this Colony—most of it relating to labour matters—that in itself is a high tribute and commendation to the hon. the Attorney-General for the services which he and his Department have rendered to this Colony of British Guiana through both placid and tempestuous times. I think that the recommendations made in Finance Committee should be implemented and that assistance in whatever form the head of the Department deems fit should be given to him.

I desire to take this opportunity, unusual as it is, to pay public tribute to the head of this Department—a man who, although not a Guianese, has done more perhaps than many real Guianese for the benefit of this Colony. (Applause). People usually have short memories; they remember for the present but forget very easily in the future. This Department has done valuable work in keeping the very high and lofty ideals and traditions up to the standard which one would expect to find in a British country.

The other Department to which I would refer is one to which reference has already been made by the hon. Mr. Sugrim Singh, and I do hope that the recommendations unanimously made in Finance Committee with respect to it will also be implemented. I refer to the Magistrates Department, where one feels that something should be done to give some temporary relief, so to speak,

[Mr. Luckhoo]

to the Officers concerned. There are several other heads, like Hospital and so on, which I intend to refer to, but I shall reserve what I have to say until we reach the Committee stage.

I shall be glad, however if I am permitted during the few remaining minutes before the adjournment, to make a few general remarks, since this is one of the few occasions that one is permitted to enjoy a roving commission without abusing his privileges. We have just been through a very difficult period in the Country's history, and while there is not much good in going back into the past and repeating the reasons why there were strikes and otherwise, I wish to say as one who has attempted to do his little bit for this Colony, that we must not permit ourselves to enter into a state of apathy and remain dormant or idle, feeling that all is completely well. (Applause). It is necessary for those of us who would save this Colony for Guianese and all the other inhabitants, to do our bit because it is only the loyal Guianese and the loyal inhabitants that can save the Colony—not troops or soldiers. We can do our bit by means of hard work and cold reason by going to the people and telling them, and showing them where they have been misled and are still being misled. I know that it is difficult to do that, because it has been truly said that "You can take a horse to the well, but you cannot make it drink." I say, however, that we must

not lack the courage to stand up and assert ourselves. If there are enemies in our country who are seeking to destroy it, then we must take active steps against those individuals. We must not permit the country to relapse into the unhappy position in which it found itself five or six months ago. There is every sign now of a move forward to progress and prosperity, but that is not all. We must be prepared to combat the forces of evil with all the power that we possess. I have taken opportunity to make these few remarks because I am only too conscious of the fact that some people who were very much concerned about the future of the Colony up to two or three months ago, now seem to be lapsing into a state of *laissez faire* and apathy again. This Colony is not by nature "The Magnificent Province." It is a country which can only be made magnificent by hard work, and I appeal to all individuals—those at the bottom of the ladder as well as those at the top—to play their part in this respect. The future of the country lies not in the hands of this Government or of any particular Government; it lies in the hands of the people of British Guiana—those who have vision—to make it a thing of beauty and not a thing of evil.

Mr. Speaker: With the agreement of Members—there being only a few minutes left for the adjournment—I will adjourn the Council at this stage, until tomorrow at 2 p.m.