

# LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

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

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Thursday, 11th October, 1956

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The Council met at 2 p.m.

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## PRESENT:

The Deputy Speaker,  
Mr. W. A. Macnie, C.M.G., O.B.E.  
in the Chair.

### *Ex-Officio Members*

The Hon. the Chief Secretary,  
Mr. M. S. Porcher (Ag.)

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

The Hon. the Financial Secretary,  
Mr. F. W. Essex.

### *Nominated Members of Executive Council*

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

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

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

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

The Hon. R. B. Gajraj

### *Nominated Unofficials*

Mr. T. Lee.

Mr. W. A. Phang

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

Mr. R. B. Jailal

Mr. Sugrim Singh

### *Clerk of the Legislature—*

Mr. I. Crum Ewing.

### *Assistant Clerk of the Legislature—*

Mr. B. M. Viapree (Ag.)

### *Absent:*

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

The Hon. R. C. Tello—on leave.

The Hon. L. A. Luckhoo, Q.C. — on leave.

Mr. W. T. Lord, I.S.O.—on leave.

Mr. J. I. Ramphal—on leave.

The Deputy Speaker read prayers.

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Wednesday, 3rd October, 1956, as printed and circulated, were taken as read and confirmed.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** I have to announce that leave has been granted to the hon. Member, Mr. Tello, from 8th October to 27th December. Mr. Tello has gone to the United Kingdom on a Development and Welfare scholarship; also, Mr. Luckhoo has been granted leave from today's meeting.

CONSTITUTIONAL PROPOSALS  
AMENDED

**The Chief Secretary (Mr. Porcher, acting):** I beg to lay on the table a statement by **His Excellency the Governor**, Sir Patrick Renison, regarding further amendments to the Constitution.

'To Honourable Members of the Legislative Council.

## CONSTITUTIONAL PROPOSALS

I have endeavoured to keep the Secretary of State fully informed of the comments, criticisms and suggestions made by various individuals and sections of the community concerning the proposed constitutional amendments which I announced in my address to the Legislative Council on the 25th of April, 1956. Finally, the **Hansard Report** of the constitutional debate in the Legislative Council on the motion moved by the Honourable Mr. Lee, was transmitted to the Secretary of State in accordance with the undertaking given by the Honourable the Chief Secretary on behalf of the Government. A full report of the representations made to me on the 28th of July by an 'All-Party' delegation had previously been sent to him.

2. I am now authorized by the Secretary of State to say that, after a careful consideration of all the representations which have been made, Her Majesty's Government have decided to amend the constitutional proposals so as to provide a Legislative Council of not more than twenty-eight members (excluding the Speaker) consisting of three *ex officio* members, not less than fourteen elected members and not more than eleven nominated members, and that, at the first elections held under the amended

constitution, the number of members to be elected will be fourteen. The Executive Council will consist of three *ex officio* members, two nominated and five elected members of the Legislative Council.

3. The necessary Order in Council will be laid before Parliament early in the coming session.

Government House,  
Georgetown.  
11th October, 56.

P. M. RENISON,  
Governor."

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

**Sir Frank McDavid (Member for Agriculture, Forests, Lands and Mines):** I beg to give notice of the introduction of the

Mining (Amendment) Bill, 1956.

PUBLIC UTILITY UNDERTAKINGS AND  
PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES ARBITRATION  
BILL

**Mr. Cummings (Member for Labour, Health and Housing):** I beg to give notice of the introduction of the

Public Utility Undertakings and Public Health Services Arbitration Bill, 1956.

## ORDER OF THE DAY

## BILLS—FIRST READING

The following Bills were read the first time:

- (a) A Bill intituled "An Ordinance further to amend the Mining Ordinance with respect to the payment of royalty on timber."
- (b) A Bill intituled "An Ordinance to provide an Arbitration Tribunal for the settlement of disputes in public utility undertakings and in certain services, and to prohibit strikes and lock-outs in such undertakings and services, in certain circumstances and for purposes in connection therewith."

DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME  
1956—1960

The Financial Secretary (Mr. Essex): I beg to move the following motion:

“Be it resolved: That with reference to Resolution No. XIV of the 10th of August, 1956, this Council having considered the report of the Finance Committee on its consideration of the Development Programme 1956—1960 (Sessional Paper No. 8 of 1956) accepts the schemes and allocations set out in the Sessional Paper as an outline of development expenditure over the period 1956—1960.”

The report of Finance Committee on this Programme was a very short one and it was examined in great detail in Finance Committee. The report says that the Finance Committee accepted the stated allocations as constituting an outline for development expenditure for the period. The word “outline” is used advisedly as, clearly, in a programme of this magnitude, one which is going to last for five years, adjustments must be made as we go along; the programme must be regarded as flexible and subject to review in the light of progress made in particular schemes. But one hopes that everything will go ahead very much as planned and within the estimate of \$91 million.

The first object of the programme is toward the intensification of the development and diversification of basic agriculture, the second is designed to improve transport and communication services, and the third is for social services, housing and electricity in rural areas. Really, one can take all day to speak on a programme of this sort but it is unnecessary to do so as it has already been considered by Finance Committee. I therefore propose to summarize the main points and deal more fully with two aspects referred to in the Finance Committee's report.

As I have said, the programme is going to cost about \$91 million. There are to be rural self-help and electricity schemes, and new ships and ferries. As regards drainage and irrigation and its allocation of \$13.4 million, over \$7 million is to finish off schemes started before 1956, particularly the Torani, Block III and Boerasirie projects. Plans for the East Coast main road, for which \$9 million is allocated, and housing with an allocated \$9 million, are well underway; the rehabilitation of ports and shipping, for which \$9.5 million is allocated, is also going ahead well.

There are some schemes which have not made their appearance in the Estimates yet. That is as it should be, because the lines along which economic development in British Guiana should go have been fairly well recognizable for a long time — more varied agricultural crops, the best possible use of mineral resources and better communications. We cannot afford on the economic side to go in for fancy schemes which are not likely to produce good results in the near future. On the social side the needs are quite clear.

On the financial aspect: we have about \$30 million (nearly \$20 million will come from Colonial Development and Welfare assistance and \$10 million is from loans already made). Of the rest \$53 million will have to come from loans to be raised. I would say here that the method of financing should be feasible, and we should be able to meet additional recurrent charges from the budget. In Finance Committee some Members felt that the total expenditure proposed for Social Services showed that too much emphasis was being placed on this side and not enough on the economic side, particularly land settlement, but I would like to point out, as one hon. Member did, that the \$24.5 million

[The Financial Secretary]

for agricultural schemes are really designed to make more men available to carry on research for new crops and to improve facilities for marketing products as well as improving land settlement as a whole. It must be looked at as a whole and the \$4 million for land settlement is no criterion. The land survey, research on crops and the proposed improvement of dairy products are all ultimately aimed at the urgent problem of settling people on the land. Besides the agricultural schemes there are other schemes which are to provide employment. I refer particularly to the geological surveys and the mining companies—and we must have high hopes for mining here.

It is clear that there will be no point in trying to develop basic agriculture and overlooking transport. To this end a further \$30 million is earmarked for shipping and railway services. Nearly \$½ million of this ambitious programme, as provided for forest projects and \$3½ million for the Credit Corporation, is considered economic expenditure and I think to a general degree all the expenditure is. Despite the criticisms in Finance Committee I do not think we can get along wonderfully well without doing as much as we can for social services, and the sum of about \$10 million for increasing water supply and for community development is not for an extension of these services but an improvement of them.

Going back to the report of Finance Committee, the point was made by certain Members that the \$2 million included in the unexpended balance of the 1954-1955 allocation for housing (the total allocation in the programme is \$11.3 million) should not be spent until we have had a review of the existing private and Government housing schemes.

It does not seem to me that this amount of \$2 million is excessive in view of the urgent need for housing, and though we would like to see more roads, for example, it is extremely difficult to say that a transfer should be made to other schemes, which goes to show that this is a pretty well-balanced programme. We can only step up one sector by cutting down on another sector.

As it is clearly shown in the Sessional Paper, a great deal of money will have to be borrowed externally and locally, and I very much hope that the people of British Guiana will show their faith in the future of the country by contributing as much as possible to the local issues. If we do not get support from local resources I do not see how it is possible for this programme to be carried out. We also hope to squeeze \$8 million out of the recurrent budget. I say "squeeze" because it is a large amount between recurrent income and expenditure, and the existing level of taxation is very narrow—though no one wants to see increased taxation.

However, a programme of \$91 million is possible in this period and I do not think that we as a Legislative Council or a Government can attempt anything less ambitious. I do commend the programme to this Council with the hope that it would not be reduced in any way. It may not have all the glamour of a headline like "Road to Brazil", but I think close examination will show that it is a sensible programme and a potentially more fleet-footed follower of the previous one on which we spent \$26 million and which brought material benefit to this country. I can expatiate on this budget further, but it is only necessary for me to say as much as I have said. Our general credit-worthiness in the United Kingdom should enable us to build on the 1955 programme and to help make our population a wealthier and happier people. I therefore beg to move that this motion be adopted.

**Sir Frank McDavid:** I beg to second the motion.

**Mr. Correia:** I am not in the habit of showering bouquets on Government, but I would like to compliment those who were responsible for the preparation of this programme. The simplicity with which it has been set out has made it possible for a layman to read and understand it, and this played a part in the fact that Finance Committee was able to discuss the entire programme in five days.

The hon. Mover was very modest in putting forward this motion but this day will go down in history because we have on this day gathered to approve of a measure that will set the wheels turning in a gigantic machine for progress. It may not be gigantic in terms of big countries but it is in terms of our population and economy. We are here today to give our blessings to this measure by approving of this motion. Never before in history have we attempted such a programme, and if we pause to think of it, if this programme is carried out we would have spent in the period, 1954 to 1960 the sum of over \$123 million on development.

The hon. Mover of the motion has told us how we are going to raise this \$91 million and, with Your Honour's permission, I would like to quote from the Sessional Paper. The amount to be raised is \$53 million and that would bring the Colony's debt by 1960 to around \$70 million. I am a bit worried over this, sir, when I think of what our loan charges will be by 1960. In 1956 those charges stood at around \$470,000 but by 1960 they would be increased to about \$4,300,000—an increase of over 900 per cent. My worry is that by 1960 we would not be able to meet these loan charges from our current revenue even if there is any

successful operation of all the schemes we are attempting.

I should like to quote with your permission, sir, paragraph 63 on page 12 of this Sessional Paper—No. 8 of 1956. It reads:—

“63—Fulfilment of this Development Programme which calls for expenditure of over \$91 million in the next five years will provide a sound basis for the further development of British Guiana in the years to follow. The Government is confident that in the immense task that lies ahead, all communities and people will play their part. No effort or sacrifice must be spared to carry out this capital plan, with its long-term benefits to the country's economy and social well-being, which has been made possible by the generosity of Her Majesty's Government.”

This is the part of the document to which I desire to draw attention—that all communities and peoples should play their part—because by 1960 we will have recurrent charges to the extent of \$4,300,000. Two years ago I advised Government in this Chamber to raise loans for development purposes and some Members laughed at me, but others took me seriously. I recommended that big loans should be raised, and I knew that they would mean much bigger loan charges than we have at present. The Development Programme is set out in the Sessional Paper and, with your permission, sir, I should like to quote a few remarks relating to the expenditure involved. These programmes are productive Development Programmes and will yield quick returns. A similar statement may be made with regard to drainage and irrigation on which we intend to spend another \$13½ million by 1960. These are the things we look forward to in order to increase our agricultural produce and, at the same time, improve the economy of our country.

I am afraid that we would not reduce our recurrent charges, and I would like to end the session with

[Mr. Correia]

people in the rural areas in order to make this gigantic scheme a success. As I go around the country, people ask me: "What are you doing?" Referring to me as part of the Government, they ask: "What are you doing with all that money?" They feel that we are putting the money into our pockets. These people are supposed to be intelligent, but they are living in cocoons and do not go about the country to see what is happening. They see the streets in Georgetown being improved, but they do not see what we are doing elsewhere. If they would leave their cocoons they would see how the money is being spent. The ordinary working man would not ask these questions because he is working on these jobs and knows that the money is being spent on various schemes.

As I have already stated, I think the hon. mover was too modest when he spoke on this motion. We have already spent \$9½ million and by 1956 another \$3 million will be spent. Very few people in Georgetown have any idea of how the money is being spent and so they are asking: "What is happening to the money we are borrowing?" If these questions were being asked by the less intelligent man I would excuse them, but when they are asked by people who are in better stations in life, I do not know what to say. It strikes me that the middle class people in this country take no interest in the running of its affairs, and that it is only when some new tax is being levied that they begin to take some interest. The sooner they get together, however, and endeavour to run their country the sooner would they have a more prosperous and happy British Guiana. If they go on as they are going, they would find themselves in such a choke that it would take

them many years to get out. I hope they are remembering what happened in 1953.

My time is limited, sir, but I would like to tell the people of this country—every man and every woman regardless of their station in life—to give this paragraph (63) their serious consideration. I am sure that the one aim of every political group in this country, regardless of its opinion, is that we should have a better and more prosperous British Guiana. I should like to make another appeal before I take my seat, and that is to the members of the Public Service who are the servants of the people. I hope that the members of the various Departments will co-operate and pull together for the benefit of the public in general. I am appealing to that section of the community to work and to assist the public; to be courteous—not to be rude. When "John Public" goes to a Government office for information very often he is chased out. I have been chased out several times, and I can understand what "John Public" suffers. Civil servants are the ambassadors of Government; whatever they do reflects on the Government which is judged by its officers. I am making this appeal to all Government employees today because we are entering upon a new phase of life in British Guiana. We are attempting something which has never been attempted before, and we must make this economic development a success. I trust that my appeal will not fall on barren ground.

**Mr. Sugrim Singh:** Very briefly I also would like to say a word of congratulation and thanks to the authors and planners of this extensive Development Programme which, I think hon. Members will agree, is another important chapter in the

economic development of this country. Like my hon. friend, I hope that the people of the country will awaken from their slumber and pull their weight in order to make a scheme designed to benefit the country a complete success. Quite often we come across persons who are interested in a particular line saying that they are not quite satisfied with the rate of progress. They proceed to generalize and condemn the Development Programme. We find such people in very high places. I say without any fear of contradiction that this programme has set the stage for the people of this Colony to coalesce and make it a success. What we say today and the schemes we approve today will be passed on to others who may come into this Chamber, and we hope that they too will pull their weight in the interest of Guianese to make this Development Programme a success.

Here I wish to part company with my hon. friend, Mr. Correia. I wish to use his exact words; I do not wish to misquote him in his reference to Government servants. I wish to say that I am satisfied that Government officers who are charged with the responsibility of carrying out this Development Programme have been pulling their weight. Some of them work overtime. I refer to one particular Department.

**Mr. Correia:** I did not refer to the officers who are in charge of development projects. I specifically mentioned public servants.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** That is correct.

**Mr. Sugrim Singh:** I shall refrain. I wish to apologize to my hon. friend for misquoting him. What I wish to say is that I have come across Government officers in charge of development schemes actually working overtime, going to the people and trying

to explain things to them. I refer particularly to officers of the Department of Agriculture, the Livestock Officers. I have seen them leaving their offices in the evenings. I have also seen District Commissioners in the evenings giving their full support and advice to the people. I hope to see this spirit continue.

In this Development Programme quite a number of the laudable and important projects hinge on the provision of suitable roads. For instance, land settlement would be affected if there are not proper means of communication. Agricultural schemes would be affected and actually be at a standstill unless there are adequate roads for the transportation of machinery and produce. Minor industries would also be affected. I therefore hope that the amount which has been allocated for roads will be adequate, and that the construction of roads will be given priority. I do not know what would be the condition of the East Coast road if there is another heavy rainfall. I think traffic on that road would come to a standstill. I hope that very soon Government will embark on the reconstruction of the East Coast and East Bank roads, and proper maintenance of the Corentyne road. I wish to refer particularly to the East Coast road which, with large villages and sugar estates on each side of it, is a very important means of transportation.

I am very glad to see in the programme provision for rural electrification. I speak as a rustic; I come from the country. I am going to charge Government with not giving sufficient attention to the rural areas. All the bright lights have been in Georgetown for years, but it is said that God made the country and man

[Mr. Sugrim Singh]

the towns. I am very happy to see that large villages like Buxton, on the East Coast, and villages on the Essequibo Coast will be provided with electric lighting. There is valuable property in those districts, and I am glad to see that the luxury of electric lighting will be exported from the City to the country areas.

**Mr. Farnum** (Member for Local Government, Social Welfare and Co-operative Development): If I may interject, I do not think electricity in the villages would be a luxury. I think it is a necessity.

**Mr. Sugrim Singh:** I am grateful to the hon. Member, and in view of his knowledge of the country districts I accept his correction without demur. Electricity is a necessity, and I am sure the country folk are eagerly looking forward to the electrification of their areas.

Another important matter is water supply. There is need for more artesian wells and the construction of pipelines to convey the water to the villagers. At present the provision of pure water is sadly lacking in several of our villages.

I wish to say once again that I hope the passing of this motion today will set the stage for years of happy progress in the economic development of this country. From this Chamber I wish again to appeal to the people of this country to pull their weight and to stop criticising when they do not know the facts. There are many agents going around dishing out stories which are untrue and wicked. As a Member of this Interim Government I am proud that in my time much has been done, through there is far more to be done. I am proud to know that

during our period of service we have been able to initiate and carry to some distance this long-range Development Programme which I am sure posterity will commend us for having started. Someone once said that there is no public opinion in this country. I do not accept such a statement. I still rely on the good sense of the people of this country to sift the chaff from the grain, and I have implicit confidence that they will think twice before they join in any destructive movement. It is difficult to build; easy to destroy. With these few words I will conclude, and I do so trusting that today we are setting the stage for a very solid development of this country of ours and that the future will pass favourable decision on what we have done.

**Mr. Jailal:** I want to join with both hon. Members and express my feelings of great contentment that we are about to embark on one of the boldest schemes ever devised for this country. From the moment I took my seat in this Legislature I have been urging upon Government a bolder vision. That bolder vision has now been shown. I feel that any investor, any businessman would now want to do everything he can to develop his business here and the people of the country would be willing to put their blood and sweat into building up the land that gave them birth.

We have about 90,000 square miles and a \$91 million programme, and in effect it is about \$9,000 per square mile. This may be a small amount, but we must remember that these 90,000 square miles take in cataracts, mountains, rivers and sand belts that may never produce economically and this country cannot spend much money on them at the moment. From his remarks a little while ago my friend the hon. Member, Mr. Correia, seemed to be frightened over the recurrent

charges of money to be spent, or, to put it another way, anxious over the "paying back time". The hon. Member is businessman enough to know that we must venture; that if we do not, we can accomplish nothing.

The bauxite industry continues to ship the ore out of this country and I am told we cannot expect smelting to be done here until we can produce cheap electricity. I am looking forward to this development programme laying the basis on which this possibility can be set. The sugar industry has expanded as much as possible and again there are difficulties set against further development like refining the product here. I am told that shipment to the areas where the refined product is in demand would be prohibitive in cost. These industries have almost reached their zenith. We have heard of the sugar industry trimming its sails. The cutting down of production costs may seem a blow to labour in this country but I think it is in tune with the industrial renaissance which is taking place and can be seen by anybody who takes the trouble to look around. I do not wish to pat this Government on its back, but things have been happening for the good these past three years and we have played a part in them, but when a thing is happening even with increasing speed in one's own house it is hardly noticeable to the person living in it.

If one takes a look at the rice industry one will see that it has become a tremendous concern. In taking a look one must go out into the fields and see. No later than three days ago I saw in the fields about 15 mechanical reapers reaping side by side and belonging to the much criticized Rice Development Company. Five years ago it would not have been an ordinary thing to see 15 self-propelled reapers

in the fields. These things are not achieved in the space of a week, and they show that the people in this agricultural pursuit have caught the spirit of things. We already have modern mills and, I am told, in the near future we are to have even more modern mills. I look forward to the day when rice will leave the mills without having to be put into bags. That may be a dream, but it can be fulfilled through the stage being set by the Development Plan.

I feel that up to the present we have done our part, but much more has yet to be done. We have to diversify our crops. I have been accused of having a one-track mind, but I think we should develop one thing at a time and then go on to the other. Agriculture is dependent upon the progress of other schemes in favour of which representations have already been made. I hope implementation of these will follow. Our great difficulty is to get the men to implement the plans we have made. I want to stress here that it is most necessary to get the men to do the job. The Drainage and Irrigation Department has been called upon to do a tremendous job. I know it is tremendous because I have laboured personally side by side with the people who are in the business of draining our coastlands and the one cry is, "we are not getting enough of the technical help that this project needs." It is no use our having the money when each year we have to put back some for re-vote. If we had to pay the men twice as much as what we set out originally to pay them, let us do so and get on with the job.

I commiserate with the Member for Communications and Works for this particular situation since it must affect his Ministry. There has been severe criticism of that Ministry and I have

[Mr. Jailal]

said that if the hon. Member were to open his mouth to ask for money he would have to talk in terms of millions and invaluable engineers, but these things it seems have been smoothed out and a road programme has been set up. The money looks as though it is forthcoming, and all that is necessary now is to put the programme into action.

I am appealing to Government at this level to see that the technical assistance needed is sought for and got. We have to compete with other countries—and we can do much more if we start competing. British Guiana must pay for what she wants. This development programme is one to which the whole country must apply itself. Every man, woman and child must be prepared to bear the strain of it, and an extra effort must be made to produce. I have said before, and I say again, that this country suffers from a surfeit of laziness. It is replete with lazy people who seem to take all life as one long siesta. This development programme is a challenge. Government has thrown down the gauntlet and the people must take it up. I have travelled along the coastlands and I think I have seen something of what is happening. Men, women and children are working in the rice fields but there are still thousands of acres lying idle, while men stand about begging for cigarettes in town. That is the pitiful position of this country of ours: too much Mexicanism, too much siesta; people have been accustomed to taking things easy.

The lethargy continues in a world that is completely changed — a world that has gone atomic — and we are drifting along like billows beyond the clouds. I must appeal in this Council as I would like to say that when the

time does come I propose to make an appeal and point out that this country has one kind of people — people who suffer from conservatism notwithstanding differences in colour. In this instance there is only one hope for us and I can only ask this Council to have faith of the sort that is being manifested in this motion today.

**Mr. Rahaman:** I rise to support the motion which has been so ably moved by the Financial Secretary. This Development Programme will go down in history, as never before — subject to correction — has this Legislature approved such a large sum of money for a similar purpose. I should like to compliment the Development Secretary on the manner in which he has arranged the various heads relating to the Development Programme and the allocations made thereunder. British Guiana is really an agricultural country, and if we can get projects like the Hutchinson scheme put through we would enable the country to hold its own against any other in the world. My only regret is that we have not got five times as much as this \$91 million to spend on development, especially with regard to drainage and irrigation.

As my hon. friend, Mr. Jailal, has said, there are many people in this country who can do something to help with these and other projects, but most of the people are only running to the City. I am not in agreement with the erection of so many new houses in and about the City, since it is encouraging people from rural areas to come and live in the city. I think that if proper drainage and irrigation facilities are installed in these rural areas, we would find people willing to settle in them in a normal way, and houses being built as they settle down. I beg, once again, to support this motion.

**Dr. Fraser:** Never in the history of this Colony has so much been planned and involved in a five-year Development Programme — calling for an expenditure of \$91 million. It is with a great deal of pleasure that I rise to speak on the programme that has been passed in Finance Committee as presented by the Financial Secretary. The Development Secretary has also given every help in putting things before us. Like Mr. Jailal, I fear that it is no use having this large sum of money to spend, particularly on drainage and irrigation matters, without having the technical staff necessary — the engineers and other officers required to carry them out. I heartily support what Mr. Jailal has said — that Government should make every effort to get the men necessary to carry out the drainage and irrigation programme which is so sadly needed in this Colony. The Colony has been backward for years because of its need for drainage, more than any other particular item. I have no fear that with good drainage this Colony will progress — and progress very rapidly. If our people had well-drained lands they would have been producing other things as much as they are producing today. I think they are willing to take up every available piece of land that can be drained, but without drainage it is a most heart-breaking thing to cultivate rice or any other crop.

The people in this Colony are not as lazy as many persons think, and we must not forget that maladies like malaria and hookworm have only recently been tackled, and that with improvement in health the people would have produced much more than they have been producing within the last five years. It must be remembered that this loan of \$9½ million will have to be repaid, and that the interest charges will also have to be met, while the chief

source of production in this Colony is the land. I desire to plead with Government to do everything possible to get the land drained so that it would be possible for the Colony to produce more. Although \$13 million has been earmarked for drainage and irrigation I would have liked to see \$25 million earmarked instead, but it must be very difficult for the planners to know how to allocate the money at their disposal. I have no doubt that this \$9½ million is only a beginning, and that more money will have to be spent in the years to come.

Roads and other communications are also necessary, and it is noted that a sum of \$3½ million has been allocated for roads. We want better roads so that the people of the country would be able to get about much quicker than they could at the present time, and without the hardships that are entailed. There is also much that remains to be done on the social side, and this includes housing, social services and so on. One would feel that this amount could have been slightly lower and should have been put on the economic side such as drainage and agriculture, so that one might see the whole picture. Finally, I would say that this Programme has been very ably planned.

**Rev. Mr. Bobb:** As already stated, there has been ample opportunity for Members of this Council to examine this Programme in Finance Committee, so there is hardly much more for me to say. I do wish at the outset, however, to congratulate those who have been responsible for preparing this very full Programme which must have entailed a great deal of work. Anyone reading through this Sessional Paper would come to no other conclusion than that this has been a mighty task, well approached and well done.

[Rev. Mr. Bobb]

I wish first to make a few general remarks on the Programme. It is inconceivable that a Programme of this magnitude would have been attempted unless Her Majesty's Government, the Administration and this Council had some faith in the country, and to me it is certainly an expression of the faith which Her Majesty's Government and this Legislature have in the potentialities of this country. I share the view that our people are able to rise to the demands which have been made by this Programme so far as its execution is concerned. I believe that, given the tools, the people will do the job. This Programme aims at providing these tools in adequate measure and to enable some solid improvements to take place.

Here I should like to call attention to one interesting point, and it is related to para. 10 on page 50 (of the Sessional Paper) dealing with the Credit Corporation. The effect (of the paragraph) is that the rate which the Corporation charged in lending money would have to be increased on account of the higher charges on new loans raised by Government, and this would necessitate a corresponding increase of the Corporation's present lending rate — to 5 per cent. That means that those who have already taken loans and those who will take loans will have to face the possibility of an increase in the loan charges. That is nothing to be worried about, however, provided the Development Programme is going to be accelerated as fast as possible.

This gives me the opportunity of under-pinning what the previous speakers have said — that nothing should be done to slacken our efforts or to

reduce the pace of development. Everything should be done, on the other hand, to implement these schemes as quickly as possible. One notices also charges of increased cost in many directions and the necessity for bringing in technicians who would necessarily have to be very highly paid. If these schemes are to be an integral part of the Programme there should be no delay in implementing them, or restrictions from all sorts of directions. I therefore join with my colleagues in appealing that the greatest possible care be taken to bring about the earliest possible implementation of this Programme.

Generally speaking, any good work could suffer in these parts through bad public relations, and it is true that a Development Programme of this kind can fail in the sense that the appeal which it should have made to the people has not been made. It is recognised that deliberate attempts have been made to misrepresent the Programme and to minimize its value to the country. With all that, I would suggest that in the present circumstances it is necessary for Government to be assured that the public realizes, as far as this Programme is concerned, it has gone to a very high and efficient level. If the Information Services are to be run for the benefit of these people, then those responsible should go among the people and let them know what the Programme stands for, and see that the Services are being run efficiently in order to achieve these things. It is necessary for them to have a stable source of information if the people are to be kept properly informed of the state of the Development Programme. I am not casting any aspersions on the present operation of the Information Services. What I am saying is that because of the very large Programmes upon which we are

now embarking, it would be necessary for us to take care that our public relations are commensurate with the size of the Programmes before us.

Every means should be taken by those responsible to see that everything that can be done is done, and in the way that this Government would have it. That aspect, I submit, sir, requires careful thinking, and I hope it will not be long before we see some action in this direction. It is a happy coincidence that today, while we are debating this Sessional Paper, the Governor has offered to this Legislature an amendment of the Constitutional proposals which were previously announced. Let us hope that the people of the country realise, inasmuch as this Programme seeks large-scale development, that they will have to put their shoulders to the wheel. I am not seeking to lay responsibility here for carrying out, officially, this Programme within the next five years, but there will be persons with a real desire to serve the country and a real desire to improve on the Programme, and not to interrupt and distort and make it a failure. To fail now would be to fail to raise our hopes and our promise for many generations to come. This Programme, if it aims at anything at all, gives an assurance that at last one supreme effort has been made to make the dreams of the past become a reality.

**Mr. Phang:** I too desire to congratulate Government on this Development Programme. It is rather difficult for me to speak on this programme because the North West District has failed to get anything appreciable. I think that the North-West District with its 7,500 square miles and a population of 10,000 has only been allocated a sum of \$130,000 for the

improvement of the Hosororo Experimental Station. It is a Government Station where the Department of Agriculture carries on experimental cultivations. Buildings are to be provided for agricultural officers and conditions made pleasant for them, but the allocation will not help to develop the district at all.

The last time I spoke in this Council about the North-West District I said that the people were very bitter because it appeared that Government was neglecting that district as if it were a foreign country. The position is the same today. Why is the North-West District being neglected by the Government? I do not understand it myself. Can the Executive Members of the Government tell me anything? Can the other Member tell me anything? It is not because Government's attention has not been drawn to the neglect of the district, but nothing has been done about it. I take my seat before I say anything bitter.

**Mr. Lee:** Please excuse me, sir, if you cannot hear me well, because I am a bit hoarse. First of all I do not think Government has acted wisely in bringing forward this Development Programme without first consulting persons in the community who know what is wanted for the development of the country. When the Ten-Year Development Plan was initiated some years ago Government thought it advisable to appoint several Committees comprising merchants and other persons interested in the development of the country. who spent several months in preparing the Ten-Year Development Plan. I do not know who prepared the present Development Programme, but it appears to me to be an appeasement of the political situation of the Colony. Can the Members of this Interim Government criticize the programme to the best of their ability and knowledge? I

[Mr. Lee]

say that they cannot do otherwise than accept it and make suggestions. The general public should be well informed of the actions and activities of Members of this Interim Government.

Can the Member in charge of Land Settlement honestly tell this Council and the public that the amount of money allocated for that purpose is adequate? I am sorry for him because he may, and I hope he will, be a Member of the new Council, because he holds portfolios which he should be given an opportunity to carry out to the end. One of the things that will satisfy the people of this country is the provision of more land properly drained and irrigated, in order that they may be able to cultivate economic crops and improve their standard of living. The Governor has the power to give the hon. Member ministerial responsibility in the new Government. Would he be able to tell the new Council that he has not been given sufficient money for land settlement? We must not fool ourselves; land settlement takes quite a lot of money. After all the economic progress of the country is based on agriculture.

Will Government tell this Council who prepared this Development Programme? I want the blame to be attached to those who prepared it, and not to the "floor" Members of this Council. The Colony can only be run satisfactorily and command respect if we are able to balance our budget. For the setting up of a milk pasteurisation plant Government proposes to spend \$382,000, in respect of which there was an allocation of \$185,000 for 1955. For 1956-60 there is a further allocation of \$197,000. For the success of a milk pasteurisation plant we must have cows to provide the milk, otherwise the plant would be a white elephant. What plan has Government prepared for the pro-

duction of those cows? It is proposed to import 200 heifers for allocation to selected persons under the supervision of Agricultural Instructors. In four years would 200 heifers be able to supply sufficient milk to make the pasteurisation plant a success? I say they will not. Have the farmers of this programme considered what might be the attitude of the milk producers towards the pasteurisation plant? Have they considered whether the present milk supply will be continued?

On account of the increased production of rice the number of milk-producing animals is being steadily reduced, and I foresee that the pasteurisation plant will be a white elephant within three years, unless some positive action is taken immediately. The plant must be in working condition and earning revenue within four years. We must have cattle to supply the milk in sufficient quantity to produce pasteurised milk at a price to compete with imported milk, unless Government intends to increase the duty on imported milk, thereby increasing the cost of living. We must also produce cheese without increasing the duty on the imported article, and in addition we have to improve and increase our production of pigs so as to foster subsidiary products. Has Government thought of these things?

It is common knowledge that when Government takes over a commercial enterprise it does not make a profit but a loss. I am hoping that this would not become a loss or a white elephant. I therefore recommend and urge that the milk production policy be so devised that at the end of the period of this programme we would have a successful scheme we can boast about.

Take the Abattoir and Refrigeration Plant at Lethem: after spending \$138,000 on it and allocating a further \$12,000 for it in the present programme,

can any Member here satisfy the public about its success? How much more will be required for its successful working?

**Sir Frank McDavid:** May I inform the hon. Member that its operation started two or three weeks ago. I am very glad to say that this synchronised with the removal of beef control. I hope he forgives me for saying this, but if the hon. Member intends to go through this programme item by item I do not intend to move that he be given extra time, as I did on the last occasion.

**Mr. Lee:** I may as well take my seat. If things hurt some Members I do not care. If the operation of the abattoir and plant had started, will there be enough cattle from the Rupununi Development Company to meet the demands of the Colony and the demands for export, for which there is a market? Have they released the duty on cattle from Brazil? That was the idea of having the abattoir and plant, to supply this Colony and export to Trinidad and other British West Indies territories. In each Ministry there is no consideration by the "Minister" of the programme handed down to him, and none of them has the pluck to say, "I cannot carry it out."

**Mr. Gajraj:** Surely the hon. Member does not wish to suggest that we bring cattle from Brazil at this time when cattle there are affected with foot and mouth disease.

**Mr. Lee:** Perhaps the hon. Member does not know that a medal was given to a certain gentleman for putting up the fence along the border to prevent cattle from crossing over.

**Sir Frank McDavid:** I am afraid I must bring to the hon. Member's attention that it has been announced in

the Press that foot and mouth disease has again broken out in Brazil. It is extremely possible that the disease can be found close to the border and the border may have to be closed. It is only right that Members and the public should know about the possibility that exists with regard to the re-outbreak of the disease here.

I apologise for intervening, but I must say that I object very strongly to the other remark that Members have been handed this programme and told to get on with it and they themselves have not had any part of it and do not know about it. That is quite untrue. (The Chief Secretary: Hear, hear).

**Mr. Lee:** They are only living by theory. We are depending on this plant but it has become a white elephant. What are they refrigerating up there? The cattle they get from the Rupununi company and the surrounding areas which they kill in the morning and ship away by air by afternoon? What is the use of the refrigerating plant? I am sorry the hon. Member for Agriculture has taken objection but I am trying to point out that this programme was not properly prepared by people who know the Colony's departments and the Colony's needs.

We need land settlement schemes and immigration to work them. The time will come when judgment will be passed, and if the hon. Member for Agriculture says they were consulted, then I will leave it at that. In the ten-Year Development Plan they allocated a certain estimate of money for the economic and social side. Part of the Plan was carried out and when the time came for further planning Sir Alfred Savage went and got \$44 million for the Two-Year Development Plan. Can the Government give any excuse

[Sir Frank McDavid]

for non-expenditure of funds on this Plan which was put before the Secretary of State and accepted? We did not criticize the action of Government then. Will the excuse be the same this time? If we look at the figures: estimated at \$20,359,660 in 1954; then it was revised by the Council —

**The Financial Secretary:** May I say that these figures are in the Sessional Paper, and if the hon. Member was here when I was introducing the motion, he would have heard them. Nevertheless, they are in the Sessional Paper.

**Mr. Lee:** The sum of \$26 million was spent in 1955. Therefore I urge on the Government that if the expenditure of \$41 million was agreed upon and only \$26 million was spent they should take care that this should not occur again in regard to something which the Secretary of State has given his consent to. Will the excuse again be, "we have not got the men" and "we have not got the technical staff"? In certain directions and through the United States Government we are having the benefit of the technical knowledge of certain persons, with the understanding that those persons would each have an understudy to take over and carry on the job to a successful conclusion after they have left. But we find after moving among these people that there is no understudy in many cases. The result of that will be that after the end of the period these experts are to serve we will have to go hat-in-hand and beg for other experts to come and finish the job, and they will most likely change policy. We do not want that. If it is the policy of Government to have under-studying, then let our boys be trained so they can continue the programme after the experts have left.

Take the Ministry of Communications and Works. Long ago there was a policy of having burnt earth ready for the repair of roads during the rains. I travel daily in areas where this policy applied and I find that there is not one heap of burnt earth to patch up the roads. I am not saying that burnt earth should be used, but the policy of the Government was to have something to meet emergency road repair during the rainy season. But now in this programme there is nothing. According to the latest report I have, labourers are being taken off the roads because there is no money to pay them. I saw a man with a motor-car spring on his shoulder. I asked him what was wrong and he said the spring was broken. This man, and others, like him, make their living from hiring cars. Is it fair that they should be deprived of this means of existence through bad roads?

It is Government's business to provide better roads. We have a road expert and we have the machinery (unless they are going to say, no). Are we going to have the road programme carried out within the five years allocated? I want Government to answer that. And judging from the cost of quarrying stones, providing scrapings and so on, can the "Minister" tell us whether from the allocations he will be able to carry out the work? I recall my friend, the late Mr. Raatgever saying in this Council, "I am not going to vote for the provision of supplementary expenditure when it is found that a proper estimate was not given in the first place." Are we going to go ahead with this programme and about the end of the period approach H. M. Government for more money on the ground that the estimate was wrong? The thing is not right to any person who knows what the facts are. One striking example of our having to go back to Her Majesty's Government for more money—an example which hon.

Members should not forget—is with respect to the Boerasirie Scheme. If I were the person in charge of British Guiana's affairs at the Colonial office and I received an application for \$2 million for doing more work under this Programme I would know what to do.

**Sir Frank McDavid:** At this stage I rise to a point of order. If we are going to carry out a Development Programme we are expected to prepare schemes and allocate money, and the normal way of doing that is for a motion to be moved inviting the Council to adopt them.

**Mr. Lee:** Sir, if I am told to take my seat I would say that I am sorry. It would be on record that I was bold enough to tell Government that although we have accepted this Programme the money is not safe.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The hon. Member (Mr. Lee) started to speak 32 minutes ago and I have made a note of the time. The hon. Member is under a handicap but I would ask him to conclude his speech in three minutes from now.

**Mr. Correia:** I beg to move a motion—that the hon. Member's time be extended beyond that stipulated in Standing Order No. 35.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** For how long?

**Mr. Correia:** For 15 minutes.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Has the motion been seconded?

**Mr. Phang:** I beg to second the motion.

Question put, and Council divided and voted:

<i>For:</i>	<i>Against:</i>
Mr. Jailal	Dr. Fraser
Mr. Correia	Mr. Carter
Mr. Phang	Mr. Gajraj
Miss Collins—4.	Mr. Farnum
	Mr. Kendall
	The Financial Secretary
	The Attorney General
	The Chief Secretary—8.

*Did not vote:*

Mr. Sugrim  
Mr. Lee  
Mrs. Dey  
Sir Frank McDavid—4.

Motion negatived.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The motion is lost; will the hon. Member (Mr. Lee) continue for three minutes?

**Mr. Lee:** I will try to do so, because I do not wish Your Honour to tell me to take my seat. What I want to tell Government is that they should not accept a Programme which is largely incapable of fulfilment and which will become a white elephant in the hands of Government. They are leaving us to operate everything, which would show that there is no Government in British Guiana that can rule. We will then be left to the Secretary of State who will say to us: "We have no Programme designed for you." That is what I want to say—that we are deliberately leaving this Government in the hands of the Secretary of State, causing it to beg for money, and in that way we would be a subservient Colony and not a democratic British Colony.

That is what I am trying to put to the Ministers in charge of the various Departments — that they should not have accepted a programme which they know is impossible of fulfilment. They have not stated satisfactorily how the money will be spent or that the Programme will be ful-

[Mr. Lee]

filled within the period for which the money has been allocated. I think it is wrong from Ministers of the Government to act in that way in these matters, since they will have to carry their sins and the cries of the people upon their heads. The "floor" Members could not do otherwise than accept the Programme which now takes the form of a "White Paper". We tried to criticise it and see that Government carry out certain things, especially land settlement for which more and more money will be required. The growing population of this Colony has to be taken care of.

If we have the necessary money we should provide more schools and more training to make a success of the schemes we have in British Guiana. The World Bank Report deals with this question, and I am trying to prevent British Guiana from being a begging country. Sir Frank McDavid has told us that we will earn the respect of the world after our plans have been completed. The British Government will respect us for one thing, and we will be able to go to London or America and raise loans if that becomes necessary. At present we cannot do so and it may be that when we are ready we will have to borrow at a rate of more than six per cent. Whose fault would that be? My time is up, sir, and I will conclude by saying that Members will rue the day if we vote for the acceptance of this Programme as presented.

**Miss Collins:** I rise to congratulate Government on the preparation of this Development Programme, and I would like to remind Government that before it is proceeded with it should come before the Legislative Council for amendment. I do not possess any supernatural powers so I cannot say that this Development Programme will fail. For years Development Programmes have been advocated and I

am quite sure that other Members of this Council who want social and economic advance will appreciate this Development Programme.

**Mrs. Dey:** I feel distinctly honoured to be among those young colleagues who this afternoon have been rendering unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's in accepting the schemes and allocations set out in this Sessional Paper as allocations for 1956-60. We all know that nothing at all is referred to us as members of the Government. We have lost three Members in one way or another today, and but for the fact that there was Finance Committee we would have been one short. We all know that before this Development Programme came before this Council how much we advocated it, and we are all satisfied with what has been placed before us, so it was our bounden duty to come this afternoon and support this scheme.

As a woman who happens to be a member of many family organisations, —and Members of this Council know how much a woman behind the scenes can accomplish, especially when she is a wife—I was pleased last evening to look at over 300 women who could be numbered among our less fortunate sisters—women of the middle class—when they had a little function for the blind in a small house. The evening was a delightful one but, what was better, was the spirit of co-operation that existed among these women. One woman chose as a solo a song that was written by a blind woman—she became blind at the age of three — while the title of another song was "There are Shadows in the Valley but there's always sunshine on the Hill".

As regards this Development Programme, it seems to me that everyone should co-operate as fully as possible, for although the shadows may be in the valleys of our country we are sure

that in the end we will all see the sunshine on the hill-top. As regards our road programme, I will say that the allocation is a very big one. When I looked at the allocation for education and the set-up for providing a number of schools within five years, I saw for myself that there is provision for handicraft instruction and post-natal education in private schools. If attention is given to that there would be little or no room for complaint about what has been allocated at present, because if we look at the future it presents a brighter picture than **the present**.

So far as the B. G. Credit Corporation is concerned, I had the pleasure of travelling recently from Kitty to the Crabwood Creek and I saw what is being done by the Corporation with respect to this Development Programme. At that time we knew nothing about this allocation and, like many others, I thought it would have been necessary to get money from outside to carry on this Programme. I sincerely trust that by the time this Development Programme has ended and it pleases the Good God, I will be able to say as the children of old—"Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation". I am pleased to support this Programme, and I congratulate the persons concerned with preparing it.

**The Financial Secretary:** We have had an extraordinary tirade from the hon. Member, Mr. Lee, but I merely wish to say a few words, including, on behalf of the authors, — "Thank you very much" to those hon. Members who have congratulated Government on its planning and expressed appreciation of the clarity of the Sessional Paper. I would say with reference to the speech by the hon. Member, Mr. Correia, that we have carefully considered the additional loan charges which will be incurred

by 1960, and we are satisfied that we can cover them partly by the additional revenue which will arise from the Development Programme project which we hope will bring in something like \$1.9 million in additional revenue by 1960. By rapid calculation that in itself would appear to cover loan charges on about \$30 million at 6 per cent. We do expect that people will take over where the programme leaves off on the completion of the various schemes, and that apart from the direct revenue from projects, additional revenue will also accrue from the implementation of this programme.

I would like to say to the hon. Member, Mr. Phang, that I quite understand his feelings about the North-West District, but the Agricultural Station there will be extended and will not only provide more comfortable accommodation for the officers, as the hon. Member suggests, but will carry out investigations of soils and crops, poultry and livestock, as indeed were started in 1955.

With regard to Mr. Lee's observations I would like to say first of all that I did not quite understand—although I tried hard to—what he was getting at in his main theme. I was not sure whether he was complaining that we would not be able to carry out the programme, or that we would not be able to do it with this amount of money, or that the programme was not worth doing at all, or that we should not accept any money from the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund. Let me take the first assumption first. I entirely agree with his point of view that we may not achieve the programme with \$90 million in five years. If we do achieve it and the schemes are completed in exactly the way planned and at the times planned.

[The Financial Secretary]

British Guiana would be unique in the whole of the Colonial Empire. This is a continuation of the Two-Year Development Plan; not something quite revolutionary. It is a target, and unless we have a target we shall have even less achievement. It is not an impossible target to spend the \$91 million over the five years.

The hon. Member said that if we accepted money from H.M. Government under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act we would be giving up our birthright. If I may say so without using unparliamentary language, that is nonsense.

**Mr. Lee:** I never said such a thing.

**The Financial Secretary:** If the hon. Member did not say that, I regret that I do not know what he did say. I cannot see any other conclusion to be drawn from what he said.

Another point he made was that Government did not consult anyone when this programme was being drawn up. As I have said, this programme is an extension of one which has been going on for some time. It has not been produced out of a hat in the last few months. The hon. Member will see it explained scheme by scheme in the Sessional Paper. This is not a new plan but an extension of an old one. The 1954 programme was the beginning, and on that planning were initiated the various schemes which we are now completing. If the hon. Member says that the programme is no good and that he will not vote for it.—

**Mr. Lee:** I never said the programme was no good. I said that if Government could complete it within the period stated, British Guiana would be put on its feet, but I know we cannot do it.

**The Financial Secretary:** I am glad that the hon. Member is now going to vote for the motion.

**Mr. Lee:** I am not against the programme.

**The Financial Secretary:** In that case I will sit down.

**Mr. Lee:** If your Honour had allowed me to conclude my speech—

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** I am afraid it would have been taxing my indulgence a little too far. The question is that the motion be accepted by the Council.

Motion carried.

#### PLYWOOD COMMITTEE'S REPORT

Item 3.—**Mr. Correia** to move the following motion:

"Be it resolved: That this Council accepts in principle the recommendations contained in the Report of the Select Committee appointed in terms of Resolution No. XXXVI of 1955, which was tabled on the 10th July, 1956, and requests the Administration to give favourable consideration to those recommendations."

**Mr. Correia:** I think the hon. the Financial Secretary wishes to make a statement on the matter.

**The Financial Secretary:** I would say that I did understand last week that as we were of one mind almost delaying this motion, that it would have been put on the Supplementary Order Paper until we were in a position to synchronise our thoughts on the subject of the motion. I would therefore ask that the motion be relegated to the Supplementary List.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Has the hon. Member, Mr. Correia, any objection?

**Mr. Correia:** I have no objection, sir.

Motion deferred.

**The Chief Secretary:** I move the adjournment of the Council until next Thursday.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Council will adjourn to Friday, 19th October, at 2 p.m.