

DR. CHEDDI JAGAN
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SPEECHES
VOLUME 1

**The Fourth Legislative
Council
December 1947 - December 1951**

Dr. Cheddi Jagan
National Assembly Speeches Volume 1
With a Preface by Dr. Roger Luncheon
This edition © The Government of Guyana, 2011
Preface © Roger Luncheon 2010

Cover design by Peepal Tree Press

All rights reserved.
No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any
form without permission.

Published by The Caribbean Press for the Government of Guyana.

This publication was made possible by the financial support of the Peepal
Tree Press (Leeds) and the Government of Guyana.

ISBN 978-1-907493-20-1



PREFACE

Dr. Jagan was first elected to the Legislature of British Guiana in 1947 and served until 1992, a span of almost fifty years in elected public office. During his period as a Legislator/Member of Parliament 1947 – 1953, Dr. Jagan served as an elected member; as a Head of Government 1957 – 1964 in the pre Independence period; and as a Leader of the Opposition Party in Parliament 1964 – 1992, until the PPP was returned to power in 1992. In 1997, he died in Office as Head of State and Head of the PPP/Civic Government.

Compiled in chronological order, these volumes contain Dr. Jagan's speeches made in Legislative Assembly/Parliament during his long career there. These speeches reflect his consummate attention to events that developed during the important periods in Guyana, the Caribbean region and the world.

Dr. Jagan was elected and entered the Legislative Assembly in the colonial era. The inequities and inhumanity of that period (the post World War II period) was the arena in which he started his life and career as a politician. With universal suffrage and the political party of his creation, the PPP, he entered the legislature and piloted the PPP that was poised to take British Guiana to Independence.

Betrayed by the Western powers, the PPP was removed from office in 1964 and led in Parliament as the Opposition Party for twenty-eight years. In 1992 his party regained power, removing the PNC after a free and fair election.

Dr. Jagan's speeches illustrate his humanism, his dedication to the working people, the poor and the powerless. He spoke as an Internationalist, joining his and Guyana's voice in the struggle for national liberation, independence and development. During the Cold War years, he argued for peaceful co-existence and non-alignment. His major contributions dealt with national issues impacting on socio-economic development in Guyana. He proposed initiatives that were well thought-out and carefully crafted, and which enjoyed the support of Guyanese. He emphasised good governance, economic planning and a tripartite economy. He exposed excesses and wrong-doings during the colonial regime and under the PNC Government and fought tirelessly in Parliament to succour the victims of colonialism and PNC misrule. For him, democratic Government needed to address issues of economic justice, for the sake of global security. The unnecessary and cruel wastage of human talent was his major concern. As he once declared, "Democracy can only prosper in an environment of economic, social and ecological development. Poverty atrophies the vigour and initiative of the individual and deprives the society of incalculable human re-

sources. If left unattended, the expansion of poverty with hunger and the hopelessness it engenders will undermine the fabric of our civilisation and the security of the democratic state, thus threatening world peace." He was equally passionate in the cause of environmental protection, recognising an intimate linkage with human economic development but also the human spiritual hunger for beauty. He put it memorably thus : "... the natural resources of our planet must be utilised for the benefit of mankind in such a way that they remain available for future generations, and that in the process of utilisation, fullest measures are taken to prevent environmental degradation. Sustainable development is an all embracing process which is centred on human development. There are two major needs which have to be satisfied. One is to use natural resources for the material and spiritual upliftment of all people. The other is to maintain the delicate balance in nature reflected in the various eco systems adorning our planet." Cheddi Jagan was, and is, the adornment of our country. His record of service is unsurpassable and the history of the party he led is intimately interwoven into the essence of things Guyanese.

Dr. Roger Luncheon
Head of the Presidential Secretariat

Biographical Summary of Dr. Cheddi Jagan

- Name:** Cheddi Berret Jagan
- Date of Birth:** March 22, 1918. Port Mourant, Corentyne, Berbice, Guyana
Died March 6, 1997
- Parents:** Son of indentured plantation workers; mother (Bachaoni) and father (Jagan) along with two grand mothers and an uncle came to the then British Guiana from Uttar Pradesh, India.
- Personal :** Married August 5, 1943, to Janet Rosenberg of Chicago, Illinois USA;
has two children: Cheddi (Joey) and Nadira
- Education:** 1933-1935: Queen's College, Georgetown
1936-1938: Howard University, Washington, D.C. USA
1938-1942: Northwestern University. Dental School, Chicago, USA, Doctor Dental Surgery (DDS)
1938-1942: Central YMCA College, USA. Bachelor of Science (B.Sc)

Trade Union and Political Career:

- 1946:** Organised and spearheaded the formation of the Political Affairs Committee and the PAC Bulletin.
- 1947-1953:** Elected Member of the Legislative Council
- 1950:** Founded the People's Progressive Party.
- 1952-1953:** President of the Rice Producers' Association.
- 1953:** From April to October, headed PPP elected government and was Minister of Agriculture
- 1954:** Spent 6 months in jail for breaking movement restrictions order.

- 1957-1961:** Headed second elected PPP government and was Minister of Trade and Industry.
- 1961 –1964:** Headed the third elected PPP government as Premier and Minister of Development and Planning.
- 1964-1973;**
- 1976-1992:** Leader of the Parliamentary Opposition.
- 1970-1997:** Honorary President, Guyana Agricultural General Worker's Union;
General Secretary of the People's Progressive Party.
- Oct 9, 1992-**
- Mar 6, 1997:** President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana.

Contents

Estimates -Tourist Bureau: Thursday February 19, 1948	1
Estimates - Labour Department: Thursday February 26, 1948	3
Estimates - Local Government: Thursday February 26, 1948	7
Tax Amendment Bill: Wednesday March 3, 1948	10
Closer Association of B.W.I. Colonies: Friday March 12, 1948	12
Increased Salary for Town Planner: Thursday April 29, 1948	15
Health Services Committee Report: Friday April 30, 1948	17
Intoxicating Liquor Licensing (Amendment) Bill: Friday April 30, 1948..	19
Hydro-Electric Surveys: Friday May 28, 1948	21
Newspaper Report Challenged: Thursday September 9, 1948	22
Crown Lands (Amendment No. 2) Regulations: Friday December 17, 1948	23
Estimates - Legislature: Wednesday February 2, 1949	26
Estimates - Agriculture: Wednesday February 2, 1949	27
Estimates - Education: Thursday February 3, 1949	33
Examinations:	36
Estimates- Labour Department: Thursday February 3, 1949	37
Estimates - Local Government: Thursday February 3, 1949	43
Estimates - Local Government: Thursday February 3, 1949	44
Estimates - Medical: Friday February 4, 1949	45
Estimates - Subventions: Friday February 4, 1949	47
Police: Friday February 4, 1949	49
Prisons: Friday February 4, 1949	58
Colonial Emergency Measure: Friday February 4, 1949	60
Motion p.w.d Police: Thursday March 3, 1949	62
Ten -year Development Plan: Friday March 4, 1949	65
Medical Practitioners' Bill: Friday April 29, 1949	71
Motion - Annual Holidays with Pay: Friday May 27, 1949	79
Motion-Central Rice Mill: Thursday June 2, 1949	82
Leathercraft Scholarships: Thursday July 7, 1949	84
Report of Salaries: Thursday September 1, 1949	85
Report of Salaries Commission: Friday September 2, 1949	86
Report of Salaries Commission: Wednesday September 7, 1949	97
Civil list - Amendment Bill: Friday September 9, 1949	99
Civil List - Amendment Bill: Wednesday September 14, 1949	103
Civil List - Amendment Bill: Friday September 16, 1949	104
Civil List- Amendment Bill: Thursday September 22, 1949	107
Court of Criminal Appeal: Friday September 23, 1949	109
Recruitment of Officers: Thursday October 6, 1949	111
Motion - Subsidisation Measures: Friday October 7, 1949	113
Motion-Minimum Wage: Thursday October 13, 1949	117
Base Buildings for School Purposes: Wednesday November 9, 1949	124
Grant to Trades Union Council: Wednesday November 9, 1949	126

Grant to Trades Union Council: Thursday November 10, 1949	130
New Amsterdam Town Council Bill: Thursday November 10, 1949	133
Land Settlement in Berbice River: Friday November 11, 1949	134
Motion - Amerindian Policy: Thursday November 17, 1949	137
Agreement with B.G Broadcasting Co.: Friday November 25, 1949	142
Agreement with B.G Broadcasting Co.: Thursday December 1, 1949	146
Reconstruction of Corentyne Road: Thursday December 8, 1949	147
Subsidised Steamer and Road Transport Services: Thursday December 8, 1949	148
Flooding in Rural Districts: Friday December 30, 1949	150
Budget Debate: January 6, 1950	152
Estimates - Agriculture: March 2, 1950	163
Estimates – Cooperative Department: March 2, 1950	166
Estimates – Education: March 2, 1950	167
Education Estimates (Continued): March 3, 1950	170
Queens College: March 3, 1950	175
Estimates - Labour Department: March 3, 1950	177
Estimates Medical – X-Ray Department: March 8, 1950	179
Estimates – Medical: March 8, 1950	180
Medical (cont.): March 8, 1950	181
Miscellaneous: March 8, 1950	183
Subvention for Maintenance of Kitty Roads: November 2, 1950	188
Gambling Prevention (Amendment) Bill: March 23, 1950	192
Motor Vehicles and Road Traffic (Amendment) Bill (cont.): August 31, 1950	193
Undervaluation and Consequences: September 1, 1950	194
Drainage and Irrigation, a Colonial Question (Motion)	199
Amendment of Regulations Governing Employment of Watchmen: May 31, 1950	203
Rent Restriction Ordinance	205
Building Construction in Burnt Area: June 13, 1950	207
Rice Marketing Bill: August 11, 1950	209
U.S. Base Employees' Rates of Pay: August 16, 1950	224
Rice Marketing Bill: August 17, 1950	225
Rice Marketing Bill: August 17, 1950	226
Prisons	241
Social Assistance	242
Constabulary Amendment Bill: 1951	244
Motion – Export Price of Rice	247
Venn Commission Report	250
Medical (Amendment) Bill	256
Budget Debate	258
Income Tax Amendment Bill	272
Estimate - Economic Advisor	274
Estimate – Development Commissioner	277

Estimates – Civil Aviation	281
Estimates – Queens College	283
Estimates – Forest Department	285
Estimates – Interior Department	286
Estimates – Local Government	287
Estimates - Medical X- Ray Department	289
Printing Contracts	292
Estimates – Tourist Bureau	296
Venn Commission Report	298
Public Loans Bill	300
Venn Commission Report: March 21, 1951	302
Estimates – Atkinson Field	305
Old Age Pension – Appropriation Bill	306
Rice Farmers Security of Tenure.	308
Venn Commission Report	310
Public Loan Bill – Second Reading	313
Purchase of Campbellville	316
Schedule of Development: March 30, 1951.	322
Venn Commission Report	324
Income Tax in Aid of Industry Bill	330
UK-Cuba Trade Pact	332
Dental Mechanic Committee Report	338
Extension of Rent Restriction Ordinance	347
Sugar Industry & Legislative Council (Housing of Workers) Bill	349
Motion – Appointment of Dr. Ho	355
Sugar Industry – Housing of Workers Bill	360
Amerindian Bill - Committee	363
Bakeries (Hours of Work) Amendment Bill	370
Motion – Employment of Watchmen	373
Motion – Reduction of Price of Gasoline	374
Medical (Amendment) Bill	376
Motion - Institution for Young Offenders	379
Motion – Abolition of Rice Marketing Board	381
Motion – Decontrol of Crude Oil & Coconuts	387
Motion - Freehold Titles on Sugar Estates	390

DR. CHEDDI JAGAN
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SPEECHES
VOLUME 1

**The Fourth Legislative
Council
December 1947 - December 1951**



The Caribbean Press

Estimates -Tourist Bureau: Thursday February 19, 1948

Dr. Jagan: In the Finance Committee I reserved the right to speak on the Tourist Bureau. I am against any increase in the vote for this Department. As I had mentioned, and I want to state again, I cannot see under present conditions that we in British Guiana can ever hope to attract tourists in any large number, and for that reason I again state that it is certainly a waste of money. If I can claim to know the Americans and the people out West and in the North, I would like to state that those people as tourists fall into two categories - one category comprising those who would like to have comfort, and the other category comprising those who would like to have fun. As regards fun, I am sorry to say we in British Guiana have nothing to offer people coming out here from the U.S.A., and Canada, and they much prefer to go to Bermuda or Miami or Barbados, where they can do a lot of swimming, dancing, etc., and have a lot of fun. As far as the other group is concerned, those whom I call the leisure class who are interested in having luxury, I can say that British Guiana has no accommodation for them. The hotels in British Guiana today are packed and cannot be compared with the hotels which those tourists are accustomed to in other countries. There are few things that we do have to offer; for instance the trip to Kaitetur that is not only a hazardous trip, but a very difficult one. Most of the people who are going to come here as tourists are going to do so as round-trippers on the boats, and whether we spend money or not in advertising they are going to come here.

I know Your Excellency has a certain amount of apprehension as regards this Bureau. I know also that the Tourist Bureau has some Department in the U.S.A, in the city of New York, but I cannot see how much good such a small bureau in a very high skyscraper can do - I do not know on what floor it is, but I am told it is on a very high floor.

I do not think that with a small amount of the vote allocated to it, it can in anyway attract any large number of tourists to come to British Guiana. Even if we do attract them, what have we to offer them? That is my point. I think that the best thing to do, if you want to advertise British Guiana, is to wipe out this vote completely and make a film. There is a company- The Argosy Film Company- which is going to Jamaica. We can invite them to come and make a film of British Guiana. We can show them all the places of attraction, the slums and everything, and let the people away see what they have to come to. In that way, I think, we will be doing a great measure of good. I noticed that we have just passed the Head "*Publicity and Information Bureau*". I think that Bureau can readily undertake that objective. I do not want to comment on the usefulness of that Bureau. What it is doing

now is handing out items to the newspapers. That can easily be done by the newspapers themselves. That Bureau can undertake this job and do it openly. I am moving that this item for \$10,000 be removed from the Estimates.

Estimates - Labour Department: Thursday February 26, 1948

Dr. Jagan: I am sorry my remarks have caused inconvenience to the Labour Commissioner by his presence here this afternoon. I certainly did not want to make an attack on the Labour Commissioner as such. I was merely pointing out what to my mind seems a wrong policy of the Labour Department as a whole. As I recall, I was speaking of the Department of Trade Unionism in British Guiana. I would like to continue where I left off. I mentioned, I think, that it is of interest both to employees and employers to have Trade Unions developed to the highest extent in British Guiana, and I further stated that I did not believe that the methods adapted by this Department was in anyway encouraging this Department. I should like to be specific and to make reference to the Sugar Estates' Trade Unions with which I am familiar. There is one provision within the framework of the Sugar Estates' Trade Unions which is called the Estate Joint Committee. I am not saying that the Labour Commissioner and the other members of his staff are not versed in the principles of Trade Unionism, but I feel that they are merely importing those principles from the United Kingdom and other countries without at first trying to fathom the psychology and amenity background of the people of British Guiana. It is true that in a country like the United Kingdom the Association of Workers are free and the workers are living in relative freedom, but that condition does not exist today on the sugar estate. On the sugar estate, Sir, I want to say that a condition which is tantamount to forced labour exists. I should like to read, if I am permitted, the "*Caribbean Land Tenure Emposium*" which states as follow:

"In 1842, the labourers refused the wages and were rejected from their houses on the sugar plantations."

100 years have passed, and I am sorry to state that a similar situation exists today on the sugar estate. The labourers are constantly told that if they do not like to work for certain wages and under certain conditions they would have to leave the sugar estates and vacate the premises occupied by them. Only a few weeks ago I wrote the Sugar Producers' Association to find out about conditions, for instance, security of tenure and on what basis the houses would be built at Plantation Ogle, and I was informed that the information would not be given to any private individual. I know, Sir that you have somewhat in a critical manner told me last night that I must first of all try and get all possible information before coming to this Council. I am trying to do so but, as I said, this information was not given

to me. As I mentioned, on the sugar estates, labourers are living on estate houses and there is not security of tenure. I want to point out to Members of this Council that only a few days ago I had to write to the Manager of Plantation Ogle with reference to a person by the name of Mr. Jacob. He was evicted from the estate lately for refusing to work on the estate and going back to catch fish and for telling the other workers that they must not work under the wage conditions offered by the sugar estates. I wrote to the Manager asking that that individual be allowed or given permission to enter the estate so as to be able to visit his family and relatives from time to time as may be necessary.

I also want to draw this Council's attention to the Agistment fees which I have already mentioned in this Council in relation to forced labour. I have been reading in this pamphlet called "*The Colonies, The Way Forward*" and I have found that in Africa a similar situation of forced labour exists even though the forced Labour Convention in 1930 condemned the practice of forced labour. If I am permitted I would like to read from page 16 a remark as follows by Sir. Geoffrey D' Orr, a former Governor of Kenya:

"We consider that taxation is the only possible method of compelling the natives to leave their reservations for the purpose of seeking work."

This compulsion refers to the Toll Tax and the Head Tax which are levied on African natives so that they will be forced to go to work on the plantations which are owned by the absentee landlords. The same situation, Sir, exists on sugar estates here. Perhaps that may be too strong a statement, but I would like to say that the raising of pasturage fees will in effect produce a similar result, in that the persons now residing on sugar estates will have to sell their cattle and in doing so their economical independence will be lost and they will be thereby compelled to work on the sugar estates as wage-earners. I have spoken at length on this condition of forced labour so as to point out to the Labour Department and to this Council that if we are to introduce any of the principle and practices of Trade Unionism as they exist in countries with free societies like the United Kingdom, we must take care in introducing those same principles and practices in a society like British Guiana's. We must take care to know the environmental background of our people. I am particularly drawing attention to the sugar estates because I am familiar with that Department.

I want to come back to the Estates' Joint Committees. The Estates' Joint Committees, as they are now functioning and as they are now comprised, consist of workers of sugar estates under the chairmanship of the managers. Those workers have to work a certain number of days on the sugar estates and, as I have pointed out, they live in the sugar estates' houses. Therefore I feel that those workers are not able to sit at the same table with the management to discuss problems of wages and conditions of work, when it is realised that those workers have been and are constantly victim-

ised by those managers of the sugar estates. I therefore held a very long time ago that the Estates' Joint Committees as presently constituted cannot in any way encourage the development of democratic principles in Trade Unionism, because those workers are always afraid. If we are to encourage, and I feel that we should, the development of this democracy, which, I believe, is the intention of the Labour Department, I think they should enlarge the constitution and allow those persons who are not even working on the sugar estates to sit on these Joint Committees until such time has arrived when Government will give the workers free housing, when the workers will not be so much under the thumbs of the sugar estates' authorities.

I want also to refer to the Trade Unions as such. On the sugar estates presently there are two Unions which are recognised – the Man-Power Citizens' Association and the Workers League. I cannot regard it as encouraging Trade Unionism when two Unions only are being recognised. In fact I recall about three years ago when there was a motion by the Executive of the Trades Union Council to the effect that there should be an amalgamation of the Unions of British Guiana, which I thought was a very praiseworthy one; the Presidents of those two same Unions openly declared that they were not ready nor willing to accept the principle of amalgamation of the Unions on the sugar estates. The mere fact that the Labour Department and the Sugar Estates' Authorities are recognising only two Trade Unions in the sugar industry allows for a supply within the ranks of the Trade Union Movement. I am also aware of the fact that the Department is not willing to recognise other Trade Unions or is not willing to recommend to the Sugar Producers' Association that other Unions should be also recognised. I agree with the Labour Commissioner that there are too many Unions in this country but I cannot see that this policy as presently adopted will in any way work for the unity of the Trade Union Movement in British Guiana. My argument for that is this: Why does not the Department accept this principle, that after there is two or more Unions in any industry or on any sugar estate the Labour Department recommend to the Sugar Estates' Authorities that they should recognise the Trade Union which has the largest membership. I know in similar cases in the U.S.A. when there are disputes between two or more Trade Unions in one industry, for the purpose of bargaining the Trade Union with the largest membership is recognised. If this Department encourages the Sugar Estates' Authorities to adopt that principle of recognising the Trade Union with the largest membership I am sure it would work for the unit of the Trade Union Movement and the building-up of the Trade Union Movement.

I am afraid the Labour Department is not at all very conversant with the psychology of the people of British Guiana. They are still trying to tell the workers to join Trade Unions and to accept leadership which the people have lost faith in. I feel that if Trade Unions are to be encouraged – I do not care which one there is existing or will come about in the future – this

Department must accept that Union which can gain the confidence of the workers and which can call to its body the largest amount of workers not only on the sugar estates but in all phases of the working class organisation in British Guiana.

Estimates - Local Government: Thursday February 26, 1948

Dr. Jagan: I should like to draw the attention of this Council to the question of the settlement of Hague backdam. I think the people there were encouraged by the Government to settle at the back of that district, but they are not satisfied with the way things have gone. The Hon. Member for Demerara – Essequibo knows the problem quite well and I am sure he is going to speak on it. I find that after these settlers have gone there and put in their labour to bring waste lands and other areas under cultivation the whole place is now being put under rice cultivation and they have been told that through no fault of their own that they cannot build any more houses or make additions to the existing ones there. Further, the Central Board of Health recently issued an order to the effect that four houses should be demolished. I cannot understand why at this time there is a great housing shortage and when everything should be done to encourage farming communities especially – the people responsible for the production of the wealth of this country – every obstacle is being placed in the way of these settlers. In fact, I want to say that the Central Board of Health is acting in this manner like a Gestapo; it is more a Persecution Board than anything else. I cannot see why the Local Government and the Central Board of Health could not have come to some agreement whereby action would have been delayed as regards demolishing the houses of these settlers. I remember going with a delegation to interview the then Governor, Sir. Gordon Lethem and it was pointed out that because of malaria and one thing or another for public health reasons it was advisable to remove these people as quickly as possible, but so far about two or three years have elapsed and nothing has been done by the Government to alleviate conditions from the public health point of view. There has been some measure of D.D.T. spraying in the area, but as far as drinking water is concerned no well has been provided. If Government fails to provide adequate public health measures to ensure the safety of these people, then it seems to me that the obligation lies on Government to remove them to more suitable locations. I have been told that Government has been considering several plans- I think three- in this respect, but so far action has not been taken on any one of them. I cannot understand why the Local Government Board and the Public Health Authorities could not get together and permit these people to remain on the settlement until Government makes some arrangement to remove them to a safer location. The reason given for removing them was, I have said before, a question of public health, but the decision is to my mind a very inelastic one if the people there are not being allowed to build new houses or to make additions to existing ones. Most of us are aware that the birth-

rate among the East Indian population in British Guiana is very high and unless Government is prepared to check that birthrate it means that the families on the settlement are increasing all the time. Some of the settlers are living at the homes of others and apart from this others are getting married and in need of their own homes, so much so that the necessity has arisen for them to put up small grass huts. I am sure that these people do not like to live in the huts, but circumstances demand that they should provide their own homes for the sake of decency, no matter how humble those homes may be. In these circumstances, I am surprised to find that the Central Board of Health has issued notices to the effect that some of the houses of these settlers should be demolished. I appeal to Government to take immediate steps to alleviate the situation of these people who are suffering immensely. I think that through this Department- the Department of Local Government- something can be done to ameliorate conditions in the very near future, in this area.

I notice under this Head there is included Central Housing and Planning Authority. I would like to make this brief comment with respect to planning in so far as Local Government is concerned. I find in my district that in villages like Plaisance and Beterverwagting, the people are settled on the Coast near the public road, and have to go aback in some cases five, six, seven miles to cultivate their farms. I am offering the suggestion, which may be taken for what it is worth, that in the future in any scheme or any area to be bought by Government, for instance, this area of La Bonne Intention and Cane Grove, a rearrangement in so far as planning be made. It has been brought to my attention that housing for farmers should be so placed as to have them in scattered areas with a certain amount of land around the houses, as it would be more convenient for the farmers to engage in mixed farming, poultry- rearing, etc., thereby increasing his yield. Why I have brought this point up is because it has some bearing on the Hague Backdam. I think Government is considering from the public health point of view abandoning that settlement and it would be most unwise if we abandon that area we have to bring those people probably to the Coast near to the public road and there would be the similar difficulty of having the people going miles aback to cultivate their farms. I have been told of cases where the people have to transport bunches of plantains on their backs because there are no good means of communication, no good road. I think it would be of great benefit to the people and the farms if, on any Land Settlement scheme undertaken by the Local Government Board, such a plan be taken into consideration whereby we will have a certain amount of decentralisation and the people being allowed to live very close to the area which they are cultivating. There is a great amount of difficulty, as I have pointed out during the debate on the Agricultural Department. For instance, between Plaisance Village and Beterverwagting Village, there is an area known as "*letter A*" next to the Conservancy Dam. That area is approximately seven miles away. You can readily see that it would be very difficult for a farmer

living near to the road to have to go to all that distance to cultivate it, he could not be expected to go back seven miles, cultivate his farm, and return home to take care of other necessities.

Tax Amendment Bill: Wednesday March 3, 1948

Dr. Jagan: I am in general agreement with what the Hon. Member has just said. My fear about these tax proposals is that they would be borne primarily by the small man. Most of the emphasis seems to be on indirect taxation. In his Memorandum on the financial position of British Guiana Col. Spencer states that the rate of indirect taxation is very high- in fact it is higher than in Barbados and Trinidad, and just as high as in the United Kingdom. I observe that several of the proposals made by our Economic Advisor have not been embodied in this Tax Bill. If I may be allowed to I would like to quote again from Col. Spencer's Memorandum. He writes:

"As far as Income Tax is concerned rates in British Guiana is roughly the highest of the four major Caribbean Colonies up to the four hundred pound a year group, after which they are exceeded by Barbados and, between eight hundred and nine hundred pounds a year, by the Jamaica rates. Above those levels, both Barbados and Jamaica rates are substantially above British Guiana. Trinidad has the lowest income tax rates throughout."

That shows that as far as the low income group is concerned, our rates of income tax are very high, but as regards the higher income groups they are lower than that of Jamaica and Barbados.

In speaking a moment ago I was not referring to company taxation but to personal income tax, company taxation has been increased to 40% because, I believe, the excess profits tax has been removed. At least I feel that that is the justification for increasing income tax on companies to 40%. What I was referring to was tax on personal incomes in respect of which the Economic Advisor has recommended certain variations, but as far as my information goes those recommendations have not yet been implemented. He has suggested that there should be no increase in the rates in the lower income group, but that there should be a 3% increase in the rates on incomes from \$1,200 to \$3,600 which he estimates would yield revenue of from \$45,000 to \$50,000. He further suggests an increase on incomes above one thousand pounds which he estimates would yield revenue between \$60,000 and \$80,000.

My argument is that Government has chosen to impose further taxation on the small man while the big man who can afford to pay more at this time has been left out.

Another recommendation by the Economic Advisor is an increase in the present royalty rates. On this subject he writes:

“...in fact, the present royalty rates are generally so low that the Colony is in some cases virtually ‘giving away’ its natural resources.”

When I look at the appended table I find that the royalty on timber ranges from 2.5% to 5% of the market value. The increase suggested by the Economic Advisor is 7½%, with slight variations as regards low-cost areas and areas which are not easily accessible. We find that revenue from royalties in Trinidad amounted to \$135,000 per annum from 1941 to 1945, as compared with \$110,000 in British Guiana which has much greater forest industries.

Again I say that whereas other means could have been found as recommended by the Economic Advisor – that is to say, impose taxation on the rich who can stand it – we find that this form of taxation has been proposed and we consider it as taxation which will ultimately fall on the small man. Another source of increased revenue recommended by the Economic Advisor is the question of spirit shops and I think it should have been adopted. Another recommendation is the increase in the duty on transports and mortgages from 1% to 2% on all properties above \$5,000 in value. We know – and I have mentioned it in this Council already – that in Georgetown there is a serious housing situation and that it is being created by certain real estate dealers – buyers and sellers whom I consider to be real estate racketeers. These people are constantly buying and selling with the profits they accumulate in one form or another. If this surplus capital is taxed by increasing the duty on transports and mortgages as recommended, that might have the effect of diverting some of it into development projects. That is what we want in British Guiana – development – not buying and selling of property, and making profits out of the poor man. If the recommendation by the Economic Advisor to increase the duty on transports and mortgages has been already implemented then I am subject to correction and would ask to be pardoned. I am trying to get all the facts – as you rightly said, Sir – in order to be able to put forward a good case when I get up in this Council.

Closer Association of B.W.I. Colonies: Friday March 12, 1948

Dr. Jagan: As I listen to the various speeches, eloquent and impassioned, my mind went back to the book I once read entitled "*The Tyranny of Words.*" It goes back still further to the beginning of Western Civilization, to the days of the glories of Greece, to the father of Western Civilisation: Socrates, who used to corner his students in the byways and say to them "*Define your terms.*" We have been hearing a lot during the last few days about Closer Union and Federation. What is Federation? What is Closer Union? What is the difference between them? I have in front of me a document entitled "*American Politics.*" I see on page 10 the author says: "*Politics becomes,*" as Ambrose Bierce said, "*the strife of interests masquerading as a contest of principles.*" As I look upon this question of Federation and Closer Union, in my mind it is only one and the same thing. It is merely a question of degree. It is a question of the concept in which it is held by the various interests. To Whitehall, the Secretary of State, it means one thing, to the vested interests and to the capitalist it means another, and to the people of British Guiana and the British West Indies, as was pointed out to us by the Hon. Member for Essequibo River, it means another. With your permission, Sir, I should like to first of all point out that it seems to me these several interests are each rotating within their own orbits and because of that they have different views on the same matter. Now the concept of Whitehall, as recorded in the White Paper, seems to me nothing more than a glorified Crown Colony, the amalgamation of several units which will carry us no further to Self-Government. In fact the Mover of the motion said, and I quote from the "*Daily Chronicle*" of Thursday, 11th March, 1948,

"I felt they were guided by the idea, not so much of federation as of self-government."

It does not appear to me that what is offered to us by His Majesty's Government is Self-Government, which seems to be the desire of the people of the Colonies. As I look at the White Paper it seems that is proposed that the model for this proposed Federal Body should be the Jamaica Constitution. If we look in the Appendix at the powers of that Constitution we would find that the Jamaicans today are not satisfied with that Constitution. It has several reservations, and the Governor-General of this setup will have reserve powers. It will not be a wholly Responsible Government as is usually the type of Government in Dominion status. It will be more of a semi-re-

sponsible Government wherein the Federal Government will only be responsible for internal affairs, and responsibility for external affairs will be left to the Governor-General, the Privy Council and the Executive Council. The Privy Council and the Executive Council, as presently constituted in Jamaica, are not satisfactory to the Jamaicans, and I am sure such a model will not be satisfactory to the peoples of any West Indian Federation. If I may be allowed to quote from the White Paper, paragraph 22 states:

“...it is suggested that provision should be made on the lines now obtaining in Jamaica, and that the Governor-General should be empowered in certain circumstances to act contrary to advice of the Federal Executive Council in matters affecting public order, public faith and good Government, and also, after reference in writing to his Executive Council and a resolution of that body to certify legislation which the Federal Legislature has failed to pass...”

According to that statement, the Governor-General will have wide powers. He will solely be the one to judge what public order is, what public faith is and what is good Government. Such a body cannot be satisfactory to the people who are today trying to get Self-Government to determine their own affairs. Again this Federal body as proposed, this Parliament, will have a minority of official members who, we are told, will act as spokesmen of Government. Again I beg to read from paragraph 21 on page 13 of the White Paper:

“...in any event it is desirable that there should be provision for a minority of official members so as to enable the Federal Government’s policy and measures to be explained during the period until full Ministerial responsibility is attained.”

That is the thing we are trying to fight against even in this Colony, and that is the model which is being proposed by Whitehall, and yet I find Members of this Council saying that Whitehall is very generous to us. I cannot say that what is being given to us is any generosity at all. It is merely an attempt, as I said, for administrative purpose to create the machinery for a glorified Crown Colony. Amalgamation of the Colonies will in no way change the economic setup of the various Colonies. It will in no way help to ameliorate the miserable conditions in which our people live. The other point about this model is that relative to the status of various units of this proposed federation – the individual colonies. If I may be allowed to read from the same White Paper, paragraph 22:

“The Legislators in the individual Colonies would continue as of present, subject to any modifications which might become desirable from time to time, and

would control those services and subjects which remained within their jurisdiction.”

In other words, we will continue as we are. Another statement at the end of the paragraph states:

“Except in the sphere allotted to the Federal Government, the position regarding reserve powers in the several territories would presumably remain as at present.”

That means, Sir, that the Executive Council of this Colony, which is not elected by this Council, and the Governor with his veto and reserve powers will continue to be as they are at the present time. Those powers will in no way be affected and so once again I state that from the point of view of his Majesty’s Government their conception of what federation is not in agreement with what my conception of what federation is, and I will not agree with their conception of federation. Now we come to the conception of vested interests and capitalists. That conception turns in another direction. Let us see certain of the advantages which they can accrue from our getting together. By that I mean British Guiana and the West Indian Islands. The Hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Roth, pointed out several of those advantages – *“Better shipping facilities, better cooperation among primary producers, better cooperation among trading facilities, a common Customs Tariff, unification of Public Services, a common currency.”* But, Sir, that conception does not go far enough to the root of the problem, but merely stops at what I consider an organised unification of services. It will help the capitalists in one way or another to increase whatever profits they are making at the present time – to make savings let us say.

I should like to enumerate some of the points which they point out against federation on the concept as promulgated by the Caribbean Labour Congress. They point out that for geographic reasons British Guiana cannot be federated with the West Indian Islands. Sir, today we cannot consider the same conditions of geography and the same conditions which brought about difficulty in communication in the past. Those conditions which existed centuries ago are not the conditions which are existing today. Communication, Sir, has to be regarded under two heads – what the sociologist calls *“Social Distance”* and *“Physical Distance”*. Those are two terms which must be taken into consideration.

Increased Salary for Town Planner: Thursday April 29, 1948

Dr. Jagan: I am inclined to agree with the Hon. Member who has just taken his seat. He expressed the view that these schemes would not materialise for a number of years and I would like to refer to one particular example. Sometime ago Government invited people to settle at Hague backdam, West Coast Demerara. The people started to build houses and so on, but after a couple of years passed Government decided that the place was unhealthy and people were told they were not to build any more houses or to make any additions to the existing ones. Now we are to have a Town Planner and since there are a lot of grandiose schemes to be carried out I hope rural areas would benefit also. Perhaps within the next five years we would have a new drug or a new insecticide which would help to improve conditions greatly in the rural areas. At one time we might regard a particular area as unhealthy, but in another few years conditions might be so improved that the area might be suitable for housing purposes. My argument as regards the appointment of a Town Planner is that if we cannot implement the schemes drawn up by him right away- and if we have not got the money to do so - I do not see the necessity for having him now. The Hon. Nominated Member has referred to slums and I would like to say that it is not for want of a Town Planner that we have the slums. Slums have been found everywhere to be the result of certain problems. For one thing, the people are too poor and cannot get materials or land to build houses and I think it is time for Government to do something to encourage the people by land tenure or otherwise- giving them land and making lots available to them and stopping the exportation of local timber so as to give them an opportunity to build. That is the only way we can tackle this slum clearance problem.

I would be the last person to say that we do not need scientific planning, but when I notice that the salary of the Town Planner is to be increased by 1,200 pounds over a period of three years that is, to my mind, a very large sum indeed. Only a few days ago the Colonial Treasurer referred to the Council the very low wages which labourers are receiving, female workers earning nine cents an hour and male workers earning twelve cents per hour. These people are not satisfied but now it is proposed to vote 1,200 pounds in order that the Town Planner's salary should be increased and we are speaking about the amount as if it is nothing at all. I can assure you, Sir, that this 1,200 pounds would be better spent if used for the purpose of a scholarship. If we need a Town planner, let us take one of our bright young men and send him away for training and give him the opportunity to come back here and serve the Colony when our financial position has improved. I opposed this increase in the Finance Committee and I am still opposed to

it because I cannot see any valid reason for the appointment at the present time.

Health Services Committee Report: Friday April 30, 1948

Dr. Jagan: When I look at the recommendations and conclusions in this Committee's report, I see that the Health Visitors will be required to be trained nurses who are qualified also in midwifery and are in possession of the Health Visitors' Certificate. In my opinion nursing is a profession, and it takes years of very arduous and exacting study and work to become qualified. I feel that the Committee did not go far enough in its recommendations as regards salaries. We have been hearing a lot about the shortage of nurse-midwives. In fact, the Hon. Member mentioned a moment ago the situation in Rose Hall village. The same state of affairs exists on the neighbouring sugar estate of Port Mourant. The position is that nurse-midwives are not being attracted to these appointments in the districts because the salaries are too low.

Only a few weeks ago the Medical Sub-Committee was considering the question of salaries with respect to school nurses who will be expected to undertake dental examination of school children. I think there is a recommendation that three additional School Nurses should be employed and when we take into consideration that these School Nurses have to take a course of three years at the Public Hospital in order to obtain a Nurse's Certificate, and another year to qualify as midwives and then to undergo specialised training in dental diseases, a salary of 48 dollars per month offers no encouragement to a woman to undergo such lengthy and exacting training. I know that in the United States most midwifery work is done by the physicians. It is very serious work, and if midwives are entrusted in this Colony with work which is done by physicians in the United States I think we should give them salaries commensurate with the responsibilities they have to bear. Consequently, I propose that the salaries of Health Visitors set out in the appendix "E" be increased by 5 dollars or 10 dollars per month. I do not think such an increase would impose too great a strain on the Colony's finances, in view of the very small number of Health Visitors. I think it would act as a stimulus to the right type of woman to take up nursing as a profession.

I heartily support the proposal by Hon. Members that Government should take over the midwives in the country districts where the present situation is very unsatisfactory. We are told that midwives are subsidised by Government in the country district, but in certain areas with large populations there is too much work for the midwives. The result is that they resort to choosing patients who are able to pay cash and pay the most. That creates hardship among people who have not the ready cash. During my last visit to Port Mourant, I was told that a patient sent for a midwife

who demanded cash before she attended. We must realise that it is difficult for a midwife to work for credit all the time, because in some cases she may be defrauded. On the other hand it is very urgent and serious business in which there is no waiting. I feel that the Government would be doing the community a great service if instead of subsidising them in the country districts it employed them in such numbers as would serve the population in the various districts of the Colony. I think it would be a good thing, especially in view of the great need in this Colony for an increased population. We are always hearing that British Guiana needs increased population so as to be able to develop the resources of the Colony, and I think it would be a good thing if Government adopted the policy of employing midwives in the county district.

Intoxicating Liquor Licensing (Amendment) Bill: Friday April 30, 1948

Dr. Jagan: I am in agreement with the general principle of this Bill and that is, that opportunity should be given to individuals during the year to secure a license so that they may not have to wait until, as the Hon. Attorney-General said, October or November to be able to get a license. But after listing to the various Members who have spoken, I am somewhat in agreement with them when they say that they do not see the necessity for granting of a provisional license by the Governor in Council since the Ordinance already provides for the holding by the Board of transfer sessions – at least two and not more than four in a year. I think that any application for a hotel license can readily be considered if the Board meets once every three months. Your Excellency may direct or an Order in Council made that there be at least four transfer sessions in a year, and in that way you will have the Board meeting once every three months and the hearing of any new application will be provided for.

However, there is another aspect of this situation in which I am interested, and that is the housing situation especially in Georgetown. We are all quite aware of the difficulty experienced by people who are trying to get houses, especially those of the lower income group. What I find in the city of Georgetown is that there are certain persons who purchase properties in which persons of the lower income group are living. No sooner than those houses are purchased they are completely renovated or rebuilt in some cases, and higher rents are demanded with the result that those people who can afford to pay black market rent are the ones who get them and no provision is made for those persons of the lower income group. What I am afraid of in so far as it affects this Bill, these hotels will be probably made from buildings which are already in existence and which are presently housing people. That is my fear. I am in great sympathy with the Tourist Trade. What I am afraid of is, if houses already in occupation by people are to be converted into hotels it would mean that there would be further difficulty so far as the housing situation is concerned. That is my fear so far as the Bill is concerned, because I think most Members have in mind that hotel which is now being constructed in Camp Street. I think this Bill is attempting to provide a license for that hotel and that hotel is being converted from a dwelling house which was formally occupied by persons.

If it was a boarding house then probably that meets the situation. I do not know if boarders who are there would continue, as in that case it would be full to capacity and I do not see how it could take care of the tourists. There is another difficulty. I would like the Governor-in-Council or the Li-

censing Board to give no license to anyone who has converted a dwelling house or a boarding house into a new hotel. If a new hotel is built I feel opportunity should be given to the owner to obtain a license as soon as possible, and that can be done at the transverse session of the Board.

Hydro-Electric Surveys: Friday May 28, 1948

Dr. Jagan: I do not know what the Hon. Member means by "before," but I saw it only a few years ago, and I think at that time there were experiments there. I wish to speak on the whole subject of the license to be granted to the Demerara Bauxite Co. I cannot help feeling some of the reservations which the Hon. Member for Eastern Demerara (Mr. Debidin) pointed out a few months ago. Being familiar with the parent body of the Demerara Bauxite Co., which is the Aluminium Co. of America, and its success in monopolising the various power sites in the United States and Canada, I feel that the Hon. Member is justified in his mental reservations with regard to the proposed license. Personally I would prefer that Government undertake the expenditure of this 150,000 dollars in gauging these various falls, and when the information is available Government would be free to decide whether the Demerara Bauxite Co., or some other industrial organisation, should be given the right to harness those falls, if they can be harnessed. Although the proviso to clause 10 of the Draft License says that nothing in the clause shall be construed as imposing an obligation on the Government to grant licensees' power development rights at such falls, I nevertheless feel that Government would be more or less obligated to give the Demerara Bauxite Co. prior right to harness the falls. What I am afraid of is that the future of the Company might in some way monopolise the supply of power in this Colony and shut out other industrial organisations. For that reason, I would much prefer to see Government carry out these surveys.

Newspaper Report Challenged: Thursday September 9, 1948

Dr. Jagan: Sir, before you proceed to the order of the day may I crave your indulgence to refer to an article which appeared in the *Daily Chronicle* of Friday, September 3. I know that one Hon. Member has already referred to the Press for this Council and I feel that I should make a few statements concerning the Press. We realise the Press is afforded the privilege to sit in this chamber so as to give the public reports of the views expressed by members in the deliberation of this Council, but I find that on Friday, 3rd of September, there is a report in the *Daily Chronicle* which is quite misleading, and I have had occasion to speak to the Sub-Editor or the News Editor, but I have not seen any correction of it. If you will permit me, Sir, I would like to read an extract from the report:

"...the least he expected is that Mr. Debidin should support the motion, especially since he was among Members who less than a year ago at the time of the general elections, had told the electorate either by the written or spoken word, that that as well as adult suffrage and other things were issues in their election platform."

The Hon. Member for Eastern Demerara (Mr. Debidin) is not here at present but I know that he took the matter up with the newspaper in question more so from a personal point of view. What I did say in this Council was not that the Hon. Member for Eastern Demerara had supported the recall, or that he made a pledge to the electorate during the time of the election – in fact reading this report it seems to indicate the Hon. Member and other Members had made pledges to the electorate, which was not what I said in this Council. I said that I expected the Hon. Member to support the motion since he had put up such a good argument for the recall, in mentioning that two members had pledged support for universal adult suffrage but had not fulfilled their promise. So that this report in the *Daily Chronicle* is an entirely wrong report of the proceedings of this Council. I asked the Editor of the news columns to make a correction but a correction was not made. I therefore would like you to inform the Press that at all times they should make it their duty to give the public accurate reports of the views expressed by Members of this Council, because I would not make a statement here which, when reported, would be misleading, or which might injure Hon. Members of this Council. If I may say so, the statement as reported definitely injures the reputation of certain Members of this Council, and I did not make such a statement in this Council.

Crown Lands (Amendment No. 2) Regulations: Friday December 17, 1948

Dr. Jagan: I would like to join other Members in praising the good pioneering work which Major "Art" Williams and his colleagues have done for the benefit of this Colony. There is no doubt about it that they have given wonderful service, but the point at issue at the moment is whether we should sign another contract with the British Guiana Airways Ltd. It is all well and good to say that these people have done good work – we all realise that and are giving them much credit for it. One story says they have derived more benefit than was originally intended but surely they have not done this good work at any great sacrifice or loss to themselves. Both sides have gained; the Colony has gained and the Company has gained also. The question at issue now is whether we should sign another contract with the Company, and I should like to ask the Hon. the Colonial Treasurer a few questions. I see at page 24 in the cyclo-style copy of the report that Mr. Bigg who is the advisor in this matter at the Colonial Office was unable to support the report when it was first submitted and among other reasons he gave two important ones. One was that:

"(c) Major developments immediately in prospect for air service operation in the Caribbean under control of B.S.A.A. may involve B.G. Airways".

The other important criticism which Mr. Bigg levelled was I believe, against the purchase of Dakotas. He says:

"(f)..... The capital cost of the Bristol freighter is high but other new and equally suitable but less expensive freight carriers should soon be available".

Later in the report it is shown that when the Colonial Treasurer was in New York he was advised that as a result of negotiations which had taken place between Sir Gordon Lethem and Mr. Bigg in London he should proceed with discussions with the director of this company. I would like to know from the Hon. the Colonial Treasurer what were the reasons, if any, given by Mr. Bigg in changing the opinion he held formerly about this agreement. If the Hon. the Colonial Treasurer is willing to answer the question now I shall take my seat.

The question which I have just asked is a very important one because the whole issue of this contract depends on the payment of a deficiency

grant by Government, and therefore if it was uneconomic to purchase these D.C.3's-Dakotas- we can expect this company to lose a great deal and Government would have to make up the deficiency which results from the operation of these aircraft.

Now, Sir, there are a few other points raised in this Agreement with which I am not in full agreement. There is the question of payment to Messrs. John H. Hunter and Son, Inc., of a sum originally stated to be four thousand eight hundred dollars which I now see would be elastic. This money has to be paid in the United States currency and today, with the crisis of the dollar shortage we are experiencing and when many Guianese cannot get adequate dollars to purchase necessary things, I feel that this expenditure should not be made. If it should be made, it should be made here in local currency. I should also like to know whether the Government is fully satisfied with the various accounts such as those relating to the cost of aircraft and the various details of revenue and expenditure of the company. I see from the statement about the use of air transportation which has been appended to Your Excellency's Message that even up to 1948 details were not available as to the number of flying hours. I see from this statement also that since 1944 this Government made supplementary contracts with the company to run a scheduled service to the Mazaruni and Rupununi districts, and that was also put on a deficiency grant basis. I certainly feel that this company should have kept adequate records so that at all times we could get a proper idea as to the amount of revenue it has earned and also the manner in which it was derived. We are fully aware of what is given here is merely the number of flying hours and if we do not know how much payload and passengers were carried we would have to accept the figures given as to the standard rate of sixty-five dollars per hour.

On the other question of purchases I note that Messrs.. John Hunter and Son are the purchasing agents of this Company, and that they are also shareholders of the Company. I observe from the figures which have been given that they have been credited with a sum of forty-six thousand six hundred and eighty-six dollars and forty-four cents as agency fees for a period of seven years. I should like again to query whether Government is fully satisfied that a person who has a direct interest in the Company who receives profit on a deficiency grant basis from Government, should be the buying agent for the Company. Perhaps someone will say that I should not make a suggestion regarding honourable business people, but in business lots of things happen. For example, an item may cost a few thousand dollars but it may be invoiced for several thousands more. What is to prevent this buying agent from inflating the value of items which are purchased, thereby causing this Government to pay a greater deficiency grant? That is one of the questions on which I would like to know whether Government is fully satisfied. I would also like to know whether Government is satisfied that forty-six thousand dollars is not too high an amount to pay merely as agency fees.

Those are some of the things which are bothering me, but the main point on which I raise objections is the statement by the Colonial Treasurer that we want a further period of a few years within which to decide what our air policy is going to be. Why hasn't Government decided that policy during the last few years? What has Mr. Bigg recommended about it? Many Members of this Council are aware that there were other Companies which were interested in carrying on air services in this country, and many of them were not thinking in terms of a subsidy from this Government. I want to know why is it that those companies were not encouraged to come here and submit proposals to Government on the conditions set out by Government, whether or not they are willing to provide an efficient air service in this country without the high cost which Government is at present paying. Your Excellency's Message states that last year Government paid the Company a subsidy of forty dollars, but to that sum should be added the hidden subsidy this Colony is paying the Company, because when interest at three percent on the loan of two hundred and twenty thousand dollars is taken into consideration it amounts to six thousand six hundred dollars a year. The point I am trying to make is that it is costing this Colony a great deal of money at present to get what we feel is an efficient air service, but are Members of the Council fully satisfied that we are not able to get an equally efficient air service from some other Company without the present high cost to the Colony? That is my point, and for the reason I have objection to this contract and to the motion presented.

Another thing with which I do not agree is the three percent interest to be charged on the huge loan of two hundred and twenty thousand dollars to the Company. Only quite recently we had to put up a fight in this Council to reduce the rate of interest to be charged tenant farmers from six to three percent, but we were unsuccessful. Yet we find Companies and individuals being allowed a lower rate of interest. Those are the objections which I have to this contract and the motion. I would have spoken more completely on this matter if I had the information which I have just asked the Colonial Treasurer to supply. I sympathise with Government because it has loaned this Company a large sum of money and this contract with the Company is one way of ensuring that the money will be returned to the Colony.

Estimates - Legislature: Wednesday February 2, 1949

Dr. Jagan: I should like to get some information from you, Sir, as to what are the rights of Members of this Council as so far as their constituents are concerned. I have a letter here from Messrs. Booker Bros. McConnell and Co., Ltd., signed by Mr. W.S. Jones and dated November 14, 1948. I do not want to read the whole letter but just to state that a few days prior to the receipt of this letter I held a meeting at Plantation Ogle, one of the estates in my constituency. I think it was two days afterwards I received this letter stating in effect that if I visit any of these estates which are controlled by that Company- many of which are in my constituency - legal action would be taken against me. I should like to know the ruling of the Chair in this matter because, on the occasion I referred to, as I approached the entrance I found that a gate was especially put up and I had to leave my car outside and be towed on a bicycle a distance of about one and a quarter miles so as to address the meeting. I held a similar meeting during this week and again I had to leave my car outside and walk into the estate. I feel it is a most unsatisfactory condition and that Members as long as they are within the bounds of the law should be permitted at all times to visit their constituents. The people are allowed to vote for Members of this Council and, if at any time they should decide to meet with their representatives and discuss their problems, I do not see how the rights of private property should have priority to the rights of the people who are living on that property. That is why I should like to get a ruling on this all-important matter. If that is not given very soon it may lead to friction and to lawsuits.

Estimates - Agriculture: Wednesday February 2, 1949

Dr. Jagan: With respect to this Department, I see from the Ten-Year Development Programme that we have various targets to fulfil, but up to now I cannot see any plan which is being followed. The first point I would like to comment on is the question of the staffing of the Department. The Department is wholly understaffed. I do not know what the reason is for that. It may be, we cannot get enough qualified men at the salaries we are paying, or there may be other reasons, but I see we have no Economic Botanist. We are supposed to have three Veterinary Surgeons, but we only have two. There is no assistant Chemist; a retired gentleman is now acting as Curator, Botanic Gardens; instead of six Agricultural Superintendents we only have three; of three Assistant Agricultural Superintendents there is only one; a Farm Manager is not yet appointed; the Junior Agricultural Superintendents or Instructors, - 25 of them I think - there are not more than six. Agriculture is a very important thing in this country. In fact it is probably the most important, and here it is the key men in this Department who are not functioning at the present time. We must either pay them better salaries or train more people. There are not many junior men in the Department, and the time may come when we may find ourselves wanting to fill senior positions and not being able to promote junior men because we have not got them in the Department at the present time. I am suggesting that more junior men be appointed and more scholarships than we are doing at the present time especially in agriculture. I see that in 1941 three scholarships were given and those were reduced to one in 1947. I think, however, an effort is now being made to increase the number of those scholarships. I feel that we should give many more and not only that, but when those men come back from the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture they should be given salaries commensurate with the intensive training they have undergone at the College. Many of those people who had qualified and were working in the Department have left because their salaries were too small, while others have gone to study law and the other professions. Your Excellency commented on the fact that there are too many lawyers and doctors in this Colony. That is one of the reasons. Many of these people are leaving these technical professions and going into other professions where they think they can make more money and be more independent.

I was told that appointments were made lately to fill the posts of Chemist and Livestock Officer, but I was told that these gentlemen who are now placed in those positions are there on probation. This seems to be a new idea in this country. I was told that at some time during this probationary period these people are to proceed, I suppose, to the United Kingdom to

undergo additional training. I am hoping that when they do proceed to the United Kingdom the training they will receive will not merely be a repetition of the knowledge they have already acquired. So far as the Livestock Officer is concerned and one of the Veterinary Surgeons, there seems to be quite a great deal of overlapping in the direction of the administration of the Livestock farm. I was told that in the Canadian and American Universities where training for Veterinary Surgeons is given only a period of between three to six months is devoted to animal breeding and animal nutrition, whereas as Livestock Officer he is made to do very intensive study in animal breeding and animal nutrition. It has been reliably reported to me fact at the present time one of the Veterinary Surgeons, Dr. Black, is now doing some work which, I feel, should fall within the scope of the Livestock Officer. Dr. Black, presently besides doing outstation work in veterinary science, is also directing the policy of the Government in respect of the Livestock Station. What are the duties then of the Livestock Officer at the Station? He is a trained man; he has specialised in this business and, I feel, that before any trouble does come about we must know definitely who is responsible for that Station. I think the Department should clearly set out and define the specific duties of the Veterinary Surgeon and of the Livestock Officer, and let them be responsible for their own jobs or positions.

With regard to the policy of this Department, I have mentioned already that in the Ten-Year Development Plan a Committee sat and after a long deliberation they decided on targets which are to be achieved at the end of the 10 year period. Personally my criticism of that is that it would be better if we have a shorter period within which to plan, taking into consideration all the prevailing factors, because as we are going today there is not much cooperation between the various Departments. For instance, we have the Land Settlement Department, the Agricultural Department, the Local Government Department, and because of that at the end of each year we are not in a position to know how far the Agricultural Department has gone in fulfilling one-tenth in the second year of these targets. It would be better to have a two or three or four-year plan, or the highest a five year plan. Let us consider all the factors - the question of drainage and irrigation, the question of lands, the question of rental - and let us see if we are fulfilling those targets. It is no use having targets and when the ten years have elapsed they have not been fulfilled, as the ten years would be wasted. I feel the Agricultural Department should somewhat revise its policy in that direction. What I notice is that in these Land Settlement Schemes which are being set out it seems that the same old fashioned, outmoded ways of agriculture are being carried on instead of the modern ways. The Government has come in and said "We are going to rent you land and you can go on in the same old way and cultivate the land." If we are going to have increased productivity, which is important to agriculture in this Colony then, I feel, we must have a different basis. Land Settlement is a very good thing, but

let the Government go a bit further. Let the Government take a piece of land - call it a Government Farm or a State Farm or whatever you like - and pay the wages for cultivating it but on an economic basis year by year, so that the farmers in the area or the people as a whole will know whether Government can make money by running the business and selling at the prevailing prices for farmers' goods. In that way the farmers will then see for themselves the methods employed - the use of machinery and other modern means which will be adopted by Government - and emulate them. They will see whether it is a paying concern. On the other hand there should also be what I would like to call Cooperative Farms. I find the Government of Guatemala is doing it now. We have the Cane Grove Land Settlement, the Vergenoegen Land Settlement, and I feel what is necessary is to have an Agricultural Department, a Land Settlement Department and a Cooperative Department getting together and to have the people cultivate the whole area as one entity instead of each individual farmer cultivating piece by piece. As long as we cultivate in a piecemeal manner it cannot pay. It would be the same old story and we would get nowhere.

I would like to say a few words in connection with the Mahaicony-Abary Rice Expansion Scheme. Many of us have been there and have seen what is going on. A lot we have not seen because we are not there all the time. But we would like to know, we would like to see, some figures. We know this is the first experiment at mechanisation of the rice industry. We regard it as an experiment, but nevertheless we should know, we should have an idea, how much it is costing to produce one bag of rice or one bag of paddy. It is no use carrying on an experiment without having some idea as to the approximate cost. I notice that the Scheme is trying to expand its area of cultivation. That is a very good thing, because when we were up there we saw from the very efficient rice factory established there that it is now working below its capacity and, therefore, if the Mahaicony-Abary Scheme has more land at its disposal and cultivates more rice it would be able to cut down on the milling cost. I am alarmed at some of the things which are done by the government and by this scheme particularly. As regards the question of land, I notice that land is being rented from private individuals year in and year out, and that *Daily Chronicle* took up this matter very seriously a few months ago. They gave figures, I think, to show that land which Government is leasing at 20c. per acre is being re-rented to Government at \$3 per acre, and this goes on year after year. That is a sad state of affairs and I feel very strongly about the matter. I was told that Government rushed madly into it without consulting the Lands and Mines Department beforehand. We have the law and if Government thinks it is necessary they should acquire the land in question. I have also seen from the newspapers - I do not know if it is wrong - that Government intends to acquire from the Abary Cattle Company an area equivalent to 6,000 acres for the sum of \$150,000. The first depth of this land is privately owned, the second depth consists of 4,836 acres and the backlands of 5,257 acres, and all these lands were ac-

quired from Government in 1910 for the sum of \$2,500.

The value of the land was practically 50c. per acre when it was sold by Government and now I see that Government is prepared to pay over \$25 an acre for the same land. Those are the reasons why these schemes cannot pay in this Colony; a lot of things are going on behind the scenes and they should be stopped. This company is a subsidiary of the Rupununi Development Company which, in 1929, had the majority of shares – 1484 – in it. We are paying \$11,000 a year to the Rupununi Development Company to keep the cattle trail clear and this Abary Cattle Company made a profit in 1947 of \$23,540.47.

The Hon. Nominated Member would like to tell us that the shares of this Company are widely distributed, but one should go into the Registrar's Office and find out who owns the thousands and hundreds of shares. I am not talking about the people who own just a few shares. The same thing is often said about America. When you ask who owns America you are told the shareholders in the United States; but who controls them - just a few people, and it is the same thing in this case. This is the way things are done: money is taken from the sugar estates and used for these things. They buy land from Government at a cheap price and then invest some of the money in forming a cattle company. People are charged grazing fees for keeping cattle there and after a few years they sell back the same land to the Government at a profit and make money all the time. The poor taxpayers do not know what is happening and when we attempt to warn them obstacles are placed, by these same people, in our way. I think Government would have to do something very quickly about this question of land rent with respect to the Mahaicony-Abary rice expansion scheme. The land should be acquired or something else done. As far as this deal of \$150,000 is concerned, I am asking Government to consider the matter seriously because I am viewing it from the point of view of justice to the taxpayers of the Colony.

There is another point I should like to raise and it is concerned with the Cooperative Credit Banks. I do not know why we do not change the name of these banks to something else, because they are by no means cooperative. I was told only last Saturday that the voting among the members is as follows:- from 1 to 5 shares – 1 vote, from 6 to 10 shares – 2 votes, from 11 to 15 shares – 3 votes, and so on. Everyone knows that the cooperative principle is that no matter how many shares a person has there should be only one vote for them. Let us hope that Government is going to adopt this principle. I was told that the cost of administration of the cooperative banks is increasing because more people are requesting loans and so on, with the result that the banks are finding it very difficult to meet their current expenses. I believe the intention was to pay back to Government whatever is charged with respect to the capital loaned to the credit banks; I believe it is 1/25 of the sum borrowed from Government. At one time the cooperative banks felt that they could pay back this 1/25 sum every year and also pay

their running expenses from the interest they received from the farmers who obtained loans. I am told that they are experiencing great difficulty and so the question has been put forward that Government should reduce the rate of interest which I think is 3% on the amount which the Cooperative Credit Banks have to pay back to Government. In other words, the 1/25 should be reduced to 1/50. That would be giving the banks a little time to repay the money and allow more to be circulated among the farmers. There is great urgency for this measure.

The other part of the question is the one dealing with land for the farmers. Many farmers receive lands if they have certain tangible security and I believe that at the present time they are allowed to repay any amount up to \$240 within one year and if they ask for an extension the time is extended to 2 years. For an amount up to \$480 the period for repayment is 4 years and for any amount over \$780 the period is 7 years. The problem which confronts these farmers is the fact that if they borrow, say \$200, and repaid a major portion within the two-year period leaving a balance of \$20, \$30, \$40 or \$50, the value of the security remains the same but because the time has expired the Cooperative Credit Bank usually levy or tell the people they must sell their property and repay the amount within the period. The suggestion is put forward that so long that the interest has been paid by the farmers and so long as security is given, then the note should be renewed or the period should be extended, because it is no use telling the farmer to sell his security when he may have to do so for little or nothing or he might have to borrow money from the moneylender again. We would be chasing him right into the pitfall out of which we are trying to get him. The machinery should be relaxed when the greater part of the loan has been repaid and the period should be extended or the note renewed to enable payment to be completed.

On the question of cane-farming, I have here a letter from the Director of Agriculture, dated January 30, 1949, in which he gives the number of acres of sugar cane which were ripe during the strike period on the East Coast, Demerara, and which were not cut because the sugar estate authorities refused to cut them. It is a known fact that only the field workers were involved in that strike and that the factory workers were not on strike. The factories were in full cooperation and could have remained in full cooperation if it was necessary to do so. The farmers approached the Management and said they were quite willing to cut the canes and transport them to the factories or to one particular factory if necessary. In Plaisance district there were 53 acres, in the Beterverwagting- Triumph district - 98 acres, and in the Buxton-Friendship district - 96 acres, making a total of 247 acres of cane which was left lying in the field, and it became overripe with the result that the farmers have lost money. Farmers have asked me what protection should they expect in future in the event of a similar strike - one in which, as I have said, the factories were not involved. I feel that there was a responsibility on the part of the sugar estates to take over these canes and

that Government or some other authority should give some compensation to the farmers for the loss they incurred. Further, I feel there should be some definite clarification of the farmers' position as regards such loss in future. I notice that during the period of 10-year Development Plan it is proposed to increase the cultivation of sugar cane by small farmers. At present, I think some 2000 tons are being produced annually and the maximum now being aimed at is 10,000 tons.

Only a few weeks ago myself and the Hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Farnum, visited the Canals Polder and were told that the people at La Grange are willing to grow sugar cane because they have found that it would be more profitable to do so than to cultivate ground provision, but the management of the neighbouring estate refused to allow them to do so because they would have to take over the cane. I am saying that there must be some coordination among the various Departments of Government. It is no use having instructors to assist the farmers in growing sugar cane if it is going to be the intention of other people to see that they should not do so. I know that I have spoken at length under this Head, but this is a very important matter.

There is one other point which I do not want to miss and it is this: I want to refer to a building which is now being erected in the Agriculture Department at the head of Regent Street, near the Botanic Gardens. I understand that this building is being erected for use by the Sugar Agronomist whose post is not included in the Estimates as being in the employ of this Government, yet a building is being built for him on the compound of the Agricultural Department. Supposing the necessity arises in future to enlarge the staff of the Department and to erect more buildings in that very compound, what would happen? I we going to say that Mr. "So and So" should pull down the building? I notice also that several Government Departments are sandwiched in various places in Water Street, on premises for which large rents are being paid. I should like to know why Government cannot do their own houses instead of having to rent at such high cost from other people? Perhaps I shall soon apply to Government for a piece of land on which to build my own house, since Government seem to be very generous in certain cases. Some people seem to have things their own way with government and I want to know the reason why.

Estimates - Education: Thursday February 3, 1949

Dr. Jagan: I think that there is need for further extension of the existing schools. In Your Excellency's opening Address to this Council I think you said that provision was being made for 14,000 places in the schools, but I think the present population of school age would require about 20,000 places. Some time ago I received a letter from the Director of Education listing the schools in my constituency, and I am sorry to state that practically all of them are terribly overcrowded. For instance, St. Winifred's R.C. School in Newtown, Campbellville area, has accommodation for 325, but there are 594 children on roll at present. Those 594 children are taught by 13 teachers. The Methodist School in William Street, Kitty, has accommodation for 240 children but on roll at present are 475 children and 10 teachers. That is the general pattern of the school accommodation in the rural districts, and I foresee that it is going to lead to alarming results in the future.

During the debates on the franchise issue a good deal was made of the question of illiteracy. Right now we have the breeding ground of future illiterates. In the report on the Cost of Living Survey which was made in 1943, I find that only four cents per week is allowed for school fees and school books for working class families in Georgetown whose earnings range from \$7 to \$15 per week. The cost of living has gone up since that Report was written and it should work out at five cents per week today. What I am alarmed about is that if the children of this Colony are not to get a proper education in the primary schools I foresee that we are going to get a crop of illiterates who would not be able to lift the Colony forward. We are constantly talking about the Constitutional development, but that depends upon how cultured and educated are the people, and it is said that when we are ripe for self-government it would be given us. But at this rate I do not see when we are going to develop culture among the people. Some strong efforts should be made. I am not going to suggest what methods should be adopted, but the problem is very alarming, and some serious effort should be made to give the children of this country at least a good primary education.

I should like to make some reference to the Guiana Scholarship. I think that during my absence from the Colony one Hon. Member suggested or moved a Motion to the effect that there should be an additional scholarship for girls, but I am wondering whether we can afford to award even one Guiana Scholarship, and whether we are getting the results we should from this Scholarship. I am not saying that we should not award scholarships, but if we cannot afford the Guiana Scholarship we should cut it out, hav-

ing regard to the value of the Colony derives from it. With very few exceptions the winners of Guiana Scholarships have either entered the professions or not returned to the Colony, with the result that the Colony gets no benefits from those persons. The present trend is to award scholarships on the condition that after they have been trained the holders should return and serve the Colony for a certain period. With that I am in hearty agreement, but when I consider the fact that the Guiana Scholarship is limited to only a few students, in that only five schools are permitted to submit candidates for the Higher School Certificate, on the results of which the Scholarship is awarded, it is clear that many students are unable to compete for the scholarship – not to mention the many thousands whose parents cannot afford to give them a secondary education. That is why I feel that the money being spent on the Guiana Scholarship, however small it may be and however laudable the object may be, could be more usefully spent in providing more places in the primary schools of this country. I feel that overcrowding in the schools is having serious results. Naturally that is to be expected, because if you have too many students, too many children in one school and too few teachers to take care of them naturally they would not be receiving the amount of attention to which they are entitled. I see from the Report of the Education Department for 1947 on page 9, it is written – if I may be allowed to read from the Report:

“The percentage of passes in all except the Pupil Teachers’ Annual Examination is far from satisfactory. There is still too large a number of candidates who come to the examination quite unprepared.”

That is indeed a very serious state of affairs to be reported by the Director of Education. It certainly means that with the present overcrowding in schools even those children who are now being taken care of are not getting the proper training, the proper amount of attention, and I hope, as I have said, that some serious efforts will be made to remedy this condition.

With respect to the literacy campaign, I see Government has again provided in the Estimates \$1,500 towards the expense of that campaign. I have already pointed out that it seems to me a waste of money, if we are going to attack this problem by nibbling at it. It is like pouring water on a duck’s back. We have a shortage of teachers in the primary schools. Take the Literacy Officer and put him to teach instead of wasting Government’s money and Government’s time in merely doing nothing.

There is one other point about which I would like Members of this Council to be informed, and that is the question of giving to our boys and girls in this country an opportunity to uplift a scientific education. At the present time very few schools are equipped to give training in Chemistry, Physics, Biology and Botany with the result that the boys, though they may reach the School Certificate standard in secondary education, have an education which is seriously one-sided and very lacking in what, I consider, a very

important aspect of education – a scientific education. As you yourself have pointed out, Sir, we need more technicians whether in Mining, Geology, Agriculture or Veterinary Science, but we can only have people to enter those professions if they have had the opportunity to get during their secondary education training in chemistry and other sciences. At the present time, I think, Queen's College, The Bishop's High School and, perhaps, one other school are teaching Science and, I feel, that some attempt should be made at Queen's College to hold evening classes or to provide another building and more equipment to have classes during the day. I am told that they have teachers here now who have had such education in the U.S.A. and who can teach elementary science subjects, but it is only a question of accommodation, a question of utensils and apparatus. I feel the Board of Governors of Queen's College should make some attempt either to find a building or to utilise the present buildings and have an additional teacher or two employed and encourage students from other secondary schools to go there and take the science subjects. At the present time I do not think much encouragement is necessary. Many students want to get this education but find the cost very prohibitive. If they have to take Science subjects they have to be taught by Masters of Queen's College at hours outside the normal hours at Queen's College, and during those hours, I believe, the rates that are charged are pretty high compared with what is charged by Government at Queen's College. Consequently many students, even though they would like to get this education, at the present time are prevented from doing so. Many of them certainly cannot afford to pay for it. I believe it is at the rate of \$10 per subject per month, which is indeed very high. I am appealing to Queen's College and to the Board of Governors that they should make some attempt to remedy this situation.

With reference to the Masters at Queen's College I am informed that the difficulty is not so much with the Masters who teach the Lower Forms, but those who teach the Senior Forms. I noticed some time ago a publication in the papers that some students, not qualified in the United Kingdom but graduated in the U.S.A., objected to their exclusion from consideration for appointment. They said that as long as a Science Master is required he should be taken as long as his school is recognised, as Chemistry is Chemistry and it does not matter where it is taught so long as it is taught in the proper way. What I am thinking is, one of these students who may qualify in Science and graduated in the U.S.A. from an accredited school, can be engaged either part-time or full time to teach elementary Science subjects. That is what I am referring to. I am not particularly speaking about the teaching of Science in the Upper Forms.

Examinations:

Dr. Jagan: On the question of Examinations I have been informed that in the Primary Schools when a child reaches the Sixth Standard he or she is not automatically put in what is known as the School Leaving Certificate examination class, but out of the lot in the Sixth Standard a special selection is made and those selected are prepared for the School Leaving examination. I feel that after a student has worked his way up and reached the Sixth Standard he should be placed automatically in the special category or group which is being prepared for the School Leaving Certificate examination. It is a good thing, I feel, that when students have reached the Sixth Standard that they should take the Primary School Leaving Certificate examination. By the method of selection parents may be discouraged and may come to the conclusion "My son or daughter has reached the Sixth Standard but is not allowed to take the School Leaving examination and, therefore, he or she may be a dunce and it is no use he or she continues at school". I think that, psychologically, it may be of help to the parents and to the children to allow all who have reached the stage of the Sixth Standard to take the examination automatically and not as is done at the present time.

(**Dr. Nicholson:** I may mention that there is an attempt to abolish the Primary School Leaving examination as it is of no real practical value.)

Jagan: If it is of no practical value I suggest eliminating it, but if it is not eliminated I feel a student, as long as he or she has reached the Sixth Standard, should be allowed to take the examination.

Estimates- Labour Department: Thursday February 3, 1949

Dr. Jagan: I should like to make a few comments with respect to this Department, especially since we have had so many industrial disputes within recent times. I should like to make reference to a few points; whenever the Motion referred to by the Hon. the Colonial Treasurer comes up I shall also make reference to it. I am particularly dissatisfied with the working of this Department and particularly with the Commissioner of Labour. I have not seen, during the past year especially, that much foresight was used in labour questions generally. I think the whole attitude of this Department is wrong and should be seriously questioned. There is no doubt that we have too many unions in this Colony and that many of them are unions in name only - many of them have very few members, have no financial backing and are merely registered as unions. But, to say that there are too many unions in this Colony is not enough. What should be done is not to hope that many of the unions would be eliminated or that they would come together by peaceful means through the efforts of certain individuals, or by wishful thinking hope that they would amalgamate and work for the betterment of the Colony as a whole. That effort was made without success four years ago but it appears to me that the Labour Department is still indulging in wishful thinking and hoping that the varied interests in labour would get together and work together. In 1945, the Labour Department, with the T. U.C. hoped that there would be an amalgamation of the various unions into three or four unions. I remember that the point was made that there should be only one union in the sugar industry and that the Presidents of the two unions now being recognised by the Sugar Producers' Association - the M.P.C.A. and the B.G. Workers' League, their Presidents being Mr. Edun and Mr. Thorne, respectively - were present at a certain meeting, but both of them disliked this idea of amalgamation. Four years have elapsed and we still have the Commissioner of Labour talking about bringing the many unions together and hoping that, as a result, there would be a peaceful solution to their many problems.

I fail to understand why the Commissioner of Labour is still pursuing this course. He ought to be an intelligent individual and should know his work, if not he ought not to have been appointed in the first place. But, let us assume that he is a responsible Officer and that he is well versed in trade unionism and industrial matters; if we accept that it means that we should be going ahead, but he has failed in the last four years in this particular matter and should have been able to look at the situation in a practical manner and say it is "so and so." If an opportunity lies in action, I am sorry to say that the Commissioner of Labour refuses to accept an alterna-

tive and, as I see it, that is the only other alternative - that the union with the largest membership should be recognised. The unions in the U.S.A. and also in Canada have accepted that principle. They have gone through the same struggles as we have gone through in this Colony and they have accepted the principle of majority rule; that is, the union with the majority of members must be accepted as the medium for collective bargaining. We accept the same principle in this Council for the election of Members and I do not see why the Commissioner of Labour cannot accept it. As I see the situation, the only fear on the part of the Commissioner of Labour is that certain politicians would try to get leadership of the trade unions and that he would find them very much opposed to him.

I have here a clipping for the *Daily Chronicle* of February 1, 1949, in which it is stated that trade unionism is of no use without political activity. That statement was made by one of the Inspectors of the Labour Department - Mr. Wakefield - and he is certainly to be congratulated. If we look at the United Kingdom today, we would find that Mr. Bevin and other prominent men in the Cabinet appreciate the fact that they must be in politics for their unions to grow up. I cannot understand why Mr. Bissell, the present Commissioner of Labour, who has been trained in England, should come here and tell us that trade unions should not have anything to do with politics and that they should be kept in a sort of airtight compartment. I think he is confused about these matters and that is why he would not accept the issue facing him - that the union with the majority and not those which are merely hanging on and fleecing the people - merely collecting dues and paying salaries - should be the medium for collective bargaining. As one Hon. Member said in Finance Committee, there should be a survival of the fittest. What we should have in this country is an opportunity for the people - the poorest of the poor - to say who they want and what organisation they want to represent them. The Hon. Nominated member, Mr. Roth, recently moved a Motion in this Council relating to trade unions.

(Mr. Roth: To a point of correction, Sir, that Motion was not moved, it was withdrawn.)

Dr. Jagan: I am sorry I said "moved", I should have said "tabled". What I want to say is that there should be no preferences or prior right given to this or that association; the I.L.O. has accepted the principle of the right of self-determination. This Colony is bound up with the United Kingdom and I certainly do not see why we cannot carry out the same policy that has been accepted by Governments in Canada and the U.S.A. I do not know what is going to happen; Mr. Bissell, the Commissioner of Labour, seems to be blowing hot and cold. When it comes to one union which appears to have a majority he says he would not recommend that it should be recognised. I remember that up to the last minute when we had the strike on the

East Coast, Demerara, he consistently advised Government to that effect. Labour Members of this Council will, no doubt, remember that when the Hon. the Colonial Secretary was acting as Governor, it was suggested that the Commissioner of Labour (Mr. Bissell) should meet myself and Mr. Debidin as the two Members of this Council representing the constituencies affected by the strike, along with representatives of the union concerned, in order that the people's grievances might be discussed, but the Commissioner of Labour refused to accede to this request.

The Hon. Colonial Secretary might not have been acting as Governor at the time, but the point I was trying to make was that Hon. Members suggested to Mr. Bissell and to the Colonial Secretary that in view of the strained relationship then existing between the workers and their employers and in view of the fact that the workers did not want the two unions in the industry to negotiate on their behalf, it would have been a good thing if the two representatives in this Council, of the constituencies affected by the strike, were included in the discussion. The sugar producers might not have agreed, but at that time Mr. Bissell himself was against the suggestion. I think there are Hon. Members here who would support me in saying that. I remember that during the first week of the strike I went to my home in Kitty one midday and found about two scores of workers waiting there for me. I went to the phone immediately and contacted Mr. Bissell, asking him whether he would interview the workers, but he said "*Send them back to the Joint Committee*". I told him that if the Joint Committee was functioning properly the people would not have had the necessity to come to me, in the first place, and added that under the terms of the Labour Ordinance, he was supposed to listen to workers and settle their grievances if they had any. Eventually he agreed to see the workers, but his whole attitude was to let them go back to the Joint Committee and preserve the machinery. Subsequently it was found that the larger of the two unions being recognised by the sugar producers, had a membership of only 600 persons out of a total of 10,000 workers engaged in the industry and out of its 600 members only 100 were financial.

That is the kind of trade unionism and the kind of machinery Mr. Bissell, apparently, wants to uphold. I am sorry to state that he and I had some very hot words over the telephone because I insisted that if the people came to me and stated their grievances he should be happy about it. I explained to him that the people would not have come to me if the machinery was working satisfactorily on the estates. On another occasion I spoke to him for several minutes over the telephone and I asked him what he was doing for the workers in the district, because he was not going there. I told him of the people because they had grievances and some had gone on strike, and he asked me calmly "*What strike?*" I asked him if he had not heard about the strike on the East Coast and also about the lockout. He asked "*What lockout?*" I told him that there were workers who were told that unless they did "*cut and load*" they would not be given any work, and that that caused

a general strike. I seriously believe that much of what happened on the East Coast, Demerara, was due to the attitude of the Labour Department. If there was somebody who was more sympathetic and who understood the psychology of the people in this Colony - that is very important since many persons, perhaps, do not understand the people - I am sure that what happened would not have happened. Even the Colonial Secretary refused to meet the people. I believe Your Excellency was away at the time and when the people assembled in Georgetown from my constituency they could not see the Governor. They met representatives of the East Indian Association and then they came to me. I asked the Colonial Secretary for an interview and also asked him to meet some of the people but he refused the request. I am quite sure that if he had taken an Official of the Labour Department with him and had said a few words to the people it would have helped the situation from the psychological point of view.

I am speaking about the time when I was told that Your Excellency had contracted malaria and was ill. I asked that a small delegation of workers from my constituency should be interviewed and anything which may have had a psychological effect upon them would have been well received. What I am objecting to is the high-handed and offhanded manner in which these people were dealt with. I believe that after the Conference took place we had the tragicomedy of the two unions meeting to discuss the problems of the workers after the workers had said bluntly that they did not want these two unions to negotiate on their behalf. That is the kind of thing with which the Commissioner of Labour seems to agree and the kind of advice on which Government seems to be acting.

I am sorry, but I would like to move the deletion of the item calling for \$5,760 as the salary to be paid to the Commissioner of Labour. I feel the time has come when we must have a new Commissioner of Labour. Why is it that other Officers are leaving this Department? One left some time ago and I am told that another - the one who expressed the opinion I referred to just now - is about to leave. I feel that the salary of the Commissioner who is left should be struck out and that he should go. The Commissioner of Labour takes things too far in this Colony; I remember that even at a party at Government House I was subject to insults by him.

There are a few other points under this Head that I would also like to speak about, and one is the sugar industry's welfare and fund. I notice that in your opening remarks in this Council Your Excellency suggested that a part of this Fund might be utilised for building houses for the workers, and what I would like to know is whether these houses would be owned by the sugar estate authorities or whether this money would be provided to workers who may care to build houses of their own. I notice also, from the 10-year Development Plan, that the sugar estate authorities expect to house only what they call "*essential workers*" - about 5,000 families - and the unessential or part-time workers who comprise about 6,000 families would be placed on the estates' front lands. I would like to know whether Govern-

ment intends that this money should be used to build houses on the estates for essential workers or for those who would be placed on the front lands. When a better opportunity affords I shall say something more on this subject. Then I should show the reasons why Government should not agree to allow those people to become rooted on the front lands, because, so far as I see, those people who would have to build their houses there, probably on the strength of loans which they may get either from Government or the sugar producers, would become tied down to the land and would not have an opportunity to get ample work on the sugar estates, or sufficient land on which to build their houses. What I feel should be done with this fund is to help those people who have become prematurely aged as a result of the hard work they have done on sugar estates. I refer to those persons who have become nonessential or part-time workers because they are worn out. If part of the fund was given to those people I think it would be a very deserving cause.

I would like to refer to Ordinance 6 of 1942 which deals with peaceful picketing in this country. I find that section 2 (2) states:

“It shall be lawful for one or more persons but not more than three in any case at any one time, acting on their own behalf or on behalf of any trade union registered under the provisions of the Trades Unions Ordinance or of an individual employer or firm, in contemplation or in furtherance of a trade dispute, to attend at or near a house or place where a person works or carries on business.”

This law was probably copied from the English Law and not modified to suit local conditions. One can very well see that “*place*” might refer to the entrance to a sugar factory or any business place, and when it is borne in mind that on a sugar estate, or in the bauxite industry, people work at several places at the same time it seems to me that there should be some clearer definition of the word “*place*”. During the recent strike I tried to get a ruling from the Hon. the Attorney-General but he was very busy at that time. As a matter of fact strikers went back and were picketing according to the law at various sections of their work place, but the Police, who apparently seemed to know more about the law than the Labour Department (I should not like to say the Attorney General) went aback and told them that they were picketing in the wrong place; that they should picket the factory. The Police not only told the strikers so but used force to get them away from the cane fields. I should like some clarification of the matter. I think there should be some amendment of the law so as to avoid any confusion in the minds of the people as to what “*place*” means in relation to peaceful picketing.

That is all I have to say now in view of the fact that a Motion is to be moved later, when I shall have a further opportunity to speak on the matter. I feel very strongly about this matter of the Commissioner of Labour, whose work at the time of the strike had to be undertaken by the overbur-

dened Attorney-General.

Estimates - Local Government: Thursday February 3, 1949

Dr. Jagan: I would like to make a few observations with reference to this Head. I should have made them under Local Government proper, but this still has to deal with Local Government. A few weeks ago I was invited to the Canals polder to look into the problems of the people there, and I notice that the people at Canal No. 1 have had the problem of drainage for a long time. There is a large area which I believe is freehold, and because the drainage is done through one main canal only one-third of the area is drained, with the result that the people cannot grow as much provisions or rear as many cattle as they would like to. They suggest that if a central trench were dug in that area it would greatly assist the drainage of the area as a whole. I was told that a few years ago. I do not know how many years ago, the scheme to dig a central canal was approved. In fact work was started on it, and I believe after a certain period of time, when the work was progressing, it was suddenly stopped, and I am told that about \$3,000 was wasted there. I do not know what is the explanation because, as far as I see it, the Commissioner agrees that it is a necessary thing. Another gentleman attached to the Drainage and Irrigation Department also feels that it is a vital necessity, yet after the scheme was approved, work was suddenly stopped. I should like to know the reason why funds are wasted in this way. If a scheme is approved it should be carried through and not left half way. I hope that in the near future the canal will be dug so that the people may be able to put the greater portion of their holdings under cultivation.

There is another problem in regard to the areas known as Newtown, Campbellville, Bel Air, etc. A portion of that area is owned and administered by the Corentyne Sugar Estates, Ltd., and several persons have come to see me from that area and told me that there is some move to sell the land. I do not know whether it is the whole or a part of the area, but I was told that private individuals were attempting to form a Company to purchase the land. I certainly feel that it will be good idea if Government would take some steps to see that if the land is sold or, the people who are at present occupying it be given an opportunity to acquire it. Those people have put a lot of labour into the land and have brought it into its present condition. It is within the memory of many Members of the Council, that that area was quite recently covered with bush and swamps, and in the early stages of its occupation people suffered a great deal as a result of the malarial and other conditions. The people have built up the area and increased the value of the land. I therefore feel that some priority should be given to them if at all the area is to be sold to private individuals. I hope that Government will look into the matter.

Estimates - Local Government: Thursday February 3, 1949

Dr. Jagan: With reference to this Head it seems that in Finance Committee the opinion of many of the Members, who supported very strongly this Department a few months ago, has changed now. I cannot help agreeing with them, because I have always voiced the opinion, even when it was fully taken up, that it was becoming redundant, and I can now see all the more, now that the Cooperative Department is getting to be firmly established throughout the country, there is much overlapping in the work which is being done. It is felt that the Cooperative Officers in the various districts will now be asked not only to do cooperative work but also to help in advising the people on social and other problems. Therefore, it seems that Members are beginning to realize that because of the clamour of the people on behalf of the Cooperative Department, this Department should be absorbed into the Cooperative Department, and let the Cooperative Department be made so much stronger so that we can proceed with the work of Cooperation and Social Services which go along with it. I think some Hon. Members have expressed the view that the whole of this Department should now be eliminated and the Cooperative Department be strengthened. I am not going to move that at the present time, because the Chairman of the Finance Committee suggested that if Members feel that this Department is now becoming redundant we can have another full -dress debate some time in the future and decide whether or not it should continue, but we should allow it to be passed this year.

Estimates - Medical: Friday February 4, 1949

Dr. Jagan: I should like to ask Government how soon it is intended to bring forth the Motion of which I gave notice since last year to allow doctors who have qualified in the U.S.A. to practice in this country. I hope it will be brought to this Council very soon. I find at the present time the Medical Department is having great difficulty in finding officers to work in the districts. Last year we voted a sum for an Anaesthetist, but so far the Department has not been able to fill it because a suitable person could not be found in the United Kingdom. We may be able to get someone either in Canada or the U.S.A., and since this is a very important matter I hope Government will give it due consideration and possibly advertise in Canada or the U.S.A. for someone to fill this post. There are other places, for instance the islands of Wakeaam and Leguan, which have had to do without the services of a Doctor for some time, and that is chiefly due to the fact that we have not enough medical men in the Service. I do not know what may be the reason that we are not getting enough medical men from abroad. I feel there are many individuals, who had left this country several years ago and are now resident in the U.S.A., and practising as qualified doctors, quite willing to come back to this Colony. If my Motion is introduced into the Council and is passed, it would perhaps help to relieve this great shortage.

I have before me the Report of the Sub-Committee which was appointed by the Central Committee of the Infant Welfare and Maternity League to consider the benefits to be accrued to District Midwives and submit proposals, if desirable, for the effectual combination of the League Services. This question of midwives and subsidised midwives has always been a burning question. Many persons find themselves in the position where they cannot afford to pay the amount which is required by the midwives. Several cases have been brought to me and I see in one of their recommendations (5) - if I may be allowed to read it- states:

"It was the considered opinion of members that the existing system of utilising the services of subsidised midwives was not desirable and they were looking forward to the day when Government would give consideration to the question of making League midwives full-time employees."

I think this certainly is a very desirable step and I hope we will be able in the Medical Advisory Committee, to propose some scheme shortly and put

it to the consideration of Government so that these midwives may be incorporated into the Government Service.

Estimates - Subventions: Friday February 4, 1949

Dr. Jagan: Item 13 "*Georgetown Public Free Library, \$7,289.*" I am beginning to wonder how free is this Library. Some time ago, in fact for some time now, there has been a discussion circle going on at the Georgetown Free Library. I think the practice was to hold it once every week. During last year I was asked to give a talk. In fact I always participated in the discussion circle meetings. I chose a subject entitled "*What is the U.S.A. Foreign Policy?*" A day or two before the meeting was to be held I was called up and told that it was a very controversial subject and it could not be discussed at the Georgetown Free Library. After a bit of hesitation, I decided to speak on "*Cooperation*", but even that I was told was a prohibited subject. I do not know how "*free*" is this Library, if freedom of opinion is to be stifled in an institution of that kind. I do not know who is responsible, whether it is the Board of Directors or who, and I certainly do not think that is a very good practice.

With respect to item 54 "*Contribution to British Guiana Airways, Ltd., \$45,000,*" I see we have on the Estimates the same amount as last year. I have with me here a BPI publication for information only of April, 1948. If I may be allowed to read a paragraph it is as follows:

"B.G. Airways, Ltd., which has had a friendly Press almost uniformly throughout the 14 years the service has been operating, found itself presented with a long Argosy indictment following an accident to one of the Company's Grummans. The newspaper contended that in its organization and administration, the Company was wasteful of public funds, adopted a condescending attitude to customers, and was not considerate to certain of its employees. It called for an official investigation into the administration of the company and urged the setting up of an Air Board, a body that, in the final analysis, is a guarantee of the personal safety of the flying public!"

Now, Sir, we have to pay a subsidy to this Company every year and I want to ask Government to make a thorough investigation, as requested by the article, into the working of the Company in order to see that it is being run on sound lines and that we are not merely being made to pay the piper. Lots of things are going on which result in great expenditure and in this Government having to pay a huge subsidy to the Company each year. It is felt in certain quarters that if this Company is properly administered, this Government would only have to pay a very small subsidy, if anything at all. The Company has had its "*Ireland*" aircraft under repair for nearly a

year, and I am informed that the cost of repair is amounting up to a very high figure indeed - something in the vicinity of \$25,000. Some time ago the Director-General of Civil Aviation reported that this aircraft should be scrapped. In fact, I myself heard one person who is closely associated with this Company stating that he would not advise anybody to risk flying in one of these planes. Perhaps it would be said that the "Ireland" is more manoeuvrable than the "Grumman," but people who have seen these aircraft land at the Baramita pool are quite convinced that the "Grumman" is as manoeuvrable as the "Ireland" and since the Director-General of Civil Aviation has reported that this aircraft should be scrapped, I cannot understand why money is still being spent to keep it under repair. If we want to keep it as a relic we might as well send it to the Smithsonian Institute, because a lot of relics are being kept there.

With respect to the Dakotas, I saw some time ago, a Report issued by Aircraft, Ltd., in which it was stated that in order to run one aircraft economically it has to fly a minimum of 1,200 hours per year. From the report received in this Council about a month ago, this Company has been flying only about 2,000 hours each year, during the last few years, and if 1,200 flying hours are required to run one plane economically, why is it necessary to have 2 Dakotas and 2 Grummans to run the service, while another Grumman is being built up and we have the Ireland being repaired. What is the use of having all these aircraft when there is not enough work for them? It simply means that the Company would have to employ a large staff to maintain them in proper order, therefore adding to its overhead expenditure. I have been also informed that several spare engines - between 8 to 10 - were purchased for the Dakotas; why is it necessary to have so many?

I was just putting these facts to show Government that some investigation should be made into the operations of this Company. With respect to the damage which we have read about in the newspapers as having been recently done to certain aircraft, one was damaged during the tour of the interior by the Editors of the daily newspapers and another was damaged at St. Vincent about a week ago. I should like to find out from Government whether any claims were made under insurance not only on these two occasions, but on other occasions when damage was done. Persons are enquiring whether some of the pilots employed by this Company are not too old, and perhaps that is the reason why we are having so many accidents with the aircraft. Since I cannot verify many of the complaints that have been made to me, I would not like to say anything more on this matter at present, but I hope to give notice of a very comprehensive list of questions and to have an opportunity of speaking on it again.

Police: Friday February 4, 1949

Dr. Jagan: I think there is very great dissatisfaction at the present time in the ranks of the Police Force. Complaints have been made to Government by policemen as a body about the attitude of certain Officers and the Head of the Police Force and, in fact, there was a checking up of typewriters to find out on which machine the letter or communication was typed which was forwarded to Government. The Ordinance under which the Police Department is functioning is old fashioned and needs a thorough revision. The Commissioner of Police has certainly been given extraordinary powers. For instance, I believe that during the last war period, he was, more or less, the Military Commander-in-Chief and his powers were enlarged greatly. Even now, after the end of the war, those powers are still there and many of the men in the lower ranks of the Force are greatly dissatisfied with the present state of affairs. In fact, many of them think that the Police Force should be organised into a trade union or some such organisation. They want to be able to bring their complaints to the Head of the Department or to Government without any fear of victimisation. At the present time they feel they are very restricted in this respect. Certain older members of the Force are complaining about the system of promotion, and those who are over 40 years of age, feel that there is no chance whatever for them. They feel that there is great discrimination in the matter of selection and I think some definite system of promotion should be adopted whereby men who have given service for a long number of years - say 20 or 25 years - should be allowed to hold posts of Officers above the rank of Lance Corporal. As things are at present, however, men can be chosen at random and placed in those positions. The members of the force also complain about the system of pension. They claim that after giving many years of service the pension they receive is very small and they can hardly make ends meet.

Speaking of extraordinary powers on the part of the Commissioner of Police, brings to my mind the Regulations passed recently in respect of bicycles or two-wheel vehicles carrying more than 7 lbs. This restriction is indeed creating a hardship on many persons. I remember that before the Bus Company, which is at present operating in Georgetown and Kitty was formed, people were able to buy goods in the Georgetown markets and take them home in the buses, but since the Regulations came into effect and the new company began its operations, the practice of allowing people to carry goods which they may have bought in the markets has been discontinued. Now these persons would be forced to carry less than 7 lbs. on bicycles and that means that many working people who cannot afford to buy on order and have things sent to their homes, would suffer much in-

convenience. In many working-class families, the husband goes to market early in the morning - on Saturdays particularly - and sometimes a number of articles are bought and they can only be transported home on bicycles. There is also the question of milk vendors, who would also be seriously inconvenienced by this restriction. They were accustomed to carry 3 or 4 tins of milk, each containing 7 or 8 gallons, on the handlebars of their bicycles, but now that these Regulations have come into effect it means that they would have to get carrier bicycles which, I am convinced, are totally unsuited for the distribution of milk in the city of Georgetown. I have spoken to the Officer in charge of the Milk Produce Depot - Mr. McWatt-- about this matter and he has informed me that if an Officer of the Police Department would grant him an interview he would readily take a carrier bicycle and fill it with one or two containers and demonstrate how very impracticable it is to use such a vehicle for the distribution of milk. Whereas, I have some sympathy for the object of the Regulations -to prevent accidents - we have to bear in mind the circumstances as they exist at the present time. The milk vendors would be forced to meet the additional expense of acquiring new carrier bicycles and if they have to use these bicycles they would only be able to distribute half the quantity of milk they now distribute. The reason is that with these bicycles they would not be able to operate freely and this means that their wages would be reduced drastically. I would therefore ask Government to reconsider this restriction and permit a person to carry more than 7 lbs on a bicycle, in view of the cases I have referred to.

I should also like to make a few remarks with respect to the Enmore shooting enquiry and I should like to be permitted to read from par. 41 of the Report of the Commission which says: -

“We feel that had there been more foresight on the part of the Police authorities and had proper measures been taken, the crowd may not have gained entrance into the factory compound, and the necessity to open fire may not have arisen.”

As one reads this Report one cannot but come to the conclusion that the Police Department is not an efficient one. I should like to make a few more quotations and explain what I meant when I made the statement. In par. 40 the Commission comments on the lack of cooperation between the two Police Officers who were left in charge at Enmore, and the Report states: -

“Moreover, it appears that Lance Corporal James was not left in supreme command of the Police at the factory. James was at the head of his own party from Georgetown; Lance Corporal Sobers was independently in charge of the three armed men whom Superintendent Roberts had taken to Enmore that morning and Lance Corporal Richmond was in similar control of his party of baton men. No instructions had been given to them how to cooperate in any eventuality.”

I can see nothing to be inferred from that but the fact that the Officer who was in charge of those men had not given proper instructions. To quote again, par. 36 of the Report states, in effect, that no one was competent enough in the Police Department to carry out methods of controlling a crowd by means of tear gas. We are always told when it comes to appointments, in this Council, that we did not have properly qualified men and in many cases people are brought from abroad with the understanding that they are experts and here we have it that the Police Authorities were not competent to deal with a common thing like tear gas, and that they were not adequately prepared to deal with the crowd at Enmore.

Paragraph 36 of the Report, which deals with the question of the use of tear gas, states:-

“No serious consideration apparently was given by the Police authorities to the question of the value of tear gas to keep away a crowd from attempting to enter the factory compound. Mr. Matthey, the Deputy Commissioner, stated in his evidence that on the 16th June when Superintendent Roberts reported at 9 a.m., the happenings that morning in his district, reinforcements were dispatched to Vigilance, as Mr. Roberts had stated that he had just left Enmore fairly quiet and was going to Non Pareil where he understood that there was going to be trouble. That morning at about 8 o'clock, one N.C.O. and eight men had already been dispatched from Georgetown to that area, and after Mr. Roberts' report at 9 a.m., twelve more men and two N.C.O.'s were sent to Vigilance. This latter batch included tear smoke men, although the reinforcements sent did not comprise a full platoon which would contain a tear smoke section. If tear smoke was then considered as a possible requirement, one fails to see why it was not considered necessary when in consequence of the Report on the night of the 15th June, steps were being taken for the protection of the factory from a mob expected during the morning of the next day. It may be true that if a crowd actually did get into the factory compound, the discharge of tear smoke amongst them would be awkward as likely to affect not only the invaders, but also those policemen at grips with them. There might be a stampede in the passages between the factory buildings leading perhaps to serious casualties. But we can see no difficulties arising from a well directed release of tear smoke on the dam at the earliest sign of an attempt to cross the trench at the punt slip. A few who might succeed in crossing the trench could easily be overpowered; the bulk however, of the crowd would be likely to disperse helter skelter away from the trench, and the necessity to have recourse to the very extreme measure of shooting would thus be obviated.”

In another paragraph, the Report states that no Officer of the Police Force was an expert in the use of tear gas. The Report also states that had the Superintendent on the spot had more foresight, much of what happened would not have occurred. It also suggests the use of more policemen with

batons, and the use of mounted police. I observe also, that in Your Excellency's Message you refer to the fact that there are only about 1,000 men in the Police Force, and therefore they were probably no more men available to put on the spot.

However, I think that what was done after the shooting might have been done before. I refer to the recruitment of supernumerary policemen, if I may call them so. What I am alarmed about is that while the Police Force is small, I find that Police Officers are allowed to have trained policemen working at odd jobs, cleaning shoes, driving children to school, chopping wood, shopping and acting as chauffeurs. If Officers must be provided with such service, then ordinary unskilled men should be employed to carry out those duties. I cannot see any justification for using policemen, who have been trained at Government expense, to do menial jobs of that kind. I think the practice should be stopped immediately, and I hope Government will do so at once.

With regard to the persons who were injured in the shooting, and those who lost their lives, I may be allowed to quote paragraph 134 of the Report which states:

"After giving due weight to the fact that some bullets did ricochet, we are nevertheless of the opinion, that the number of injuries caused by bullets received from behind as compared with the few which entered in front, indicates that some shots were fired at persons after they had turned around and were making their escape. Exactly how many were fired it is impossible to say. It has already been stated that sixteen live rounds were not produced to Sergeant Major Carryl at the inspection when it was explained that of those, one shot was fired accidentally in the air by Brown, that two others were lost by Brown, and three by de Groot in the struggle with the crowd. We have also declared our view that although no policeman had received serious injury, a stage had been reached when firing was justified. Mr. Walsh stated that his impression at first was that blank cartridges were being fired until he saw someone in the back of the crowd fall. Perhaps many in the crowd thought like Mr. Walsh and did not immediately turn to escape. We are, however, of the opinion that the evidence has established that after the first few shots, there was firing which went beyond the requirements of the situation, with the result that Pooran, notably, and some others received shots when in actual flight."

I have in my hand a copy of the Riot Manual which is issued to policemen, and on page 6 it states:

"If it becomes necessary to fire, Officers and men have a serious duty which they must perform with coolness and steadiness, and in such a manner as to be able to cease fire the instant it is no longer necessary."

I am glad to see that Your Excellency has directed the Commissioner of

Police to submit a statement on this matter. Many of the persons were shot while they were retreating. Several passages in the Report of the Commission bear that out. Paragraph 104 states:

"We have found as above stated that the police in the circumstances then existing were justified in opening fire on the mob when they did. While, however, shooting is justifiable by law if strictly necessary to protect life and property from serious danger, one is not excused if he causes death or serious injury to another by any act which goes beyond what is reasonably required for that purpose. In this regard the police are in no better position than the ordinary citizen, except that while the law insists that the ordinary citizen who acts in self defence must retreat, if he can, so as to avoid recourse to extreme measures. The police, in the lawful execution of their duty in protecting life and property, are not required to retreat, but must check and oppose such threatened serious violation of the law, and in so doing are expected to use even extreme measures if necessary for the purpose. A policeman will get no protection in law if anything done by him goes beyond the reasonable requirements of his duty. It is in the light of the above principles that we have examined the testimony relating to the extent of shooting which took place at Enmore."

Paragraph 126 states:

"As regards the nature and location of the bullet wounds we propose to refer first to the two deceased Lallabagee and Rambarran, whose bodies were taken up at the edge of the trench on the mule pen dam. Lallabagee had one wound from a bullet which entered his back on the right side just above the waist and came out at the left of the chest between the 7th and 8th ribs. The bullet's course was horizontal before and after it entered the body but Dr. Boyce was unable to say whether the bullet had ricocheted or come direct from the rifle. If the bullet came direct from the rifle, then the deceased was standing on the same plane as the person who fired. Death was not instantaneous, but the deceased must have become unconscious immediately as a result of shock, and then some time elapsed before death. It appears to us that unless the bullet had ricocheted, Lallabagee received this bullet in the back direct from the rifle when he was making his escape. Hyderalli, who testified that he was one time a field worker at Enmore, said that he was one of those standing on the mule pen dam when firing commenced, and there he saw Lance Corporal James, whom he recognised because of seeing him earlier that morning, deliberately aim and shoot Lallabagee who was about to climb on the southern parapet of the trench. Hyderalli's evidence, like that of others who testified that they saw James shoot Lallabagee, was so unsatisfactory as to other incidents that it was unsafe to accept his story that it was James who shot Lallabagee, especially in the light of Carryl's evidence that James's rifle showed no sign of recent firing and that he produced all the five ammunition with which he had been supplied. Mr. Roberts identified Lallabagee as a barber, who earlier that morning had appeared to be prominent as a leader of the crowd around the main gate, so that it is not im-

probable that Lallabagee was one of those who had led the rush into the factory compound. The evidence of Dr. Boyce that death was not instantaneous is not inconsistent with his being in an unconscious state when, according to police testimony, he was being carried by others across the water. Still the fact remains that unless the bullet ricocheted he received it in the back, and that is significant."

Paragraph 127 states:

"As to Rambarran, whose dead body was found lying near to that of Lallabagee, we have the police version in conflict with that given by many of the strikers or those in sympathy with them. Rambarran, according to the police, was ferried across the trench from the factory side at the same time as Lallabagee. On the other hand these other witnesses say that Lallabagee was shot as he was climbing on to the southern bank of the trench, and after he fell an East Indian woman approached him to give him water, but on being threatened by James she went away. Then Rambarran, it is said, came up from along the dam and as he was about to dip his hands into the water to give Lallabagee a drink, Rambarran himself was shot and fell. Rambarran's injuries seem inconsistent with this evidence. His postmortem examination revealed that he had been hit by 4 bullets. One went in horizontally at the upper third of the right thigh and came out on the other side; another entered at the inner side of the right leg below the knee and made its exit at about the middle of the calf on the outer side of the leg; a third entered at the back of the left leg just below the calf, went through horizontally and came out on the outer side of the left thigh at the middle third. Dr. Boyce was of opinion that none of these wounds was serious, except that which caused the rupture of the femoral artery of the right thigh. The resulting loss of blood was the cause of Rambarran's death. It is to be noted that the witnesses who describe how Rambarran was shot at the southern edge of the trench, all speak of his receiving one shot when he went to give water to Lallabagee, and that he then collapsed. It is hardly likely, we think, that with the other injuries, involving fracture wounds even though not serious, Rambarran would have been inclined, even if able, to turn back on the dam to give water to Lallabagee. There was some reference to a pool of blood on the ground near where the bodies were found, and that Hon. Dr. Singh visited the spot and saw the blood there. We regret that Dr. Singh, if he did see blood there, did not come and assist us with medical evidence on the point. Still all the wounds except that on the right thigh were received by Rambarran from behind or from the side."

Then paragraph 128 states:

"How the deceased Pooran received his injuries was the subject of much con-

flicting testimony. The evidence of those who described how Pooran was seen climbing over the western fence near the southern end, and how he met his death was so obviously tainted with untruth in regard to other important facts about which they testified, and the many versions given were so conflicting, that we felt that it would be better to ignore altogether, the oral evidence describing the manner in which Pooran did receive his fatal injuries. We had perforce to rely on such inferences as may reasonably be drawn from the nature of the injuries, the course and direction of the bullet wounds in his body, and the significant factor of the place where he was lying injured until picked up and carried in a stretcher to the main gate of the factory. Pooran's injuries were described by Dr. Boyce as consisting of a punctured wound on the outer side of the middle of the right thigh, which was the entrance wound of a bullet that went upwards and emerged through the upper front part of the right thigh, causing a lacerated wound at its point of exit. There was also a punctured wound on the lower part of the left buttock above its fold, indicating where a bullet entered and then came out about 1½ inches above the pubis, causing an exit wound through which coils of the small intestines protruded. In the doctor's view the deceased, though not dying at once, must have been disabled immediately by the wound in the abdomen. Dr. Boyce could not say whether either bullet came direct from the rifle or was ricocheted, but the entrance wounds were clean cut. If the bullet came directly from the rifle, the wound through the abdomen was consistent, Dr. Boyce said, with the deceased at the time being in a stooping position that is on his hands with his tail up, and the rifle may have been on a lower level. In cross-examination Dr. Boyce admitted that the injuries were also consistent with the deceased at the time climbing a tall fence whilst the rifle was fired by a person standing on the ground. To us it seems that if Pooran was twice shot while in the act of climbing the fence, the possibility would be very remote indeed, that two bullets would ricochet upwards to the height of that fence, particularly if the rifle or rifles were fired from the ground and aimed downwards. In view of Dr. Boyce's statement that Pooran was immediately disabled, the spot at which he was picked up was important as fixing the area where he received his injuries. There was much conflict in the evidence on this point. Moffat, Walcott and Thomas, three factory hands who had carried to the front gate of the factory four other injured persons lying at the punt slip, described how they found Pooran groaning on the ground outside the southern fence about 18 feet west of the opening at the punt slip, and they carried him in a stretcher over the trench in a punt which they brought to the spot. They expected to meet on the mule dam an estate vehicle known as the "form-all", which would, they thought, be coming there to fetch the two dead bodies. They were positive that Pooran was picked up outside the southern fence and not outside the western fence, at the top of which it was admitted that a piece of shirt was then affixed to the barbed wire. On the other hand, the witness Sherlock Bacchus, whose evidence alleging much shooting by de Groot and Brown west of the rum bond, has already been the subject of adverse comment in this Report, insisted that he saw when Pooran, while climbing the western fence about 4 feet from the southern end and hooked there by his shirt, was shot by Constable Brown who was at that time, together with de Groot, at a point

west of the passage between the two bonds. Bacchus said that he subsequently picked up Pooran on the parapet west of the western fence at about 2 feet from the southern corner, and he, and Walcott, carried him in a stretcher through the punt slip to the main gate of the factory. Bacchus had been for some time, and was on the day when he gave his evidence, still employed as a welder at Enmore factory at the relatively good wage of \$3.00 per day, and he was functioning as a watchman for the factory that morning. It may not be unreasonable to expect that instead of fabricating evidence against the police, he might show some bias against the field workers on strike. It was obvious, however, that Bacchus was inspired by some personal grudge against the police and particularly against de Groot whom he described as firing from points different from where all other witnesses had placed him. Though unable to rely on the evidence of Bacchus and the other witnesses as to Pooran's death, we feel that the nature and direction of Pooran's wounds, the silent but significant testimony of the torn piece of shirt caught up by the barbed wire at the top of the fence, and indeed all the surrounding circumstances, impel us to the conclusion that Pooran was shot at twice when making his escape over the fence. Whether he was shot by this constable or that, it is impossible to determine from the evidence."

Paragraph 130 states:

"With regard to the deceased Harri, a bullet entered on the right side of the lower part of the back near the middle line and remained lodged in the body. There was much controversy between Dr. Nehaul and counsel as to whether that bullet had come directly from a rifle or might have first gone through some other person. Dr. Nehaul was of the definite opinion that because of the absence of laceration at the entrance wound, the bullet did not first pass through any person or object, although it may have been slightly deflected in its course. Against this view Major King, Staff Officer of the Local Forces, who has had much experience in rifles and ammunition, declared his opinion that a bullet could, after passing through one object, still retain its original rotation while in further flight, and, entering another body, cause nonetheless, a clean cut entrance wound. He instanced such cases in his own experience. It was, however, conceded on each side that the fact that the bullet did not pass right through Harri but "mushroomed" in his body was not a factor to be considered in determining whether the bullet had come direct from the rifle or passed first through another body. At what place exactly Harri received his fatal injury is not clear, but the evidence discloses that he was at the time not on the factory side of the trench, and that he may have walked a short distance after receipt of the injury. However, his was another case of a bullet entering from behind."

I hope Government will see that this matter receives immediate attention. One of the injured persons is still in hospital, and hospital bills have

to be paid. Many persons, widows and orphans, are in a destitute condition, and in view of the finding of the Commission that the Police continued shooting longer than was necessary, I hope Government will take immediate steps to recompense the families of the injured and the deceased in order to prevent further suffering.

Prisons: Friday February 4, 1949

Dr. Jagan: I observe that we are spending a great deal of money in this Department, and I suppose as crime increases the cost will also increase. From one of the Annual Reports of the Department (I cannot remember what year) I gathered that about 400 persons were the daily average prison population, so that the expenditure worked out at about \$470 per head per annum. I do not say that that is too much but what I am alarmed about is the fact that Government pays unskilled workers in this Country between \$221 and \$370 per annum. The question that faces me is whether by paying these small wages we are not sowing the seeds of crime and delinquency, which in turn result in the filling of our prisons and an expenditure of about \$470 per head per annum. Working-class people are being forced to live substandard because of the low wages they receive. I have before me the Report of the Cost of Living Survey Committee, the facts and figures in which are certainly alarming. The Report refers to 12 persons living in a single tenement room. Dr. Francis deals with the nutritional side of the family budget and points out that the diet was not only deficient in calories but also deficient in variety.

Those are the things which I am worried about – that families have to be huddled up in small rooms because they cannot afford to pay for better accommodation, or perhaps because better accommodation is not available, and that they have to pay more for several items. For instance in 1942 they paid for doctor and medicine 14 cents per family, for education, which includes tuition fees and school books, 4 cents per family; for bus, car, railway and ferry fares 3 cents per week. We read the newspapers today and find that people are sent to prison for 3 years for stealing bicycles. I think that if we are to reduce the expenditure on prisons, the Essequibo Boys' School, and the Salvation Army for social services, we must endeavour to raise the standard of living in this country, and Government should set the example. I have already described as inadequate the recent increases granted by Government to unskilled workers. The Cost of Living Committee has stated in its Report that if the same standard of living was maintained in 1942 as was in effect in 1938, then the Cost of Living Index figure would have been higher than 160 points. The Committee points out that certain items of food which the people were accustomed to using in 1938, such as salt fish and flour, could not be obtained in 1942.

I can see clearly the connection between inadequate wages and crime and delinquency. I observe that the Chamber of Commerce has made a declaration on the question of wage policy, but their figures fall short of even the low wages which Government is at present paying its employees.

One Hon. Member referred to restaurant workers. Cases were brought to my notice recently in which restaurant workers were being paid 3 and 4 cents per hour. Government should take an interest to see that the living standards of the people are raised, otherwise our expenditure on Prisons will continue to rise.

Colonial Emergency Measure: Friday February 4, 1949

Dr. Jagan: As regards the question of allocations, quotas, and so on, there is a great deal of dissatisfaction at the present time. I notice in the Press that there has been a great deal of controversy with regard to certain items for which import licenses are now being allowed for hard currency areas, and also with regard to other items which have been left out. I remember also seeing a letter from the Hon. Member for Georgetown Central published in one of the newspapers, asking for more information with regard to the amount of additional dollars allocated to British Guiana and for the entire list of items and so on, but so far as I know the information has not been published. I do not know if the Hon. Member was given the information privately by the authorities concerned, but I think there should be some thorough investigation into the working of the Control Board. I know that there are some persons who are experiencing great difficulty at the hands of the Board at the present time. For instance, dental students who recently graduated and are coming into this Colony find that they have to spend quite a lot of money because they have been told that they can only buy dental equipment from the United Kingdom. Those who are familiar with the situation would realise that dental equipment from the United Kingdom is not as up to date or as cheap as that which can be purchased from the United States of America. On the other hand, one finds that items such as Pepsi Cola and Coca Cola are being allowed entry into this Colony from hard currency areas. These items are not really necessities and I hope some serious effort will be made to look into this question of allocations and quotas.

As regards food, one finds that towards the end of 1948 a large quantity - some 216 casks - of salted fish arrived in the Colony from the United Kingdom for the firm of Booker Brothers and should have been distributed before the end of that year if the Control Board was fully apprised of the position. Instead of that, about 50 casks were released later to Bookers apart from their normal quota. Most of the firms in Water Street which wholesale these commodities have their special friends and when 50 casks of salted fish are set aside for one particular firm, apart from their normal quota, then their favourite would get that and since subsidising is to be removed from this item one can readily see what would happen to these 50 casks of fish. Some people might be able to make a large amount of profit by keeping them hidden until the price has increased. I am also told that because there is no proper system of checking and examination, several articles being distributed by the Board at the present time are going bad. Condensed milk is said to be getting hard in the tins, flour is getting sour and being

destroyed by rats and so on, and split peas are not being properly distributed with the result that vermin get into contact with them. When the time comes for distribution several of the items are not fit for human consumption and, consequently, the Board has to suffer loss. I hope that Government is going to have a proper check made of these items and that they would be released shortly after their arrival in the Colony. There is no proper supervision in this respect at the present time.

Motion p.w.d Police: Thursday March 3, 1949

Dr. Jagan: I have listened with great interest to the debate on this whole matter with regard to the Public Works Department, and I cannot help but agreeing with the Hon. Mover of this Motion that there has been terrible waste in this Department, that there have been great scandals. As far as I see, it seems that we are going to have many more. The Hon. Member for Demerara River told us a moment ago that it probably would have cost just as much or less to dig the Bonasika Canal by hand, by shovelmen, instead of buying useless machinery. Certainly these things should have been within the comprehension and judgment and intelligence of the Officers of this Department. We hear something about liquidation. Some Member referred to liquidation during the time of the Roman Empire, but I can assure him that even at the present time in certain countries if things are not done as they are supposed to be done in liquidation.

I am not referring to politicians particularly. I am talking about one, or two, or three-year plans. When those plans are not carried out the Heads of the Departments concerned are called to account and they have to give reasons why, and if they have made mistakes, glaring mistakes like we have in the Public Works Department, certainly there is liquidation - they are put aside and others put in their places. We are told we cannot get engineers. Maybe we cannot get English engineers. Why not go to Holland, to the U.S.A.? I agree that at the present time these engineers are in great demand and we cannot probably pay them enough to come here, but in such an important matter like this I feel that until we can train our own engineers locally, this Colony should offer big salaries to these skilled technicians abroad so that we can have the benefit of their advice before things go wrong. We should not get them, as one Hon. Member has said, after things have gone wrong to come here and give advice and be paid tremendous salaries.

We also hear about redundancy, and it is claimed that there is no redundancy in this Department. I am also informed that many skilled officers, engineers, are doing work of administration which can very well be done by other officers who were not technical men. A man in a district is told that such and such a house has a leak. He is supposed to go there and see it and then write a minute and get approval from the Head to go ahead. That is where our technical staff is being utilised at the present time, and that is why we must have redundancy. Some time ago, during last year, I remember, there was a retrenchment of Public Works employees in the lower categories. The reason given was that the vote was inadequate, the money had run out and, therefore, the people had to be retrenched. Even the road

gangs were retrenched from six in many cases to two, but you still had the same number of overseers and drivers looking after them. That is the kind of thing that is going on and which is eating up the money of this country. It is said that as long as the men are honest and they are not proven negligent in their work, everything is O.K.

The Hon. the Colonial Treasurer said in relation to giving out work -on contracts that contractors were chiefly interested in profits - that is true - and the Department being a Government Department is interested in saving the people's money. However, the second point which he should have stressed was whether the Department is running efficiently. I have to agree with many of the Members of this Council that the Department is not functioning efficiently. There is tremendous waste. I do not know who is to be blamed, but certainly the Head of the Department should see that things are done properly. To give a simple example: I ride up and down the Sea Wall road every day. I see a gang of men cutting grass by the side of the Sea Wall. By the time they leave the Camp Street end and reach the Vlissengen Road end the grass has already grown at the end which they left. There are about four to six men employed in doing that work. I do not know why Government will not get a motor mower. I am speaking of the section of land abutting the Sea Wall. One or two men with a motor mower can do the whole place quickly instead of the practice which is now being followed there. Those are some of the things which come within my knowledge, but there are many details which Members of this Council are not aware of. We, perhaps, have not the time to go around into the various districts to see how the work is being done, but from what we hear from the little information we can get, we know that there is tremendous waste and terrible overlapping. There is definitely redundancy in the supervisory section of the Department.

Why is there all this breakdown? Probably it is because some of these officers who claim to be men possessing great knowledge and skill - perhaps when it is all found out - do not have the necessary qualification. The Hon. Member for Demerara River has pointed out that the men appointed to supervise the Bonasika Scheme did not have the proper qualification. Why undertake the Scheme when you have not the men who are going to run it properly? That is one of the ways in which money is being wasted. I see from the Department's Report that it is costing the Colony \$1,400 to maintain one mile of road, but if proper roads are built the cost would be but \$400 to \$500. I would prefer the Government to borrow several thousand dollars, and, if necessary, get the Americans who built the roads at the Air Base and the Naval Base to bring their engineers here and build our roads for us, instead of paying this large amount to maintain roads which are in a perpetual bad condition.

(The President: I should remind the Hon. Member that is what the Development Plan is doing.)

Dr. Jagan: I quite agree that those are all earmarked within the 10-Year Plan we have for the future, but what I am worried about is the slowness with which these things evolve. Only last week I went up to the Cane Grove Settlement. We have voted a certain amount of money to be spent there, yet I see nearly a year has elapsed since then and the money wasted all over the place, because things go on so slowly. That is the reason why money is wasted in this Colony. What I am trying to say, I see it all put down in this Report, is merely that the thing should be done. If we have to invest a lot of money let us invest it. I am going to deal with that when we debate the 10-year Plan. I would like to support the Hon. Mover of this Motion in accepting the amendment of the Hon. the Colonial Secretary. I hope that in the future Government is going to employ qualified men in this Department and that works, which are to be given out and which are to be done, will be done quickly and not prolonged over a very long period of time. I think that will save this Colony a lot of money and certainly will lead to the progress of the people as a whole.

Ten -year Development Plan: Friday March 4, 1949

Dr. Jagan: I am pleased to see that Government is now undertaking a definite plan for the development of this Colony, and I was glad to hear the Hon. Colonial Treasurer mention the fact that this Plan is not an isolated collection of schemes and projects together. However, as I read the reports which have been submitted I cannot but agree with Mr. Jacob - who is not a Member of this Council at the present time - that even though we have set specific targets and decided upon certain schemes, there is no direct plan as to how those things are to be achieved. I see nothing in this Plan about workers in general - how many are available in this Colony, how many man-hours can be put into operation per year and how much land is available to them. I would have preferred to see some targets set for a year or two, especially as regards agricultural products. We would then have been able to say that under certain conditions, such as a shortage of machinery or lack of drainage and irrigation, we could only do so much within such a time. In fact we be would be able to check up on our progress from time to time. Are we utilising the means and the men at our disposal to see that this Plan is carried out? I am sorry that Mr. Jacob is not here to voice the criticism he has made in the subcommittee's report on Agriculture, because he is very familiar with the production of such things like rice and sugar. I feel that what is lacking in this Plan is an estimate of the available manpower and the resources of the Colony, and the bringing together of those two elements in a conscious and direct manner so as to achieve the results we are aiming at.

In Your Excellency's Address to this Council at the opening of the session you said:

"The primary objective of His Majesty's Government's declared economic policy towards all of its independent overseas territories-and it is reflected in the establishment of the Colonial Development Corporation - is the development of those territories for the benefit of the people inhabiting them. Let there be no mistake about that. To characterise that policy as imperialistic and capitalistic exploitation, as has been done in certain irresponsible quarters, is not only wholly untrue but mischievous. It is my duty with your help to carry out that declared policy for the benefit of British Guiana, I shall do so without fear or favour."

As I look upon this whole Plan I see that we are to spend a matter of \$26 million in a period of 10 years. Certainly that is a drop in the ocean as far as I can see the problems in this country. In the Development Planning Re-

port, No. 1, it is stated on page II :

“It would indeed have been much easier to draw up a Plan which was virtually a schedule of social and economic desiderata without regard to the practical and financial possibilities of attainment. Such was, more or less, the old Departmental Sketch Plan of 1945, and this would have required over \$100,000,000 to carry it out. It is doubtful whether such “plans” have much practical utility. The schemes now put forward admittedly exclude many that could be- and indeed are- desired by the members of the Committee....”

Certainly, if one hundred million dollars is necessary to carry out the Plan which is really essential, then when we are going to spend only a quarter of that sum I cannot see that the standard of living for the majority of the people of this Colony would be increased to any great extent, no matter how much we brought of the increased productivity of the country and the noble things we talk about.

The Hon. Member for Demerara River (Capt. Coghlan) made an appeal for more help from the U.K. Government. They have given us some help - a matter of \$12 million which is envisaged in the expenditure of this Plan. What is bothering me is the fact that when this total sum which has been given by H. M. Government towards Colonial Development and Welfare, is spread over all the colonial territories it only amounts to 6 cents per head, and when we take into consideration the waste that will occur in expenditure of this money the actual sum per head would be about 4 cents. Some time ago I mentioned in this Council that what the U.S.A. was giving to one territory - Puerto Rico - in one year, the U.K. Government was giving to all the Colonial territories in 10 years. We certainly have to be worried when we see that only one quarter of the sum of money that is really necessary is made available over a period of 10 years, which is a long time to suffer and starve, and as far as I can see this plan will not bring much material benefit to the people of this Colony.

Referring again to Your Excellency's Address, I would like to quote what Lord Trefgarne and a few others in the United Kingdom have said with reference to the Colonial Development Corporation. If I may be allowed to quote a passage from *Masses and Mainstream*, a United States publication. On page 37 in an article headed “Africa: Operation Jackpot” it is stated:

“Lord Trefgarne, Chairman of the half billion dollar state-sponsored British Colonial Development Corporation, speaking to a group of Liverpool businessmen this year, pointed out...”

On page 38 the article continues:

"One member of the British Cabinet, John Strachey, put the issue this way:

'Our national position is really too grave to warrant any indulgence in our particular opinions on the methods of overseas development. By one means or another, by hook or by crook, the development of primary production of all sorts in the colonial territories and dependent areas in the Commonwealth in far more abundant quantities than exist today is, it is hardly too much to say a life and death matter for the economy of this country.'"

Looking at the problem from that perspective, what I am worried about is what is to happen to British Guiana? What has happened to the proposals with respect to cement, glass, wood pulp, and various other minor and secondary industries in respect of which we have paid experts to come here and report? Are we doomed to primary production? Are new industries to be abandoned so as to conform to this broad plan of providing the United States of America with raw materials, so that they in turn would be able to give dollars to the United Kingdom to rehabilitate her economy? Those are the things which are worrying me at the present time. Your Excellency says that that is not exploitation or imperialism, but I am beginning to see in the broad perspective that it is nothing short of imperialism and exploitation.

As far as I see it, this policy of collaboration with the U.S.A. is certainly not for the best interest of the Colonies and especially British Guiana. The Colonial Development Corporation is to come here - they have already come here - and invest money in timber and gold and maybe in other primary products, but clearly from what Lord Trefgarne said here, it does not appear that the Colonial Development Corporation would invest in any minor industry in this Colony in respect of which the United States would not be able to buy the goods produced. These are the things which worry me, Sir, and that is why my criticism to this whole plan is based on the fear that no conscientious effort is made as to how we are going to use our available manpower and reserves to the best advantage of this country.

There are buildings in this country to be put up. Queen's College is being built and may be finished in another year or two. There is a terrible shortage of houses and they cannot be built. In a big country like this where lumber is so abundant, we do not have enough lumber. But whatever will be produced will be sent to earn dollars. I should very much like to see if the United Kingdom Government is going to pursue this same policy with the United States Government. If she does, then she must give us some of the money she would get out of the deal - give us a fair share of it. I agree with the Hon. Member for Essequibo River that we should get a large sum. If the United States Government can spend in one Colony so much money, I cannot see why the United Kingdom Government should not be able to give us large loans. We demand \$100,000,000. Why should they not

make money available to us, gets it from somewhere, the Imperial Bank or other international agencies which are set up? But it does not appear we are going to be able to do it that way. We want money in our hands here to say we would spend so much in the development of this industry or in agricultural production and utilise our manpower to the best interest of the Colony by placing them here and there.

What happened in the oil shortage? The Agricultural Economist wrote a report saying that there were enough coconut trees in this country to provide enough nuts to give all the oil and soap required for the country. Those trees are still there and the nuts are there, and yet nothing has been achieved. Why is it? They have not planned so that a man can go there and work and be paid a decent price. It is no use setting up targets unless we have consciously planned and we know that the work will be carried out and the targets achieved. I want to show by giving a few examples that in this whole plan there has not been as much foresight utilised as is claimed in constructing this whole plan. The Hon. Member for Essequibo River referred to the very admirable plan which the sugar estates have for housing their workers. I would like to know if that subcommittee -

(Mr. Lee: I would like to correct the Hon. Member! I did not refer to any plan. I said the effort they have made.)

Dr. Jagan: The effort is all wound up in the plan. It is all the same. What I would like to refer to is the Rural Housing and Planning. I see an appendix was submitted by Dr. Giglioli for the sugar estates in relation to rural housing. In that report it says that the sugar estates have no more moral obligation to house estate workers since the indenture system has stopped, and they intend from now on to house only essential workers. According to their calculations, that is a matter of 5,262 families. But they go on to state that they have residing at the present time on the sugar estates part-time and nonessential workers which comprise 6,555 families. What is the plan of the sugar estates to house those nonessential workers? According to the subcommittee's report there was a scheme where at Port Mourant, Wales and Schoon Ord the sugar estates were to give 266 acres of land to the Government at a nominal price of \$1 per acre and Government would then lay out the land and give grants and loans to persons so that they could build houses. But I see from the recommendations of the main committee that plan is not to be carried out. I do not know for what reason. What is recommended is very sketchy and it does not say in a specific way what will be the programme of Government so far as rural housing is concerned for estate workers. What the sugar estates want to do with those nonessential and part-time workers? They intend to build a matter of over 9,000 house lots on the frontlands of the sugar estates - 9334 house lots. These will comprise an area of approximately 1,228 acres. If that same

acreage was rented out as formerly bearing a rental of \$5 an acre the Sugar Producers would get a matter of \$6,140, but if they rent that same area at 24 cents per month per house lot they would then get \$13,440. But the policy of the sugar estates is not only to rent it at 24 cents per month. What they do now is to rent at \$1 per month per house lot to workers who are not participants in the work on the sugar estates, and that would give them an income of \$112,008 per annum instead of \$6,104 for the same area rented out as provision lands. That is the scheme behind it all. But Members have passed it hook, line and sinker and recommended it.

Besides making a large yearly profit on rental on this future plan the sugar estates would also benefit in the fact that the value of those lands would go up by the people residing and erecting their houses on them. But that is not worrying me. What is worrying me is, what is to happen to those families when they settle on the frontlands? My memorandum submitted to the Sugar Commissioners showed that if all the lands which are now distributed for rice, provision, cattle pasturage, are given to each family equally, one family would get about a three-quarter acre for rice, a quarter-acre for ground provision and about one head of cattle agisted on the estate. What is to happen to those people when they have borrowed money and taken their savings and built houses on the frontlands and then- with the new scheme of mechanisation which the sugar industry is now embarking upon and which would further throw people out of employment - not having enough land to work and having at the same time to pay to the sugar estate authorities so much money every year and at the same time raising the value of the estate land? That is why I say this Plan is not a plan. It does not go far enough to say what it is translated to - what it means in terms of human suffering, human living.

How are those people to live when this Plan has evolved, those over 9,000 families who would be settled on the frontlands of the sugar estates? That is why I would have preferred that Government made a very serious attempt, as Mr. Jacobs, to set up certain committees for certain products - a committee for rice, a committee for sugar cane, a committee for poultry and a committee for other things - that we would be able conscientiously to say under present conditions we can achieve so much this year and so much next year. But as long as we have planning of this type without any conscious knowledge and effort made as to translate the plan to find out what it would mean in terms of the people as a whole, then I can see nothing but failure. I hope Government is going to find more money somewhere or other to implement a broader scheme, because this scheme will not be adequate as presented to us this time. Many things are necessary, many things are required. Education - the Hon. Member for Georgetown Central has pointed out that we have many children who should be in school not in school. In the subcommittee's report they say: "*there are about _____ (page 414) children between 6 and 14 years of age who do not attend school. In the circumstances the Compulsory Attendance Ordinance has to be spar-*

ingly enforced."

What I noticed, Sir, that when the Royal Commission came here some years ago they suggested that some encouragement should be given to the peasant type of farming. A man should be given the opportunity to get a piece of land and thereby cultivate it in co-corporation with his fellow farmers and peasants. But it seems to me that the emphasis is changed. That probably is because in these overall attempts for increased productivity to satisfy this great plan and the United Kingdom not very much thought is given to the peasants and farmers themselves. I remember reading some time ago Dr. Benham's report on the national income of British Guiana. He reported that in 1942 about 3½ million dollars was leaving this country and going abroad, profits which were earned in this country. I want to suggest that if the Royal Commission's Report was implemented and more so with the view of giving to farmers plots of land, then we would be able to affect savings in this respect, the money which is presently sent abroad by many of these corporations and what not who come here and may come here and start the plantation system. I hope that this same money will be left in this country so that we can have the development which we need.

There is one other aspect, Sir, which I feel is very important in this ten year planning and that is in respect of the necessity of having more technicians in this Colony. I remember immediately after the Russian Revolution in 1918 the Soviet Government found themselves confronted with a lack of technicians, because the Tsarist Government before then had permitted themselves to a policy of primary production. So the Soviet Government had no technicians at their disposal and had to go to the U.S.A. and get the help of the technicians there and pay them a lot of money. I hope we will anticipate in the industrial development which will take place in this country and make preparations now to have the necessary technicians available when they are required in the near future. I am reliably informed that a Principal was brought here for the Kingston Trade Centre and this gentleman has submitted reports which have been in the possession of Government for a matter of 7 to 8 months. I do not know what action has been taken upon them. We were told that we needed a qualified man to come and take over the Trade Centre when the appointment was made. That technically trained man has been brought here and has been sitting here actually folding his arms doing nothing. The opportunity to unfold, to carry out, is not there. What has happened to his plan?

Medical Practitioners' Bill: Friday April 29, 1949

Dr. Jagan: I am really disappointed with the contents of this Bill, especially after having given notice of Motion since February, 1948. This Bill has certainly been watered down with respect to the conditions which I requested in my Motion. However, when it is being considered in Committee I may be able to introduce certain amendments. At the present time there is great need for many more doctors in this Colony. In the Government Service there are many doctors who should be on leave at the present time, but they cannot be granted leave because it is said that there are not sufficient doctors in the Service. There are certain districts of the Colony which have to do without a medical officer, such as the islands of Leguan and Wakenaam. A few days ago I read in a newspaper that the acting Director of Medical Services had to use a radiophone to communicate instructions to a dispenser who carried out an operation at a distant hospital. There are some doctors who will soon leave the Government Service to join private institutions, and it is rumoured that there are many posts which have not yet been filled. I can think of the anaesthetist, for whom we voted salary last year, but we have not yet been able to find a person qualified for the post. At the present time there is need for Medical Officers of Health in the three counties, but we only have one qualified officer who is acting Director of Medical Services. This state of affairs is certainly unsatisfactorily and as far as I see from the provisions in this Bill, we are not likely to solve the problem in the very near future.

Reference was made to the fact that in the United Kingdom we have about 39 students who are now pursuing studies in medicine. There is no doubt that some of these may return to the Colony to work, because they have been awarded scholarships, but on the other hand we have to consider the fact that in the United Kingdom today medical practitioners have better prospects under the National Health Scheme which is now in operation. Physicians, surgeons and dentists are being offered remuneration which is in excess of what they could get in this Colony, so that even if there are some students who are bound to come back to this country because they have been granted scholarships, there is nothing to prevent them from leaving the Service at the end of the period for which they would be under contract. Others may not chose to come here at all.

As regards those students who are in the United States and Canada, last year I obtained the information that up to May, 1948, there were 22 students who were given currency to pursue studies in medicine in the United States, and Members of this Council are aware of the fact that today it is the devil's job to get into the medicine schools in the United States. Many of

my friends who have gone to the United States to study medicine have taken the premedical course, some of them with degrees beyond the requirements of the premedical course, but have failed to gain admission into the medical schools. This state of affairs is likely to continue for some time, and if it does I cannot see how we are going to solve our problem, especially in view of the fact that this Bill limits the period to the 31st December, 1951. It is hardly likely that many of those students will be able to get into the private medical schools.

The other condition which is stated in the Bill is that to be eligible for registration a medical practitioner must have commenced his medical course before 1st September, 1949. During the early years of the war many students applied for permission to proceed to the United States to study dentistry. In fact there is one dentist here now who, while in the United States pursuing studies, applied to the Treasury to be allowed to switch over to medicine, but he was told he could not do it, consequently he had to proceed with his study of dentistry. There are others who left this Colony a long time ago and are now resident in the United States, having started their course long before 1939. Many of those persons are willing to come back to this country, but if this Bill is passed as it stands they would be prevented from coming here and registering as medical practitioners. I have in my possession a petition which was forwarded, I believe, to the Government by the B.G Development League of America, wherein they stated that some of the petitioners are practising physicians, students of medicine duly licensed to practise medicine in New York, who are desirous of returning to British Guiana and pursuing their chosen profession. That means, if this beginning period – if I may call it so - of 1939 is removed those who were doctors before then would be permitted to come in and help the situation in this country. At the proper time I shall beg to move an amendment to permit that.

I also have in mind the question of West Indian graduates to come and be permitted registration in this country, but from the Bill it seems that only persons who were born in this Colony or persons domiciled in the Colony would be permitted to do so. Today there is great discussion on questions like Federation, Customs Union and also unifying various services of the West Indies and British Guiana. If we are going to have unification of medical services, I feel we can initiate the process by permitting West Indian graduates of the recognised schools of Canada and the U.S.A. to come to British Guiana and become registered as medical practitioners. We will not be creating a precedent in that respect, as I have had a communication from the Colonial Secretary of Barbados and of Jamaica to the effect that in those Colonies West Indian students who hold diplomas from recognised Colleges in the U.S.A. are allowed registration. I have the communication with me, and if Hon. Members desire it I would read it to them. But it is a fact that in Jamaica and Barbados at the present time West Indian students who have degrees from recognised American Colleges are per-

mitted to be registered as medical practitioners. The Hon. Attorney-General mentioned the question of reciprocity and said the reason why we cannot permit those persons who have American or Canadian degrees to practise here is because the Governments of Canada and the U.S.A. do not recognise the English degrees.

(**The Attorney-General:** I did not say that was the reason. I said the position was based on reciprocity.)

Dr. Jagan: Whether that is so or not, the question is this: If a person in British Guiana today desires qualified medical service which he cannot get in this country, we find him going to the U.S.A. to the centres there for medical service. No question of reciprocity comes into the picture when people apply for permission to go to the U.S.A. for an operation or other medical service. Therefore I do not see that the question of reciprocity comes into the picture at all. We in British Guiana need doctors and whether they qualify in Canada or the U.S.A., so long as they meet the standard set up in England, we should recognise those standards and allow those people to be registered in this country. I do not see that the question of reciprocity should affect this matter in any way. When the proper time comes I shall beg to move an amendment to the effect that not only British Guianese students but British West Indian students who have recognised diplomas from Canadian and American Universities should be allowed to practise medicine in this country, and if we are to put in a period at all then I am going to suggest that Hon. Members should support the suggestion of having a limited period placed - the end of the year 1959. That will give us a bit of grace, and that time will allow us to get more people who are qualified to come to this country.

I move that clause 4 (a) and (c) be amended by the addition of the following words at the end of those paragraphs: "*or in the British West Indies*". I feel that we may be able to find some qualified persons in the West Indies who are West Indians. The question of a Unified West Indian Medical Service is being considered, and should that materialise it may be necessary in future to move doctors from one part of the West Indies to another, British Guiana being included in my reference to the West Indies. At the present time we have doctors in the Colony who are from Poland and other parts of Europe, and I cannot see why we should not allow West Indians, who are better acquainted with local conditions and the habits of local people than doctors from Poland; Czechoslovakia and other places, to come here and practice. I think Hon. Members should support this amendment, especially since it has been suggested that the commencing period should be deleted from this Bill. If that deletion is accepted, then we are going to have in the U.S.A. many persons, not only Guianese but West Indians, in a posi-

tion to obtain registration to practice their profession in this Colony. In view of the shortage which is with us at the present time and which I do not see we can overcome very quickly unless we accept this amendment, as the doctors who will be graduating in the United Kingdom in the near future are most likely going to remain in the United Kingdom because of the attractions there of the National Health Service, the only alternative left to us is to accept these British Guianese and West Indian doctors, who are now practising in the U.S.A. and Canada and who may be willing to come here and relieve the situation. I am therefore asking Hon. Members to think very wisely of the amendment and support it most wholeheartedly.

I was surprised to hear from the Hon. the Colonial Secretary what are the intentions of Government in bringing forth this Bill, or what Government thinks about it. That is why I preferred that my Motion was discussed fully in this Council before this Bill was brought, because it seems to me what my Motion intended is certainly not in the intention of the framers of this Bill. I had in mind that today the U.S.A. has recognised medical colleges which are on a par with the colleges in the United Kingdom and, as such, graduates of those colleges should be recognised in this country. Now we are hearing that the principle which impelled Government to bring this Bill is something different — because during the war Guianese students could not get into the United Kingdom schools and had to go to the U.S.A. Government had to bring this Bill. I submit that may be the case but feel sure many Members want to take this Bill further. Why is it that Guianese wanting medical service do not hesitate to fly over to the U.S.A. to get that service? It is because they know they can get qualified service there. Why is it, if we can go there to get medical attention, we cannot accept the graduates from those very schools where Guianese or West Indians go for treatment?

(The Attorney General: The answer to that is this: When you are going to the U.S.A. for treatment you are making your own choice of the centre, the John Hopkins Hospital or some other clinic. It is not analogous. This is where you are providing for persons to come here to practise as private practitioners. The Hon. Member's proposal is to open the door completely to all whether they qualified before 1939 or qualified after 1957.)

Dr. Jagan: The point was made that there is a shortage of doctors primarily in the Government Service. If we are going to lose one Government Officer after another, it seems that there would be more room for private doctors to go into the country districts and practise. In Wakenaam and Leguan there is no Government Medical Officer. If we have officers whom Government cannot pay adequate salaries, they may in their discretion go to Wakenaam and Leguan and practise if they feel they can make enough money there. If West Indian graduates of American schools want to go to

Leguan and Wakenaam and Government cannot find the funds to employ them, I do not see why Government should stop them.

That is exactly the point. You have cited the 1947 Ordinance which permits certain doctors to come here but to work in the Government Service. That is precisely what we're not going to get, because even those we have are leaving us.

(The Attorney General: That is where the shortage is.)

Dr. Jagan: We should allow them to come and practise here privately, if they so desire. That is my contention.

(The Chairman: I will now put the amendment of the Hon. Member for Central Demerara (Dr. Jagan).)

Dr. Jagan: I take it that Hon. Members, are quite aware of what my amendment suggests.

(The Chairman: If Hon. Members would read the Minutes of the last meeting they would see exactly what your amendment is.)

Dr. Jagan: It was to the effect that West Indian doctors should also be eligible.

(The Chairman: Your amendment is that paragraphs (a) and (c) of clause 4 be amended by the addition of the words "or in the British West Indies". I will now put the amendment.)

Dr. Jagan: When I first spoke on the Bill I felt that we should have an extension of the period to 1960, but in the light of what I have said I think it my duty to move the deletion of paragraph (d) because I feel that doctors who have had the prescribed training in a recognised medical school in the United States are certainly well qualified to practise in this country. The Hon. Member for Western Berbice (Mr. Peters) has told us of the very extensive training which a graduate has to undergo there. For instance, he told us that before a young man can enter medical school he must have a degree. Today it is even difficult for those with Master of Arts or Master of Science degrees to enter a medical school in the United States. Those who are able compare the two systems will realise that the training received by medical students in the United Kingdom falls far short of that received in the United States. For that reason I do not see why he should place an embargo on the American qualifications. Science is science. It is not like selling potatoes which we have to import from the United Kingdom. Scientific knowledge is something which should be free of barriers of countries. Atomic weapons know no barriers, and atomic energy will be used by all countries, Similarly, if we need doctors, and America can train them with

proper skill, we should embrace in our midst those Guianese who have qualified at any time in the United-States, so long as they have graduated from recognised Universities. I move the deletion of paragraph (d) of clause 5.

I did not understand from what the Hon. the Colonial Secretary said that we are interested in creating a monopoly of doctors in this country. If that is so, I do not agree with that at all. The study of medicine is a very choice profession, and those who like to study it should know the future if it. If the prospects are not good in this country they can go to another country. On the other question of Guianese doctors, who may be resident in the U.S.A. and had graduated before 1939, here are many of them, even though they are now resident in the U.S.A., who may want to return to the country of their birth now. Aside from patriotism the cold of the winter may be chilling their bones, too much arthritis and they want to come back to the land of sunshine and to give a little bit of their skilled service and spend some of the money which they have acquired over here, and so support Mr. Raatgever's tourist trade. I do not see why any objection should be taken to having some of our people returning to this country.

I see in this Bill that clause 5 (d) refers to medical courses which were commenced within 1939 and would be ending in 1951, I should like to find out from either the Hon. the Colonial Secretary or the Hon. the Attorney-General whether it is meant by "*commenced*" actual entry into a medical school or entry for the premedical course in a University College. It is very important for us to know that. I understand as a fact that up to May last year there were 22 students who left this Colony and were pursuing the study of medicine in the U.S.A. That term was very wide and vague. Most students who left here for the U.S.A. to study medicine have to take the premedical course in a University College. That course may take a minimum of three years, but at the end of those three years there is no guarantee that the student will be able to gain entrance into a recognised American medical school. In fact there are several students who cannot gain entrance into a medical school and have to switch over to other professions.

What is bothering me at this time is this: If we have a limited number of students today in the U.S.A. and if we put the limited period to 1951 which will probably allow a few more to get over to the U.S.A., those students would be faced with two problems. One is, whether they could get entry into a medical school, and the other is when they qualify whether they should come back to British Guiana or not. So it appears to me that so long as we have this 1951 limitation we are going to be still faced with a shortage of medical practitioners, because some of the students will not gain entry into a medical school, and some of those who have and do qualify, will not return to British Guiana. That, is why I propose to abolish the clause altogether and so leave it open to all students who go to the U.S.A. and in that way ensure a fair number coming back to the Colony. If we go on with a limited period we would not have many coming back here to practise.

That is not my point. I quite understand the point that the Hon. the Colonial Secretary is trying to make. That is, if the student enters any time before 1951 a medical school and even though it takes him six years to qualify, he would still be eligible. The study of medicine is divided into several parts. There is the premedical course which has to be taken into consideration. A student may go to one University College which has not a medical school when he graduates after three years he then applies to a medical school. It may be within the same University or outside in another University. I would like to know whether this 1951 limitation refers to the point where the student actually enters the medical school to commence his four years course or to the period where he enters the premedical school.

I would like to support what the Hon. Member has said. A little while ago I read a section of a petition which was forwarded to the Government about medical practitioners in the U.S.A. desiring to come here. I have the covering letter from the B.G. Development League of America, and I see there several names — Bruyning, Babb Morris, Peters, Bennett, Basil Charles. If they have sent the petition to Government and are on the executive body of that organisation, they must have some knowledge as to whether the signatories would come here or not. But my point is not answered.

(The Chairman: I take it those petitioners are residents of the Colony!)

Dr. Jagan: No, Sir; they are Guianese residents of the U.S.A. They have an organisation called the B.G. Development League of America. The point I raised a moment ago about premedical school has not been answered. I am going to put it another way. First of all, I would like to know whether there is any restriction on students going to the U.S.A. to study medicine. We know there were restrictions some time ago. If there are still restrictions I ask Members to support my amendment, as by restricting the men only a limited number will go to the U.S.A. I would like to know if at the present time there is free access to American Universities so that B.G. students who desire to go there to pursue the study of medicine will be permitted to do so. The other point which I would like to raise is this : Suppose a student in British Guiana applies to Government for permission to proceed to the U.S.A. to study medicine on the 31st December, 1951, and merely says he is going to study medicine — whether he is going for a premedical course or direct to a medical school, is of no concern at the moment because it seems he will have to go through a premedical course and it is likely that he has to take the premedical course first — will Government accept that as being within the meaning of the terms of this Bill, or the very day when he will be directly entering the medical school? Those two points I would like to get some information on.

Unless we know now what is intended by Government, certain people outside would not be able to know, whether at the closing date they should

be entering a pre-medical school or a University. Whether it is taken-, in the same University or in another, the requirements are that a medical student must take a pre-medical course. A pre-medical course takes at least three years, whether it is taken in the University or in some small College. The Bill must make it specifically clear what is meant; otherwise later on we may find a student, who entered on his pre-medical: course on the 31st of December, 1951, claiming, that he is eligible for registration.

As far as I understand it, the course in the United Kingdom is more inclusive and is usually taken in one institution over a period of about five years, but in the United. States it is different. There is a pre-medical course which may be taken in the same or another school over a period of three years, and then there is a medical course of about four years.

Motion - Annual Holidays with Pay: Friday May 27, 1949

Dr. Jagan: Rising to support this very commendable Motion I think we should adopt the suggestion of the last speaker, but before doing so I think this Council should record its approval of the principle of the Motion and then refer the matter to a Committee to thresh out the details and report to this Council. I feel that the principle of holidays with pay should be adopted by this Council. I have before me the Caribbean Commission Monthly Bulletin in which is set out a Declaration of Human Rights which was recently discussed by a United Nations Committee. Article 24 says:

"Everyone has a right to rest and leisure," and I suppose that "everyone" includes people all over the world, the Colonies included.

The Hon. Mover of the Motion has gone to great pains to show us what has been the development of the principle of annual holidays with pay in other countries, and particularly in the United Kingdom. It does not seem to me right that in a matter of this kind we in this Colony should lag very far behind the Mother Country. I recall that some time ago it was remarked at the United Nations Assembly by a British delegate, that many people usually think of the Colonies as the ground for exploitation because they are divided by the sea- what he referred to as the "salt water fallacy." In other words if there should be no such fallacy of inequality between the Metropolitan Government and the Colonies then I would suggest to this Council that if the United Kingdom has found it necessary to adopt such an admirable measure then we should certainly follow suit. Other progressive democratic countries have adopted similar measures. In the United States of America holidays are provided by the State Legislatures.

I observe from a book I have, here entitled "*The Truth about Soviet Russia*," that one of the Articles of the Constitution provides for annual holidays with pay. Most democratic countries have accepted the principle, and not only the big countries but the smaller ones too. We have been told by the Mover that the little Colony of St. Lucia has already adopted a similar Motion. Referring again to the Caribbean Commission Bulletin I observe that only a short while ago a similar measure has been adopted in the island of Martinique where workers in industry, commerce and professional occupations will in future be entitled to annual holidays with pay, subject to the following conditions:

(1) The worker must prove that he has been employed by the same employer for at least four months.

(2) Every employee will be entitled to one day for each month worked.

(3) Maximum holiday period will be a fortnight, to include 12 weekdays.

(4) Long-term employees will get one extra weekday for each five years with the same employer, the maximum period extending to include 18 weekdays.

(5) Workers and apprentices under 18 years of age at May 31 in any year will be given two days for each month of work up to a minimum of 30 days, which must include 24 weekdays.

(6) Those between 18 and 21 will get 1½ days a month with a maximum of 22 days, this period including 18 weekdays.

I think those conditions would admirably suit the Motion which has been brought forward. The Mover has suggested two weeks annual holiday with pay and also brought into the picture the question of domestic servants who may work for a few months, but if we adopt the Martinique procedure whereby a person has to work at least four months to be entitled to one day's leave, that would be a very simple solution to the problem of domestic servants. It is a very useful procedure, and I submit that we should follow the admirable example of the St. Lucia and Martinique Governments. In this country the working class people, especially those who work the longest hours, get very little vacation with pay or no vacation at all, while other persons who do not work as hard but live more comfortably and enjoy better incomes, get longer holidays.

In the case of Government we find that officers in high posts get accumulative leave with pay - in some cases six months' leave at the end of three years, and in other cases after five or six years' service - but it is in the lower income groups that the pinch is felt. I have before me the rates of pay for the staff employed by the Public Works Department at the pumping station, and I notice that those people have to work in the wet seasons for 60 hours per week, and in the dry seasons 48 hours per week, and one category of those employees are given seven days holiday annually while the other category gets no holiday at all.

We have heard from the Mover that the employees of the Transport & Harbours Department have succeeded in getting quite good conditions so far as holidays are concerned, but even then there seems to be no uniformity in the matter. If because of climatic conditions it is necessary that certain workers should have two weeks' holiday with pay and accumulative leave, why is it that other workers who have to toil in the field in the heat of

the sun or in the rain are not entitled to holiday with pay? It should be a condition of their service as not only a form of relief from their monotonous work but as an opportunity for recreational activities which certainly help the cultural development of a country. Man does not live merely by work - at least work in which there is so much drudgery involved. If such persons have to work hard in producing the wealth of this country then Government should see that they get at least two weeks' holiday with pay annually so as to repair the loss of tissues through hard toil. I support the Motion wholeheartedly and recommend to Members that it be accepted as it stands.

Motion-Central Rice Mill: Thursday June 2, 1949

Dr. Jagan: It gives me the pleasure to second this Motion which has been moved by the Hon. Member from Eastern Berbice. There is no doubt that the inhabitants of this Colony lack many social services. Only a while ago we were debating the question of providing an annual vacation for workers with pay. There are many other services which are urgently required by the people, but as long as the national income per head remains low this Colony would not be in a position to provide these things which are necessary for a good standard of living. I think the Government is certainly helping a great deal to increase the national income per head in this Colony, and various methods have been debated in this respect. I have in mind the various Drainage and Irrigation Schemes which are being embarked upon in the Corentyne district especially, and I am sure that these schemes would result in increased production by the Colony and, consequently, increase the national income per head. But that is not all; in providing for increased production we should not only aim at extensive increased cultivation of the acreage of land at our disposal - we should also have in mind intensive production, and that is where I feel this Motion deserves the support of this Council. A central rice mill in the Corentyne district would help to increase intensive production in this Colony; it would enable us to produce more rice from the paddy that is grown in that district.

It would help to eliminate some of the wastage in rice production which takes place at present. Those of us who have had the pleasure to visit the Mahaicony-Abary Scheme and to see the rice mill there at work have been amazed to see the things which are being turned out from the waste product, such as the polish and the bran, which I believe is sold for stock feed and other purposes, and I believe that other valuable by-products could be turned out, if proper research was made into the matter. Those products are certainly being wasted where rice is being milled at small mills which are being operated on the Corentyne Coast and other parts of the Colony. Of course the question may be asked: What is to happen with the small mills? My friend, _____ that those mills may continue _____erated in certain districts in _____y they are located, but because there _____ be extensive cultivation of rice, _____reater necessity for a central

Apart from that there is also the question of whether this Government should _____ and see the production of this _____ being wasted by small inefficient _____ whether *it* should step in with _____t central mill, such as we have _____ at the Mahaicony-Abary scheme, and effect savings which this country needs at the present time. We are all quite,

aware that the small rice millers have been providing adequate service to the rice growers. For instance, we are well aware of their moneylending. No doubt they have obtained advantages from it but, nevertheless, the growers have obtained credit from the millers who are also moneylenders. In many cases, they are also owners of estates, and they were able to provide lands for the farmers to cultivate rice. Today we find Government stepping into the picture more and more. We have rice production loans through the Cooperative Credit Banks, which also provide loans on security, and Government is providing drainage and irrigation facilities, so that the traditional assistance which the millers afforded the growers is no longer in the forefront. Whereas it may have been said in the past that we had more business than government, today we have more government in business and less business in government. The time has come when, in the interest of the community as a whole, Government should introduce labour-saving devices such as a central rice mill which would produce rice more economically. With those few words I second that Motion.

Leathercraft Scholarships: Thursday July 7, 1949

Dr. Jagan: Like the Hon. Member for Berbice River (Mr. Ferreira) I commend the Mover of the Motion because there is no doubt that his idea is an admirable one. We want to increase the production of this country by creating more secondary and minor industries, but the question is whether we would be able to produce leather on a sufficiently large scale to compete with imported leather. I had hoped that the Mover or the Seconder would have gone into all the facts and given us some figures, because it is difficult for us to know what the whole position is. We should be in a position to know how many hides are tanned locally, and at what cost. As the last speaker has said, the matter also involves associated trades such as the manufacture of boots and shoes, and there also the question will have to be considered whether we could produce those things as cheaply as other countries from which we import footwear. The mover mentioned the new rubber shoes which have recently invaded this country. Even if they may not be admirably suited to this country the fact remains that they are cheap.

(**The President:** Are they what are known as "*yachtings*"?)

Dr. Jagan: No, they are all rubber shoes made in Hong Kong. "*Yachtings*" are also brought in, and they are cheap. We also have to consider how much it is going to cost to produce boots and shoes, and what the prospects are. We should certainly endeavour to know more about those things. Another point is that we are going to have a Technical School in the near future, and perhaps a section could be established there in which the tanning expert could teach local people the intricacies of the tanning trade. Those are all questions which I think should be gone into. The Council would then be in a better position to decide whether someone should be sent abroad for training or an expert tanner should be brought out. What is operating in my mind is that scholarships are usually given with the idea that, when the holder returns to the Colony he would give his service to the Government. He will probably be employed by the Government. I do not know if the Mover of the Motion intends that this person who, it is anticipated, is to be sent abroad will become trained and return and work for Government on a roving commission throughout the Colony, going about the various districts and teaching people how to do tanning probably on a small scale, or he intends that certain persons should be selected, who are already in the trade, to go abroad, return and set up in business. Those are facts we have to consider before we decide this very important issue.

Report of Salaries: Thursday September 1, 1949

Dr. Jagan: I too would like to support the Motion for an adjournment of the debate on the Motion. Apart from the petition which has been presented on behalf of the Civil Service Association, I gave notice of a Motion on May 27 asking that Government introduce legislation for a minimum wage of \$2 per day for unskilled workers in this country. I see from this Report which has been submitted to us - this balance -sheet, if I may call it so, by the Colonial Treasurer that the approved estimate of revenue for 1949 is placed at \$18,474,000, and that receipts up to July amounted to \$10,468,000. In addition to the million dollars reserved in the budget to meet salary and wage increases, the Colonial Treasurer anticipates surplus revenue on the basis of the yield from January to July. We do not know what will happen in the future. Not only this year but next year we will certainly be in a better position to know what the dollar crisis will mean - what arrangement the U.S. and U.K. Governments will arrive at. We will then know whether this Colony would be able to afford to pay this lump sum increment which is being petitioned for by the Civil Service Association, and which we are told will cost \$325,000.

In the meanwhile I hope Government will see fit to bring before this Council my Motion for a minimum wage, because in my remarks on the Motion I intended to show Hon. Members that the working class people cannot live today on \$1.50 per day which has been fixed by the Commission. Therefore, it would be better for Government to bring my Motion forward for discussion first, so that we may see whether the Council will approve of it or not, and what the cost will be. That is why I support most heartily the amendment which has been moved by the Hon. Member for an adjournment of the debate on the Motion for the adoption of the Commission's report.

Report of Salaries Commission: Friday September 2, 1949

Dr. Jagan: Before I speak on the Motion, Sir, I should like to make a suggestion and that is, that this Council invites the Economic Adviser, Colonel Spencer, to give us an address on this matter, especially since this Report envisages the expenditure of a large sum of money which will have to be provided not only this year but also in years to come. Colonel Spencer has written some valuable reports, but they were written some years ago and I think this Council should have an opportunity of knowing what are his views on this matter, and what are the prospects of the Colony from an economic point of view. He is a fit and proper guide in a matter of this sort and should assist this Council in arriving at a proper decision. Unfortunately, we were not able to get this debate adjourned yesterday, but I hope Government will give serious consideration to the suggestion I have made and ask Colonel Spencer to come here and give us the benefit of his advice.

There is no doubt that the Commission with its able Chairman should be congratulated for doing this tremendous amount of work in such a short time, but so far as I can see from this Report, I am wondering whether so much valuable time has not really been wasted. The Hon. the Colonial Treasurer, in his address to us yesterday, stated that at first they tried to put right the question of wage rates, and I recalled yesterday also that I had given notice of a Motion in this Council advocating a minimum wage of \$2 per day for unskilled workers. People outside have been clamouring for this for a long time; the T.U.C. has been passing resolutions year in and year out about it and yet the Motion has not been brought up for discussion.

I see that the Civil Service Association has been able to put enough pressure on Government so as to have this matter quickly reviewed and that is why we have been able to get this Report in such a short time. I cannot help looking at Appendix VI of the Report and seeing that the Civil Service and various subordinate posts in the Government were thoroughly investigated between 1943 and 1944, and even as late as 1948. It was only in April last that we passed increased cost of living allowances for Government employees and I do not see why there should be this great hurry - this indecent haste, if I may call it so - in dealing with this matter now.

Perhaps I am wrong. I would like, however, to come to the question of minimum wages set out for unskilled workers. The Interim Report states that in Georgetown it should be \$1.52 per day and in the country districts \$1.26 per day, for male workers; whereas a female worker, if I am correct, would get \$1.26 per day in Georgetown and 96c in the country districts. Now, Sir, how were these figures arrived at? The Hon. Members of this

Council should be in a position to know how they were arrived at so that they may be able to say whether or not they are adequate. I believe a Special Committee was set up to go into this question and in their deliberations they figured that the cost of living had risen by about 100 per cent. The cost of living figures today are around 200 and 206 points, taking the basis in 1938 to be 100 points. If it was at 100 points in 1938, the cost of living today should be double. The Committee went on to say that if subsidisation was removed and the cost of living rose, as anticipated, the wage rate of \$1.52 per day - 8c added to the \$1.44 which is twice the wage rate of 1938 - would provide for a rise of 12 points in the cost of living figure. Therefore, the Committee felt it was generous when it recommended an addition of 8c to the \$1.44 to make a total of \$1.52 per day. But unless Hon. Members of this Council be carried away by that generosity or that appearance of generosity, I would like to quote from a Government Report so that they would see what was the standard of living on which those wages were based and decide for themselves whether that was an adequate standard of living for the people of this Colony to enjoy. Government set up the Committee in 1942 and it was called the Cost of Living Survey Committee to investigate the cost of living of the working-class families in Georgetown. The Committee went into the Albouystown section of the City - practically the poorest neighbourhood I believe - and sought to find out how much families spent on food, clothing, rent and so on. What they found out was indeed alarming and the facts are very lucidly stated in this Report. I should like to quote from it so that Hon. Members would know the real facts. It was found that the average family, in 1942, spent \$8.23 per week while it was only earning \$7.41 in the same period. That is saying, in other words, that they were not earning enough wages.

The Committee took into consideration such things as earnings; allowances for support of children; loans, pensions and poor relief; rent received by member of household; and other sources of income. All these totalled \$7.41 as the weekly income of a family while it had to spend \$8.23. How was this grand income of \$7.41 spent? \$4.58 was spent on food, and we find that Dr. Francis, writing on the nutritional aspect of the Committee's work, states the following on page 21 of the report:

"...Apart from deficiency in total calories the food in several families may show remarkable deficiency in variety and may be wanting in many indispensable ingredients."

In other words, the people were not only not eating enough, but they were not eating the right type of food. That was the finding of one of our Officers, in fact, a one-time Acting Director of Medical Services. The Committee also found that each of these families spent \$1.07 per week on rent, and on page 4 of the Report it says:

"...The position is aggravated by the shortage of housing accommodation and the difficulty of obtaining suitable dwellings and the Committee is satisfied that owing to the present situation certain tenants are prepared to connive at the increases in order to obtain a suitable dwelling...In tenement rooms, however, overcrowding is prevalent and returns disclose that in certain instances as many as twelve persons live in a single tenement room."

There is another sub-head in the Report - on page 5 - dealing with Expenditure on Fuel and Light, and it shows that in this respect these families spent 47c. per week. No wonder we have so many of these people going around and collecting chips and so on as fire wood. Even many of those who live in the more prosperous parts of the City cannot afford the advantages of electricity. We have in the Report another Sub-Head dealing with expenditure on other items, and in this respect a family spends 14c. per week on miscellaneous items including Doctor, medicine, etc.- 14c. I wonder how many of these people can get adequate medical care and adequate dental care if they can only spend 14c. per week on these things, taking into consideration the conditions now existing at the Public Hospital, Georgetown - overcrowding, the shortage of doctors, and so on. What were these people spending on education? 4c. per week. This, obviously, includes tuition fees and school books, but is indeed alarming. In the terms of reference of the Public Service Salaries and Wages Commission, (a) (ii) refers to *"the difficulties which are now being experienced in securing qualified candidates for appointment to senior professional and technical posts in the Public Service."* If these people can only afford to spend 4c. per week on education, then it follows that they would not be in a position to afford the blessings of secondary education and that is why we are faced with these recurrent shortages. That is also the reason why we have so many imports in this Colony and why we have to pay so many pension bills year in and year out - a constant drain on the economy of the country. While it is a fact that the people cannot afford to pay for education, what do we find happening in our primary schools today? There is overcrowding almost everywhere. I wrote the Director of Education the other day and asked him to give me the number of pupils in each school in my constituency and in every school there was overcrowding to the extent of 50 and up to 100 per cent. The people cannot afford to send their children to secondary schools and even if they try to scrape up some money to send them to Queen's College or the Bishops' High School for Girls they have to send them there before they are 11 years of age, unless they win a scholarship. We are seeking through this Report to give higher salaries to people in the Public Service while the poor people to whom I have referred cannot afford to spend more than 4c. per week on education. I seriously ask Hon. Members of this Council to take these figures into consideration. There are other items which are listed here but I need not mention them because they are so small.

There is one other aspect of this Report on which I would like to com-

ment. When this Report was written in 1943 the Committee came to the conclusion that the cost of living had risen by 60 per cent, but the Report went on to state:

“The Committee is satisfied that the percentage increase in the cost of living would have been greater had the statistics been based on the cost of maintaining the 1938 standard of living.”

In other words, during the war, in 1942 -1943, people could not get certain supplies they were accustomed to use in 1938, like salt fish and potatoes, for instance. If they were able to get those items in 1942 - 1943 and thereby maintain the same standard of living to which they were accustomed in 1938, the cost of living index figure in 1942 would have been higher than 160 points. Therefore, the cost of living index figure today would be in the vicinity of 220 points or thereabout, and when the Commissioners state in their Report that the cost of living index today is between 200 and 204, and they make allowance for that by fixing a wage of \$1.52 per day for unskilled workers, I say that the Report is misleading. That wage is inadequate, and Government should seriously consider the question of a revision. For once I see that even the Chamber of Commerce has come to the rescue of the working-class people in this country. I quote from a Report which was recently issued by the Council of the Chamber. It states:

“...As the rise in the cost of living in the Colony is the primary cause for the revision of salaries, then the Commission could have expended the amount available in a genuine effort to improve the living conditions of the lower paid civil servants.”

(**The Colonial Treasurer:** Who made that irresponsible statement? I was not in the Colony when it was made.)

Dr. Jagan: I do not know if the Colonial Treasurer is trying to be funny. (Laughter). The statement was issued on behalf of the Council of the Chamber of Commerce. I am quoting from the *Argosy* newspaper. Perhaps the Hon. the Colonial Treasurer is disappointed that it is not a communist publication. (Laughter). The Commission should have done what the President of the Chamber of Commerce so rightly states here. If there is a surplus of a million dollars, and if, as the Colonial Treasurer anticipates, there will be an additional \$400,000, Government should have waited until the end of the year to decide how it should be distributed among the lower income groups - the wage-earners and the lower ranks of the Civil Service. Those are the people for whom I plead, and for that reason I am thoroughly against the Report of the Commission. I oppose it because, as far as I see, it

proposes to give with one hand a pittance to the lower income groups, and with the other hand to squander the revenue of the Colony among those who can well afford to live on the salaries they are receiving. That is the ground upon which I oppose this Report. I want that to be clearly understood lest it be said, especially by irresponsible persons, that we are not considering the lower income groups of the Civil Service. I heartily agree with the statement issued on behalf of the Council of the Chamber of Commerce, to which I will refer again a little later.

Now I should like to comment on the economic picture as a whole. Unfortunately, I was not present at the first meeting of this Council in the month of January this year, because I missed my boat in St. Vincent. I therefore was not able to take part in the debate on the Budget. Since this Report of the Salaries and Wages Commission is very much tied up with the Budget and the future economy of this country, I crave the Council's indulgence to make a few comments. We see from the statement made by the Colonial Treasurer that the Colony will have to bear an additional expenditure of \$1,362,000, which is made up as follows: Salaries \$862,000; Wages \$350,000, and Teachers \$150,000. What is the policy of Government? I remember that when we met in this Council for the first time in 1947 we were greenhorns, if I may use the term, and Government rushed before us several tax Bills. No doubt it was a very strategic move, because many of us did not know our way around. Those Bills were passed, and the taxpayers of this Colony found that they had to pay more for tobacco, malt liquors, rum, and many other items. It was pointed out at the time that the Colonial Treasurer had underestimated revenue; and therefore was putting on additional taxation. The result was that at the end of the year, when we found that there was a surplus, it was distributed as a bonus to civil servants - \$600 to officers earning \$300 a month or more. A million dollars was set aside to meet the cost of the revision of salaries and wages recommended by the Commission, but at the same time Government abandoned subsidisation.

What is happening to the poor man who is not a civil servant or a wage-earner employed by Government? His food cost him more when subsidisation was abandoned, yet he is being asked to contribute to this huge expenditure in the form of the cash bonus to civil servants in December last year, and the 1½ million dollars for increased salaries to civil servants this year. The Colonial Treasurer has clearly stated that the Colony will be in a position to meet this expenditure this year, because a million dollars is in reserve, and he anticipates buoyant revenue from Customs and other sources at the end of the year on the basis of the collection for the first half of the year. While in the 1947 Budget the Colonial Treasurer underestimated his revenue, I feel that he has overestimated it on this occasion, and if those Members of this Council who are in the commercial community are honest to themselves they will agree with this view. I have talked with a few businessmen in Water Street who have told me that they are not buying huge stocks in advance as they used to do. They are buying month

by month because they anticipate a fall in prices at any time, and they do not want to be caught with stocks in their hands in a falling market. If prices fall it would mean that Customs revenue would be affected, and seriously affected.

I should like to refer briefly to Col. Spencer's Report in support of my argument that we have to be extremely careful not to find ourselves in the position we were after the first World War, because I share the fear of the Hon. Member for Essequibo River (Mr. Lee) that if we commit ourselves to this huge expenditure now and in the uncertain future, we would be hanging ourselves by having to borrow more money and pay more interest on loans to meet heavy salary and pension commitments which this Colony cannot afford. Col. Spencer, our Economic Adviser, clearly states in his Report that we must be very careful to keep our budget in balance, and looking at the future he refers to what he calls the transition period: 1949-1950. This is what he says:

"Such estimates are offered only with great caution; they are no more than pointers or estimates of broad trends on certain assumptions, which can be divided into two: the first being that there will be what is called a "Transition Period", lasting until, say, 1949/1950, during which the Colony will continue to enjoy sellers' markets for its exports, but will also receive a growing volume of imports; the second, that this period may be followed by a "Long Term Period" or readjustment, in which first (it is hoped) Import Prices and then Export Prices may move downwards as world production increases and catches up with monetary demand".

In other words, in this transition period we are in now, because we are still getting good prices for sugar, bauxite, timber, gold, etc., and because we are still collecting Customs revenue at inflated prices, we have what Col. Spencer calls a buoyant revenue, and if we estimate our expenditure on this buoyant revenue and there is a shortfall later on we may be "in a boat". As regards the long-term period Col. Spencer refers to, I think the sugar producers and the Government and people of this Colony should be worried lest the U.K. Government does not undertake to give us a long-term contract for the purchase of sugar from this Colony. The economy of this Colony is still lopsided; it still revolves around sugar, and if the price of sugar is not guaranteed for a period of at least 10 years we will be very worried. In spite of that we are concentrating on development which we hope will add to the revenue of the Colony, and at the same time help to straighten out the financial crisis through which Great Britain is now passing. We are looking to the Colonial Development Corporation and to other capitalist investments in this country to develop our resources and raise the national income of the Colony. As Col. Spencer says, unless we raise our national income we will not be able to increase our revenue. When we consider our revenue prospects we find that in countries like the United States there is already a slump impending. The dollar areas are the areas to

which we look to buy the products of this country and to swell the dollar pool, and thereby help to solve the dollar crisis in the U.K. If I may be allowed to quote from the "P.A.C." Bulletin of March 13, 1949, on page 2 of the Bulletin it is stated:

"Lord Trefgarne, Chairman of the half billion dollar state-sponsored Colonial Development Corporation (C.D.C) said to a group of Liverpool businessmen that:

'The United Kingdom has an annual dollar deficit of £500 million - that is the background against which productivity of colonial territories must be viewed. If the colonies could raise their overall productivity during the next 10 years by £200 million per annum, that indeed would be a mercy twice blessed.... The reason why we look to the colonies, is that their products - food and raw materials - are more acceptable to the United States than manufactured goods. The total value of imports of manufactured goods into the United States in 1947 from all sources amounted to some £250 million. The total imports of food and raw materials were more than four times as great..... Thanks to tin, rubber and cocoa, the colonial territories overall are playing a good part in the dollar sterling balance... Obviously, therefore, it's a sound policy to aim at greatly increased dollar exports of colonial products'."

In other words, we in this Colony are going to continue to be producers of raw materials and food, because even Mr. John Strachey, Minister of Food and a Member of the British Cabinet, said (and I quote again from the "P.A.C." Bulletin):

"Our national position is really too grave to warrant any indulgence in our particular opinions on the methods of overseas development. By one means or another, by hook or by crook, the development of primary production of all sorts in the colonial territories and dependent areas in the Commonwealth in far more abundant quantities than exist today is, it is hardly too much to say a life and death matter for the economy of this country."

Primary production of food and raw materials. That is the aim, that is the plan and policy of H.M. Government for British Guiana and other Colonies. Where will we be when the slump comes in the United States and hits us here when they say they do not want our food and raw materials any more? Where would we get our national income to meet our annually recurrent expenditure of 19 million dollars? If the Colonial Treasurer closes his eyes to the future I am not willing to do so. I will let my voice be heard and let the people know what the true situation is. That is why I am looking out very anxiously to hear Col. Spencer on this point: what is the future of this Colony? Let him tell us whether we can afford to spend this huge sum of money at this time. This is what he states in paragraph 4 of his

report:

“It is important to realise that although the outlook for the prices of Sugar, Rice, Timber and other Colony produce for the next few years is good, any subsequent decline in such prices would lead to an immediate contraction of National Income and Government Revenue, so that they might become inadequate to sustain even the existing level of Public and Social Services, unless there had been a ‘considerable’ expansion in the actual volume of Colony production in the intervening period. Even the maintenance of existing levels of Services is therefore likely to depend in the long run on a moderate growth in real output.”

Yes, we have a Ten-Year Plan to increase the National Income of this Colony, but has Government taken any stock to see what has been achieved? Two years have elapsed. I had a conversation with another Hon. Member of this Council who remarked that the longer Government delayed the implementation of its 10-year programme the more it is going to cost, and that instead of the 26 million dollars we have earmarked Government will have to spend 26 million dollars more, because the cost of materials is going up.

I would like to quote from Economic Notes of August, on the head “*Industrial Production.*” It says:

“The Federal Reserve Board index of industrial production (1935-1939 – 100) dropped another five points, reached 174 in May, and was running around 156 in the last week in June. That’s a drop of 29 points on the index from 195 level of last November, or about 15 %. It was expected to go lower in July and latest estimates for that month were around 164, compared with 169 for June as a whole. Most corporation economists are now saying that the index will “level off” for a while between 150 – 160 in the fourth quarter. Others believe it will be down to 150 by the end of the year.”

If the dollar areas are cutting down on their production because they have not adequate markets to sell their goods, it follows that they will not continue to buy our raw materials to manufacture goods which they cannot sell. At the peak of the war, the United States production stood at 270; today it is 166. Therefore we can very well imagine what is happening over there. Nearly five million persons are already unemployed. We must therefore look into the future.

There is one other point I would like to refer to in support of what the Hon. Member for Essequibo River (Mr. Lee) has said in regard to self-government. I would like to quote again from Col. Spencer’s report on the Financial Position of British Guiana 1920-1946. In paragraph 26 he states:

“In consequence, the deficits which occurred in 1921 and 1922 were primarily the result of the post-slump in Trade and Revenue rather than any increase in expenditure; but from 1924 onwards the trouble was the growing burden of Loan Charges and to a lesser extent of Pensions. Customs receipts, of course, reflected the onset of the price depression of the “thirties”, but other revenues were fairly buoyant and there was no collapse in total receipts nor any expansion in ordinary expenditure. The 1931 crises in the Budget of British Guiana arose simply from the cumulative effect of excessive borrowing in the face of what were then considered to be the limit of Colonial Taxation.”

(**The Colonial Treasurer:** I am afraid I have not the printed copy before me. I must have time to answer. The Hon. Member must give the whole story; if he is going to quote logically from that he must remember it was written in 1936. Col. Spencer’s estimates of revenue for the transition period, 1936-1950 is \$11,000,000, but it has reached \$20,000,000. That report was out of date within six months after it was written. The figures and conclusions drawn are erroneous, as Col. Spencer tried to prophesy at the time he came to the Colony. The revenue has already doubled.)

Dr. Jagan: I agree with what the Hon. the Colonial Treasurer has said, but nevertheless what Col. Spencer is saying is that unless we increase our production in this Colony, our national income, we will be nowhere. It is true that from the time he wrote that Report to this day, production has increased and taxation has increased. But what must be taken into consideration too is that Col. Spencer says that taxation to give the people adequate social services, etc., should not be higher than 20 per cent of the national income of the Colony. In other words, if the burden is not to be too great on the people. But in the intervening period with all these taxation measures and the removal of subsidisation Government has sought to raise the level to 27, 30 and 37 per cent in order to get the revenue about which the Hon. the Colonial Treasurer is talking about. We do not know the figures. We do not know how far the national income has been raised.

Let us go back to the Main Development Committee’s Report. It is anticipated in that report that the national income of this Colony when the Ten-Year Plan is fully implemented will be raised to \$70,000,000 per annum. If we take one-fifth of that, 20 per cent, it still does not give the huge revenue we are going to spend now. This is what Col. Spencer, in one paragraph, says:

“In the intervening period, the next ten-year period, we must anticipate a drop in the prices of imported goods – raw materials and foodstuff, and at the same time a drop in imported goods which would effect the revenue also. Therefore in the long term period, even though we are aiming today at a target of \$70,000,000 basing on

present prices, the national income because of the drop in prices may only be in the vicinity of \$55,00,000."

Take one-fifth of that and we have \$11,000,000. Assuming there is an expenditure of \$19,000,000 this year, next year we have to pay increased pensions and maybe other increments will add some more, where are we going to be? Sir, I was only trying to read a few paragraphs of Col. Spencer's Report to support my argument so that Members of this Council will see the gravity of the situation. We are not begrudging the fact that the Civil Servants are working under hardship and should get more money, but let us give it to those who need it most. Those who don't need it - by that I mean those people in the \$250, \$300, \$600 and \$700 per month income bracket- can very well do without it. In fact I made the suggestion in Finance Committee but it did not meet with approval, that there should be no increase in salaries above a total of the yearly wage of an unskilled worker. That is, if a man is getting \$150, or \$200, or \$300, or whatever figure per month as a salary, he should not receive on his yearly income a sum which is greater than which an unskilled worker earns in one year. There is great equity in that. Taking the Government figure of \$1.52 per day, for 50 weeks of 5½ days per week gives \$418 a year, provided the worker is kept fully employed. If that man earns \$418 a year and supports a family, then certainly Government Officers who are earning \$200 a month can feel no hardship in getting an increase of that same amount per annum. But unfortunately, Sir, Members of this Council, I believe, are not aware of the gravity of the situation, otherwise they will not be so generous in giving these huge salaries from the Governor all the way down. That I will come to in a moment. I was quoting from paragraph...

I have read these Reports, over and over and have digested them, and so there is no need for me to come here and read them, but I want Members who had not the time to go through these Reports to be informed. There is no doubt that numerous reports presented to Members are not studied by some Members because they are so busy. Nevertheless since the Hon. Nominated Member is objecting - the Hon. Member seems to be in a bad mood and is always objecting to what I say in this Council - I am going to take my seat. I hope Hon. Members sense the gravity of the situation and insist on Col. Spencer coming here and reviewing the situation so far as the future of this Colony is concerned, so that they will be a better position to know whether we can implement this Report.

It is set out - Salaries: \$862,000, and Wages: \$350,000. I am sorry the Hon. the Colonial Treasurer did not put the figures in the different categories so that one could know at certain levels, what the increases would amount to, as we will then be in a better position to say how much it would cost if given from \$100 or \$200. I quite realise that it may appear I am quite inconsistent in saying the Colony cannot afford it and yet I am asking for \$2.00 as the minimum wage. What I am going to suggest is this: this Colony

under the present estimates has many Departments which can be wiped out. There is a redundancy of staff. Let the pruning knife be used there. In Great Britain they effected a lot of economies in that way. We have people in a lot of Departments doing, nothing. Hon. Members are aware of them.

Report of Salaries Commission: Wednesday September 7, 1949

Dr. Jagan: Yes, Sir. The amendment moved by the Hon. Member for Georgetown South reads:

“And be it further resolved that this Council recommends payment of an immediate lump sum benefit, equivalent to six monthly increments to each Government officer and employee on an incremental scale whose salary does not exceed \$140 per month.”

I should like, in support of what the last speaker has said, to move an amendment to that amendment by the addition of:

“Provided that teachers and wage-earners be included in this lump sum benefits, the amount to be given to wage-earners to be calculated pro rata to corresponding monthly salaried employees.”

I have heard statements here that I have painted too black a picture of the future. If the picture is not going to be so black and we are going to be generous to one group of individuals, then I feel sure we can be equally generous to other equally deserving people, the wage-earners whose salaries or wages were fixed at \$1.52 per day. I remember the Hon. Member on my left (Mr. Fernandes) said he likes to go by stages, to climb one rung of the ladder at a time. I am not saying “no” to that statement, but I thought it was the duty of this Commission to see that justice be done in this Colony to the people who have been employed in the Government Service. What the Commission has done in fixing the wages at \$1.52 per day is merely to give the same bad condition prevalent in 1939 to these unskilled workers. I do not see any improving principle in the picture at all, despite the fact that the Hon. Member for Georgetown Central had pointed out that at the beginning of the year when he got into this Council the wages rate was around \$1.04 or \$1.28 a day. What the Commission should have sought in their deliberations was whether \$1.52 a day is an adequate wage or not, and not whether the Chamber of Commerce or businesses can afford to pay. The Council is not now debating what businesses can afford to pay. The Council is debating what Government can afford to pay to these workers so that they can be satisfied and can enjoy a decent standard of living. That is what this Council is debating at the present time. I think we are confusing the issue when we think what industry can afford to pay. If we are debating that, we may as well suggest a complete debate on the whole on industries

of this Colony, whether we have nationalisation or not. Since we are not debating the whole issue as such, I suggest that we should limit the debate to what Government should pay and what Government can afford to pay to the unskilled workers. That is why I took pains to say to the Council that the very figure Government was paying was not adequate. If Members are willing to close their eyes to that, I certainly would not.

I remember when the Hon. Member for Georgetown South was speaking on the last occasion in this Council. He mentioned that the rise in the cost of living does not affect the higher bracket and the very low income group as much as it would affect the middle class. Now, Sir, I do not see how he could have come to that conclusion that the lowest income group, what I call the wage-earners of this Colony can make any adjustments and live at a lower standard of living than they are enjoying today. And to say that they can make substitutes or whatever he wants to call it, I am really surprised at such a statement. If anything should be given at all, it should be given to those people who do not only suffer many inconveniences which the salaried people do not suffer; to name one, for instance, the workers on the public roads. When there is no money to make roads they are the ones to be told, "*We are going to send you off; you will work two weeks and remain home two weeks.*" The salaried people are kept on, however. I would like to think of those people too, and I hope Members will be equally generous and support the amendment I have just put forward, that is if any lump sum bonus is being given.

Provided Members are aware of the implications I hope that Members of this Council will support the amendment also, if not I am willing to wait, as the last speaker has just suggested that this Council should wait and see what the Commission would say about this question of bonus after giving it full consideration. If the Council is not willing to wait, then I suggest that we should at this time recommend payment to all workers, whether monthly or day workers, who are earning up to \$140 a month, of a lump sum bonus.

Civil list - Amendment Bill: Friday September 9, 1949

Dr. Jagan: I notice that we have a complete revision of the Civil List and from what I have seen expenditure in this respect is increasing rapidly. When this list was first introduced in 1928, under Chapter 52, the total expenditure was £28,185 and now we are being asked to vote a total of £37,400. I have gone through this List and I cannot see why we should burden the taxpayers of this Colony further at this time by increasing the salaries of Officials who are already receiving quite adequate salaries. Apart from the salaries which these Officers are receiving, they enjoy indirect subsidies which are provided in one form or another. We have a very heavy passage provision which gives them free return passages when they get their vacation leave. Then, we have to provide pensions for these Officers. On going through the pensions list last night, I noticed that this Colony is now paying \$637,296.27 in yearly pensions, not only for Officers on the Civil List but for the whole Colony. As we increase these salaries it seems to me that we would also have to increase pensions in future, therefore the yearly burden on the Colony would continue to grow. I feel the time has come when we should call a halt to this. I know that I have painted a very gloomy picture and that some Hon. Members might criticise it, but we must face the facts.

Another thing is that some of these Officers are provided with low-cost houses to live in. On this point I would ask permission to read a statement made in the Chamber of Commerce recently and published in the *Daily Argosy*, dated August 20, last. It says:

"We can see no justice in the Commission's recommendations with regard to the rental to be paid by officers renting Government property. The lower income brackets who cannot get a Government property to rent will be found to be paying up to 30 per cent of their income for rental, as against the figures quoted in the report."

In the report, we find that those Officers who occupy houses owned by Government pay 10% of their salary up to a maximum of \$50 for unfurnished houses, and 12% up to a maximum of \$60 for furnished houses. If we take one example at random, we would find that the Colonial Secretary would pay a maximum of \$60 per month for the furnished house he occupies, but at the same time he is receiving a salary of \$9,600 per annum. Now, \$60 per month in relation to his salary is only 8%, if my figures are correct. There can be no justice in this procedure when individuals who are receiving quite handsome salaries are being given housing at a small cost while the ordinary taxpayer – the people who have to provide this money

- have to pay as much as 33% of their salaries for housing. These are some of the indirect subsidies which these officers are getting. I have already mentioned that if they are sent to any conference abroad they receive, in addition to their hotel expenses, the sum of \$7.20 per day as a personal allowance.

I cannot agree to the increases set out for these Officers in the schedule. I feel that the sum of \$480 - £100 – would be an adequate increase in their annual salary at the end of 1948. It was only in April last that we passed a cost of living allowance which gave each of these Officers \$40 per month on his basic salary and when it is considered that they receive other benefits such as those I have already mentioned, I do not see why these large salary increases should be made. It may be said that we cannot get the technical Officers we require in this Colony but, on the other hand, what are we doing to get them? Only today the Acting Colonial Secretary laid on the table a reply to a petition which I tabled in this Council asking for a passage for a young Guianese student so that he could go abroad and study a profession which would qualify him to hold a responsible technical post in this Colony, but the request has been refused. The Government of India has given this student engineering scholarship tenable at a University in India but, unfortunately, he cannot afford the passage to India in order to take up the scholarship. Government, on the other hand, does not seem willing to provide the passage and yet we hear all this talk about shortage of technical Officers. Is it our intention only to raise the salaries and offer these posts to those individuals who can come from abroad? If that is not the intention then individuals in this Colony should be encouraged to go abroad and study these professions. It is true that a few scholarships have been given to local students, but when everything is taken into consideration they are not enough for the number of technical Officers we would need in a very short time. When this matter was discussed in Finance Committee we heard certain individuals saying that these posts were revised without regard or prejudice to the individuals concerned, yet one noticed that whether directly or indirectly certain personalities were kept in mind when the posts were being revised. That, I think, was unfair.

If I may name a couple of these individuals, I would mention the late Mr. Justice Luckhoo and the present Solicitor General who has just been appointed to a judgeship in Trinidad. They were pointed out as being very capable Officers and yet we find now that they would not be with us any longer. The posts have been revised, but who would fill them? Apart from that, what about the present holders of acting posts? The Governor is to have an increase of \$1200 per annum, plus free duty allowance as set out in Clause 5 of the Bill. Then, we see that the Colonial Secretary, Attorney-General, the Financial Secretary and Treasurer, the Director of Agriculture and other Officers are all down for increases. What is the reason? I wonder whether they are going to be replaced by Officers coming from Burma or Ceylon. The Director of Medical Services has certainly been given a very

handsome increase. I heard at a public meeting the other day the past history of this Officer being read and it seems that only a few years ago he was a Sanitary Inspector. There were other Officers here with the qualification he is now holding, yet we find that he was given a scholarship more or less – he was given a year's leave in order to qualify – and Government is going to increase his salary and his personal allowance by a total of over \$1900 per annum. If this Government intends to give scholarships to local students, I suggest that they should give a large number of them and when they return to the Colony they should work for salaries more comparable with those of the ordinary people. If the taxpayers are going to pay for their education, they should give service in *lieu* of it and they should serve for a long time instead of a few years only.

We have heard very many times about the shortage of administrative Officers; how are we going to get them? The argument is that we must increase the salaries and encourage brilliant people to come here, otherwise we would get second and third rate Officers. To my mind, if Government does not change its policy we would always be in a position where we would be short of the best men. Therefore it is not irrelevant when I suggest that we should give young Guianese students an opportunity to go abroad and qualify. When the Bill reaches the Committee stage, I propose to move that the total sum of £37,400 be reduced to £34,640 and that the schedule be amended accordingly.

The first item is "*The Governor.*" I should like to move an amendment that the salary be reduced from £4,500 to £4,350. I note from the Report of the Finance Committee that the Governor is in receipt at the present time of a salary of \$27,600 per annum. I feel that the present salary is really adequate for a Governor who has to administer a small Colony such as this. Apart from that, the Governor gets other facilities from the Colony such as a free house and certain allowances. Only a few months ago we were asked in Finance Committee to cover the cost of an air passage to the United Kingdom during leave, for even though a certain sum is allowed for free leave passages, apparently that was not enough for the Governor and therefore the Finance Committee was asked to pay the cost of the whole passage. I cannot remember what the figure was, but I am only pointing out these things to show how very generous the Finance Committee and this Council are to the top-ranking Officers including His Excellency the Governor, I do not know if we are going to lose the services of the Governor. Perhaps now that we have a Labour Government in England it would not be too difficult to get many more socialist Administrators in these Colonies - not only Governors but other high Officials. If a Socialist Government is going to send Officers to these parts, I do not see why they cannot send men from their own ranks - men like Mr. Bevin or Mr. Bevan who came from the ranks - to work for salaries like £6,000 or £7,000 per annum, including a Duty Allowance of £1,500 such as would be paid to the Governor. I think the Governor can well afford to live on the salary he is getting at present

and I do not know what the argument for the increase is in his case.

I have been hearing about the shortage of technical Officers and increase in the cost of living, but I want to find out from the Executive Council whose Members have increased the salaries of the Officers on this list, what is the reason for the increase in the Governor's salary. I hope that we would be told so that I would know how to vote on this issue. I cannot approve of these new scales and, consequently, I move that the Governor's salary be carried out at £4,350 instead of £4,500 as proposed in this Bill. I do not know whether I should speak on the other items now, Sir. I would like to move reductions also with respect to them.

Civil List - Amendment Bill: Wednesday September 14, 1949

Dr. Jagan: I would like to agree with the Hon. Member who has suggested the reduction of this salary. As he did that, it came to my mind what I read in the Report of the Boland Commission on the Enmore Enquiry that there was no competent officer in the Police Department who was well versed in the use of tear gas and tear smoke. Lately I saw the Commissioner of Police has been given leave and he is going to take some postgraduate course in the use of tear gas and tear smoke. I do not see the necessity for increasing the Commissioner's salary by £300 – his 1948 salary – and at the same time continue the personal allowance of \$480 per annum, when it is clearly stated in that Report that our Police Force has no competent officer. I agree with the Hon. Member when he stated he could not help looking at the individual presently holding the post. If he is not qualified what is the purpose of giving him more money? Do we contemplate the present officers resigning? Besides the benefits these officers get, I think the Commissioner gets a personal chauffeur who is also a policeman. The Police Officers – I do not know if the Commissioner is in that category - get larger benefits which ordinary members of the Service and people outside do not receive. I remember some time ago I tabled some questions here which were subsequently replied to, stating that police constables had to do menial tasks for officers. That is true even though the Government in its reply tried to "*white-wash*" that. It is being done today. Those are additional benefits there officers are getting, and I do not see why their salaries have to be increased to such a great extent. I am going to agree with the Hon. Member for Essequibo River (Mr. Lee) that this item be passed at £1,000 as he suggested.

Civil List - Amendment Bill: Friday September 16, 1949

Dr. Jagan: The figures are wrong to the extent that the Hon. Member added an extra amount equivalent to \$960 to the salary of the Director of Education, which is in addition to the \$480 which is now to be received. I think the explanation was, he was to receive \$480 and the \$960 he was receiving was to lapse, but I think he is adding both sums together. If you take £100 from the Director of Education, £100 from the Commissioner of Police and £150 from the Director of Medical Services you would have a sum of £350 as the total. If that is deducted from the sum of £37,400 we would have a sum of £37,050. If the Hon. Member accepts my amendment I would move it.

I quite agree with what the Hon. Member for Eastern Demerara (Mr. Debidin) has said about allowances. The Commission which was established and also the Committee of the Executive Council which was appointed to go into this question of salaries were to consider the whole matter in full detail and, I believe, when these salaries were revised due consideration was given to the fact that these posts were taken into consideration and nothing else, as far as I heard the remarks made by you, Sir. If I may be allowed to speak on each of these Officers who will now receive an allowance, let us take first of all the Director of Medical Services. He is to be given an allowance of \$720 as a specialist allowance. Now, Sir, it may be interesting for this Council to know that this Officer was provided leave of a year to go at this Colony's expense and get this specialist qualification. Now he will be receiving the same special allowance which other Officers are now going to get, but those other officers were not given the same advantages. There are qualified officers in that Department now - I believe there is one who has been acting Deputy Director and later as Director of Medical Services and is still acting as Deputy for over a year and, all during this time he had the D.P.H. degree. In fact I am told he had his D.P.H. specialist qualification when the present Director was only getting his qualification in medicine. So I am going to ask this Council whether we should agree to the injustice to those officers who had this qualification at their own expense and for a long number of years and are to receive the same allowance as an officer who really got his qualification at the taxpayers' expense. I cannot help saying that.

If Officers are allowed to go on their usual leave, the normal period is six months after four years' service. This Officer was given one year's leave to qualify and get his diploma. In Finance Committee we mentioned this same fact when discussing a Scholarship Allowance towards the travelling expenses and upkeep of an officer selected from the Audit Department,

because it is definitely favouritism. If Government is to pay the expenses towards a scholarship to allow officers to get certain qualifications, then those officers should not be given a specialist allowance as other officers who incurred and paid the expenses from their own pockets to get the same qualification. It is not fair and therefore, I heartily agree with the Hon. Member who proposed that this \$720 be removed because, as I said, this officer had the degree at the taxpayers' expense. He was fortunate in that he was appointed Director of Medical Services with a qualification which was lower than the qualification which other officers in the Department held. With respect to the Commissioner of Police ...

I would like to answer the Hon. the Colonial Secretary. If other officers have been given certain Government facilities, whether in assisted passages, or extended leave, or tuition fees, I certainly would agree that those officers should not get any extra amount, because I have been holding the view all along that what this Colony needs is more technical and medical officers who can only be got not by raising the salaries but by giving numerous scholarships and when the holders come back to this Colony we make them earn salaries in conformity with the wage-earners of this Colony. Several countries are doing that. I know when I was in the U.S.A., Persia, and Afghanistan had done that, and a gentleman has just told me that Mexico is adopting the same principle of giving scholarships to students and when they are finished that course they have to return and work for salaries which we are now fixing here. We are fixing the salary of the Director of Medical Services at £1,500 which is an increase on his salary of, I believe, £240 with an additional allowance. As the Hon. Member for Georgetown North (Dr. Nicholson) said, this officer was fortunate in being placed in that position when he did not have the specialist qualification of D.P.H. which is normally required for holding this post, when other officers in the Department had this qualification. Why was it necessary to appoint him? Then when this officer gets this qualification, which is more or less necessary for the holding of this post and that at Government expense, why should he receive a sum of £240 as an increase on his salary plus an extra amount, which is known as a -personal allowance, of \$720?

I cannot agree with this, and I feel that if this Council passes this amount, which is merely an allowance, Government should take into consideration certain personalities, because I believe in this case personality did come into the picture.

To return to the Commissioner of Police, the Hon. Member for Eastern Demerara (Mr. Debidin) said enough about this Department already and of the various advantages which this officer receives outside of his salary. He enumerated some of them - housing, a personal chauffeur in the form of a trained policeman. If the Commissioner needs a chauffeur, why does not Government offer him a chauffeur instead of his utilising a trained policeman? It costs the taxpayers money to train a policeman. Why the taxpayers' money should be wasted in this respect? The Hon. Member also

referred to the fact that he gets free housing.

Civil List- Amendment Bill: Thursday September 22, 1949

Dr. Jagan: I listened to the Hon. the Colonial Secretary. He has got the impression that we as members of this Council must not touch the "gods" who are listed in the Civil List at all. Apparently they are like the Pope; they can do no wrong and, therefore, we must not even say anything about them. He referred to the fact that if those individuals were to be subjected to pressures by Members of this Council and if they were put into a position where they would be subjected to political patronage, then a system would result in the Public Service that would be inefficient, degrading and corrupt. I do not agree with that entirely. There are countries, it is true, like the United States of America, where you do have a lot of corruption and degrading circumstances because of political patronage, but what the Hon. the Colonial Secretary did not state was on the other hand there are other disadvantages in a democracy where they do things as they like without criticism by members who are chosen by the people to voice and look after the people's welfare. The Hon. Member knows very well that in Great Britain when the Socialists came into power they had to deal with a conservative aristocratic Civil Service. The same can be said about here. We have no Party system, no Ministerial system here. We can only criticise. We come here but the Administration does what it likes... We can only advise and criticise, and in many cases our advice is not listened to. We have Advisory Committees, but the Hon. Member on my left (Mr. Fernandes) has several times mentioned here that those committees are a farce because the advice given is never taken. If that is so, if that is the type of Constitution we have, then we must have the right to get on our feet and say what we feel, whether it affects certain personalities, the Heads of Departments or not. These Heads of Departments have to administer the Colony as Government so desires, and if we feel it is not being done correctly we have the right to get up here and say it is not being done correctly. Only a few weeks ago we had a hue and cry over the Medical Department, the running of the public hospital. Are we, as Members of this Council, not privileged to come here and say what is being said outside about the administration of this country? We certainly have the right to do so.

When it comes to the question of these allowances I have to refer to them again. I am very glad that you have allowed this amendment. But speaking on the whole matter of allowances, I feel that the Commission and the Civil List Committee should have gone into the question very seriously and once and for all removed all these anomalies and all these acting allowances. If the individuals are not to be taken into consideration, as is being always said in this Council, then the posts must be considered and

salaries placed to fit those posts, and all individuals appointed should get those salaries and that alone. If we are to accept that principle how can the principle of allowances come into the picture? Certainly if the principle of allowances come into the picture, it means that individuals come into consideration. We are told not to take into consideration the individuals on the one hand and on the other hand they predominate the scene all the time. Reference has been made to the Director of Medical Services. It may be true and we take it to be true, as the Hon. the Colonial Secretary said, this gentleman had leave which was due him from another Colony and which had to be paid at the expense of this Colony apparently. I was not aware of that. But I know there are many persons in this Colony, even in the Medical Department - Doctors - who are trying to get away on long leave. They had been working all through the war years and want to pursue further studies too, but I do not see they are fortunate enough to get this extended leave and the leave which is due from other sources. Don't their days accumulate too? That is the point. That is why I said it seems to me preference is given in certain cases, even though the explanation that was given seemed to falsify or correct everything I have said.

When it comes to the Deputy Director of Medical Services, it may be true that he also got his specialist qualification through Government support. Therefore I am not suggesting that he also should get the allowance. I am accepting as a broad principle that if individuals get qualifications at the tax payers' expense they should be quite willing to serve the Colony at salaries which have some relationship to the salaries and wages the people receive. Therefore I cannot agree that when I made that point I was referring to all individuals. There are others who have got their qualifications but at their own expense, and certainly there should be some distinction between persons like those and the others. I do not want to go over this whole matter, because I have spoken at length on this issue. It may have been that I had spoken about certain individuals, but it could not have been helped because the individuals are tied up with the posts, and, to speak of the post even though you do not want to speak of the individuals, you necessarily have to speak of the individuals. The whole question of allowances to my mind should go, especially since this whole matter has been given a thorough revision.

Court of Criminal Appeal: Friday September 23, 1949

Dr. Jagan: Before speaking on this matter there is no doubt that most Members of this Council are agreed on the principles which are enunciated in these two motions. I believe it would have been proper if Government or the Hon. the Attorney-General had given to this Council the benefit of the discussions which may have taken place already in Executive Council on this matter, so that we could have been informed as to the necessity or otherwise for a fourth Judge. We have been hearing that there are numerous cases to be heard. We have also been hearing that lots of cases have to be postponed. But on the other hand we have heard from the Hon. Member for Eastern Demerara (Mr. Debidin) that many cases had to be postponed because a few, and the same, lawyers are recurring in every case with the result that those cases have to be postponed from time to time. It certainly would be good if this Council were to be given the information by Government, whether or not after due consideration was given to the facts it is necessary to have a fourth Judge, because we who are lay Members of this Council, who are not lawyers and do not practise at the Bar, do not know precisely what the true situation is. I hope when the Government Members speak on these motions we will be apprised fully on those facts.

(The President: To a point of correction! I did not check the information. The view of the Chief Justice is that it is necessary.)

Dr. Jagan: Apart from that, I think it should be borne in mind also that the jurisdiction of the Magistrates' Court has also been increased. Some time ago this Council increased the civil jurisdiction of the Magistrates' Court to allow cases up to \$250 to be heard. The Magistrates were permitted before then to hear cases only up to \$100. So many cases which were formerly heard in the Supreme Court will now be heard by the Magistrates, and a lot of the work which fell on the Supreme Court will now be carried out by the Magistrates. Aside from that, I think, the number of Magistrates will also be increased, and so this Council should give serious consideration to that matter in order to see whether or not a fourth Judge is still necessary. Another consideration which has to be given is to the expenditure which will be necessary if a fourth Judge is appointed. Perhaps the Judge will be appointed at a salary around £1,500 to £1,700 a year. Aside from that we will have to provide the note-takers who will be necessary, an additional clerk, an additional marshal, an additional orderly. Those are all additional expenditure which this Council should very keenly observe, especially since the cost of administration in this

Colony has risen and has been rising rapidly within the last few years. As I said I am not fully apprised of all the facts, but if the Government feels that a fourth Judge is necessary and can satisfy us, lay Members of this Council, that the situation warrants it, I am quite prepared to support it. So far as the court of Criminal Appeal is concerned, I definitely feel that is very necessary. Members have already elaborated on that fully; therefore I desire not to waste the Council's time but to indicate my wholehearted support of that Motion which seeks to give the right of appeal to a Court of Criminal Appeal.

Recruitment of Officers: Thursday October 6, 1949

Dr. Jagan: As I came into the Council I felt that this would be a very short day, because I felt that the Motion would have been accepted without any debate at all. It seems to me that what is sought in the resolution is so obvious that it hardly needs much talking about. There can be no doubt that in the ranks of the Police Force today there is a certain amount of dissatisfaction in the sense that an individual looking towards the future will see a future which is more or less dim and dismal because, with the exception of a few cases, he cannot see any hope of much promotion. At the same time he looks around him and sees young individuals being brought in from outside who have had no social training, and appointed as his superiors. I have listened with great interest to the statement that those individuals who are recruited from outside have educational qualifications. I am certain, as the Hon. Member who has just taken his seat said, that there are many young men with Junior and Senior Cambridge Certificates with no jobs at their disposal, who would be quite willing to enrol in the Police Force if they were assured of an opportunity to qualify for appointment as Asst. Superintendents, Warrant Officers, etc.

My friend (the President) here tells me that since 1943 Warrant Officers have been appointed from the ranks. I have listened with interest to the debate on the question of youth versus age and experience, and it seems to me that in all cases we place a premium on age and experience. Even in the nomination of Members to this Council Government considers men who are mature and experienced and hold a certain amount of rank and good standing in the community. I know that much has not been said in this Council, and I would hesitate to go into certain aspects which would tend to bring up a question which is not very – I do not know the right word.

It is a matter which is not very much discussed, but it is really in the minds of people. It is said that applicants for commissioned ranks must have certain qualifications. Formerly such individuals could only be obtained from abroad but, fortunately, they are now being found also in this country. As the Hon. Member for Georgetown Central (Mr. Fernandes) had said, many notable appointments have been made from local men, but I believe even that is not satisfactory, because there is some grumbling in the Force, especially among the rank and file, that there is a certain amount of racial discrimination in the appointment of these officers. I did not want to bring this matter up but it seems to me that it has been avoided during the whole debate, therefore I want to be specifically understood. I believe that may have been one of the reasons which impelled the Hon. Member to bring this Motion.

The rank and file of the Police Force are disgruntled because they find that individuals who may be fortunate in having connections are brought from outside merely because they may have a School Certificate or a little higher qualification. If the rank and file were told that they could get those positions I am sure that they would qualify themselves. Unfortunately, many of them suffer from pigmentation of skin, and I believe that is one reason why the Motion has been brought in the form it has been. The feeling among the rank and file is that these posts are being given to a certain racial group only, and I believe that if this Motion is accepted without any amendment there would be greater satisfaction in the Force. The men would know that by sheer hard work, application to duty, research and the various other things which are necessary for promotion, they would be eligible for the higher posts, and I believe that we would have a better Police Force with improved morale and a credit to the community.

Motion - Subsidisation Measures: Friday October 7, 1949

Dr. Jagan: Sir, I think I shall begin by stating in the words of the Hon. Member for New Amsterdam (Mr. Kendall), that I am also forced to accept this Motion. I think this Council can do nothing else at this time but accept this Motion. The Hon. Mover of the Motion said it would not be an instrument of policy in referring to subsidisation as only a stop gap measure, a breathing space, and the Hon. Member for Georgetown Central (Mr. Fernandes) in a perhaps nice way said we may have to administer a couple of aspirin tablets. I hope we will not have to administer too many doses of aspirin in the future, lest the patient succumbs from a heart attack. One Hon. Member, I think it is the Member for Western Demerara, (Dr. Singh) said that devaluation was an aftermath of the Second World War, but I think it is more than that. It can be said that devaluation is the outcome and result of the bankrupt policy which is now advocated and which is now being carried on by the Labour Government in Great Britain. I know, Sir, several months ago I made a statement in this Council that Great Britain and the Colonies were fast becoming outposts of the American Empire and, Sir, the day has now come when that statement has borne fruit, because slowly and surely Great Britain and particularly so the Colonies will now become vassals of the great and huge American Empire and that, Sir, is due chiefly to the fact that the Labour Government in England is pursuing this policy which hinges around the dollar. I have some figures which I would like to quote, so that Members of this Council would see that even though certain essential things are necessary from dollar areas other things not vitally necessary are still being purchased in huge quantities from the dollar areas. We quite realise that certain items like machinery are necessary for the modernisation of Britain's industries in order to bring her up to the same productive level as the United States and those items have to be obtained from the dollar areas. But unfortunately many other items which can be obtained from other countries and which can be obtained by making bilateral agreements with those countries are not being pursued because everything, as I have said before hinges round the almighty dollar.

You would pardon me if I digress to go further into this issue because, as I see it, there is no use this Council discussing this matter unless we are able to speak broadly on this whole issue of devaluation. Otherwise we have to accept the proposal which has been set out in the Message, Sir, and merely accept it at that without saying anything on it. But it seems to me that, constituted as we are, a Crown Colony and since everything that happens in England is sent to us in this Colony for adoption without our having to say anything about it, it is right and proper that Members of this

Council should in some way, if it is necessary, criticise the policy of the Home Government since it affects this Colony so greatly. Taking the figures for the first seven months of 1948 and comparing them with the figures of 1949, I see that in the United Kingdom the imports of cheese were increased from 209,000 lbs to 7,383,000 lbs; lard from 66 lbs to 2,357,000 lbs; milk powder from 7,000 lbs to 244,000 lbs; meat from 45,000 lbs to 910,000 lbs; other foods from 541,000 lbs to 5,239,000 lbs. taking some other items like motor spirits, that was increased from 6,454,000 to 10,000,000 gals; raw cotton was increased from 14,000,000 to 29,000,000 lbs.

Now, Sir, it may be said, if those items are necessary for the maintenance of the economy of Great Britain, then they have to be obtained from those sources, but fortunately other sources are available. Only recently we have seen that the British Government signed a bilateral agreement with Argentine whereby Great Britain will be able to get meat. Great Britain can do the same with other areas too, and in fact the United Nations European Economic Commission which was set up to investigate the trade between Eastern and Western Europe emphasise in their report that trade between them can be multiplied about five times, and many of those items which Great Britain was importing and is presently importing can be obtained from other areas. For instance, Sir, it was reported that the imports from the Soviet Union and the countries of Eastern Europe fell from 24,600,000 in the first half of 1948 to 22,400,000 in the first half of this year. Many items can be obtained from Eastern European countries, but apparently because it does not suit American interests the British Government seems satisfied to forego that advantage to maintain her present relationship with the dollar area. Great Britain, Sir, can make other arrangements; other arrangements are economically possible but it is said that those arrangements are politically undesirable. That brings in very broad issues, because the U.S. Marshall Aid group do not want to see in those countries, in which there is a great deal of nationalisation, a great deal of planned economy trade between them and the Western countries of Europe.

But the problem resolves itself around the fact that we have also arranged our economy to integrate with the economy of Great Britain, and consequently we are forced to accept the major policy which is advocated by the Home Government. Sir, reference is made to wheat. We have to buy large quantities of wheat from the hard currency area. I have read, Sir, only recently that at a Wheat Conference held, I believe, at the beginning of this year the Soviet Union offered to make available to the Wheat Pool a total of 2,670,000 tons of wheat.

I have been hearing all along "*Let us increase production.*" But when we increase production we have not the means of disposal of the stuff. We have to throw it away. Soon we may be faced with the proposition of removing the guaranteed prices to farmers, if that is not already being contemplated. Those things affect us. One Hon. Member referred to creating tariff barriers. Other Members felt that it would not be & good thing. Those

are things we have to think about in trying to balance our economy, in trying to see that the best results are obtained here; but unfortunately, as the Economic Adviser has told us many times, what is happening abroad has some relationship with us, and we cannot close our eyes to those things. Take a simple product like potatoes. One Member referred to the fact that the imported article is cheaper than the local one can be sold for. Are we to be interested in how potatoes are produced at such low cost, and why? Must we not find out whether as a policy we should put barriers to those things and what are the various implications? That is why I was going to the broader issues in order to suggest that a change should take place from the top in the policy of the Home Government.

Sir, I see that what I have to say about matters, which affect broad issues are not very palatable and, therefore, I shall restrict my talk merely to the usual humdrum things over which we have very little control, which fluctuate with the times and which, I believe, will not affect very materially the economy of this country. Let us take increased production. We have been talking about restricting the importation of salt fish from the dollar areas especially. But there comes the question again of whether it would be economic to produce salt fish in this country. I have read a report by some gentleman who came here some time ago and looked into the fish industry, and he said it would be more costly. It is more costly to produce yams and potatoes and, therefore, let us allow potatoes to come in. It is too costly for other things to be produced in comparison with the goods which are coming from outside, therefore let us refer back to the one main crop - sugar. Let us rotate around that and continue to buy our goods from abroad. Sir, it seems to me that unless this Government is prepared to make some radical changes - when I say radical changes I mean radical changes in land policy, radical changes in land settlement, radical changes in machinery, mechanisation - we are only drifting and our economy will only be intertwined with the economies of foreign countries, economies over which we have no control. I am suggesting this is only as stop gap measure.

I quite agree that it has to be done but, unfortunately, every time there is a crisis abroad we have to come back to this Council and vote an additional sum, because the policies we are pursuing today and unfortunately the policies pursued by the Home Government will not lead us to a balanced economy. Hon. Members have referred to balanced economy. What has happened to our secondary or minor industries? They are all dead. We are going to produce some more timber, maybe diamonds, gold and bauxite. We are going to get dollars. Whereas we may sell more and do not get full value we may still get some amount of dollars in the end. I have no other representation to make but to accept this proposal of the Hon. the Colonial Treasurer and to say that in doing so I have no constructive plan to offer so far as the economy of this Colony is concerned, because the economy of this Colony is not controlled by this Legislative Council. That is the reason why I wanted to bring in the other issues. I feel that we should endeavour

to present a concrete plan to this Council and see that it is adopted to improve and balance the economy of this country.

Motion-Minimum Wage: Thursday October 13, 1949

Dr. Jagan: I desire to move the following Motion:

“Whereas the Cost of Living Survey Committee Report revealed that in 1942 Georgetown working class families were earning \$7.41 and expending \$8.23 per week and were living under conditions of overcrowding and malnutrition;

“And Whereas the incidents of crime and delinquency has been increasing since 1938 despite the fact that the present rates of wages are increases on the 1938 wages in direct proportion to the rise of the Cost of Living Index figures;

“And Whereas the Trades Union Council has repeatedly passed resolutions to the effect that a minimum wage of \$2.00 per day is essential for providing working class families with the necessary purchasing power to acquire the barest necessities for a decent standard of living;

“Be It Resolved that Government enact a minimum wage law for a payment of a minimum wage of \$2.00 for all Government Departments and Institutions, and all commercial and industrial establishments employing more than ten persons.”

In speaking on this Motion – asking Government to provide legislation for a minimum wage of \$2.00 per day – I will recall, Sir, that I raised this point on several occasions in the past. I am very sorry this Motion was not brought forward before because it has to be fully discussed at this time whereas very much of the ground has already been covered. I am quite sure it will be very difficult at this time for Government to implement a measure such as this, especially since we have had to deal recently with the large issue of salaries and wages for Government employees, and just a few days ago we have to stabilise certain prices involving expenditure to the extent of \$200,000. I feel this Council would be doing the right thing in taking the opportunity now of the situation as it exists and in seeing if some remedy could be affected within the very near future. I realize, Sir, that any issue such as this – asking that a minimum wage be set up – will necessarily be a very complicated one and that a great deal of consideration will have to be given to it. I suppose that by this time Government has considered the matter in all its various aspects but, Sir, there is one point

which I do not think I can overemphasise and that is, the great majority of the working-class people in this Colony are today living in subnormal conditions. I feel that this Council should be reminded of that fact so that an attempt could be made to effect some remedy of the whole situation. In the preamble of the Motion I have stated that:

“WHEREAS the Cost of Living Survey Committee Report revealed that in 1942 Georgetown working class families were earning \$7.41 and expending \$8.23 per week and were living under conditions of overcrowding and malnutrition;

“AND WHEREAS the incidents of crime and delinquency has been increasing since 1938 despite the fact that the present rates of wages are increases on the 1938 wages in direct proportion to the rise of the Cost of Living Index figures;

Now, Sir, it would be wise perhaps to elaborate on these two preambles so that Hon. Members would be fully aware of the situation. I have already quoted from this report – the report of the Cost of Living Survey Committee – Leg. Co. Paper No. 6 of 1943 – in this Council and I would not do so today as fully as I have done before. There are, however, a few salient points which I should like to be given consideration. As I have already stated, the average weekly income of a working-class family in 1942 was \$7.41 and that was made up as follows: Earning - \$6.21; Allowance for support of children – 42c; Loans, Pensions and Poor Relief – 20c; Rent received by member of household- 8c; and Other sources of income – 50c. This total - \$7.41 – is for a whole week and for a family of 4.8 persons. Lately, a Committee which has been set up decided to increase wages to \$1.52 a day for male workers in the City of Georgetown after taking into consideration the fact that the cost of living index figure had risen to over 200 points – an increase of some 10 or 12 points within recent months. I believe that Committee overlooked the fact that even though it was trying to bring up wages in proportion to the increase in the cost of living, in 1942 and even further back – to 1938 – the standard of living of the people was necessarily very low, and therefore the rates of wages existing then could not even be said to have been in proportion with the low standard of living which prevailed at that time. Secondly, Sir, I should like to point out that the conditions under which the people were living in 1938 were reduced, as the Committee more or less admitted, so that the wages which they are getting today would only give them the same standard of living which obtained in 1938. Further, there is an expenditure column set out in this report and it shows that the expenses of a working-class family amounted to \$8.23 per week. Of this amount, \$4.58 is set aside for food. Dr. Francis then Acting Director of Medical Services, was asked to comment on the nutrition aspect of this

report and on page 21 he says:

".....Apart from deficiency in total calories the food in several families may show remarkable deficiency in variety and may be wanting in many indispensable ingredients."

This, in simple language, means that the people were not getting enough to eat and were not getting a variety of food within indispensable ingredients – calories such as calcium and others necessary for a healthy life. There is another item – clothing – on which expenditure amounted to \$1.07 per week. This was for 4.8 persons and it means that these people were living in slum conditions. In fact, the report goes to show that as many as 10 or 12 persons were living in a single tenement room. This resulted from the fact that in many cases two or three families had to pool their resources in order to live. So far as fuel and light are concerned, the expenditure was only 47c. This means that many of these individuals could not enjoy the benefits of electricity and had to make use of makeshift fuel and so on. There is also a sub-head dealing with "Expenditure on other items" and these amount to \$1.04 per week. For instance, we have: "Doctor, medicine, etc. – 4c; Education (including tuition fees, school books etc.) – 4c; Fares (Bus, car, railway, ferry) – 3c; Newspapers, magazines, etc. – 3c; Sports, games, etc. – 3c; Subscriptions, payments, etc. (including church, club, trade union subscription, insurance and hire purchase payments, repayments of loans, wages of domestic help, etc.) – 15c; Tobacco – 11c; Toilet requisites, etc. – 7c; Allowances to dependants living away – 10c; Soap, soda, starch – 16c; Other items (including brooms, cycle accessories, poultry feed) – 7c; Alcoholic drinks, mineral waters, etc. – 11c.

I do not want to comment fully on each of these items because Hon. Members would, I am sure, realise that these amounts are wholly inadequate and members of these families in many cases must have had to forego expenditure on some of these things in order to meet their demands on others. In many instances they said they could not afford to spend on certain of these items. This clearly shows, Sir, that the wages now fixed- taking into consideration the increase in the cost of living as compared with 1938 - cannot provide the necessities which working-class families need to keep them in a healthy state so that they could work as healthy members of the community - so that they could give of their best in productive enterprises and so that they would not crowd our institutions such as the hospitals, the T.B. sanatorium and others through becoming prey of various diseases if they are not in a proper state of nutrition.

Now, Sir, another question which may be asked is whether Government can afford to pay a minimum wage of \$2 per day and whether commercial or industrial concerns can afford to do likewise. So far as Government is

concerned, I feel there should be no difficulty whatever in meeting such an expenditure; and so far as commercial and industrial enterprises are concerned, I feel that even they can afford at the present time to pass these wages. I have before me, Sir, a copy of the memorandum which I submitted to the Venn Commission with respect to the sugar industry.

I propose to give some figures to show that the largest industry in this country is in a position today to pay this wage. Other industries, like the bauxite industry, can also afford to do so. The report of the Department of Labour for 1946-1947 shows the resident male piece workers on sugar estates earned an average of \$1.74 per day, while nonresident piece workers earned \$1.89 per day. Nonresident time workers earned an average of 86c per day and young persons 56c per day. Skilled workers in the sugar factories earned an average of \$8.61 per week. From those figures it may appear that the sugar industry may not be able to afford to pay a minimum wage of \$2 per day, but I was fortunate in getting some figures of production costs which I was able to submit to the Sugar Commission, and on the basis of those figures I can prove, or attempt to prove, that the present wages can be doubled, even with the fixed prices for sugar which are obtaining.

In my memorandum I tried to show the cost of production of one acre of cane, taking into consideration every category of worker, and taking the average of four years- the first crop and three rations- to give the average for one year, and the figures which I arrived at were as follows: Expenditure - machinery and other capital charges, 33.28 per acre; Wages paid to labourers with cost of living allowance, \$86.89. Yield, which I estimated for one acre of cane, taking the price which was paid for farmers' cane, amounted to \$243 per acre. That yielded a surplus value of 142 per cent. Translated into simple language that means that an average worker working on a sugar estate on a 10-hour day basis works four hours per day for the wage he receives, and during the other six hours he produces surplus profit for his employees. So that if we take the figures supplied by the Labour Department of \$1.74 per day for resident male piece workers and \$1.89 per day for nonresident male piece workers, we can see that on the basis of that rate of surplus profit the sugar industry can afford to pay a minimum wage of \$2 per day.

I have given these figures because I anticipate that the argument will be that the sugar industry cannot afford to pay a minimum wage of \$2 per day. I am not going to burden the Council by referring to other industries, but I feel sure that, with the help of Government, industries like the sugar industry will be able to seek long-term agreements at stabilised prices, and maybe at increased prices, and therefore will be able to pay a minimum wage of \$2 per day.

Another aspect of the question, which is referred to in the preamble of the Motion, is the increase of crime and delinquency in the community. Almost every day we read in the newspapers of thefts and housebreaking. If individuals in the community cannot get sufficient wages they will seek

other sources to satisfy their needs. It is costing Government quite a lot of money to maintain the prisons. I remember some time ago quoting figures in this Council which showed that it was costing Government \$470 per annum to keep one person in prison, whereas at the present rates of wages Government was only paying \$418 a year to an ordinary worker who works 5½ days per week. We therefore have the aspect of a family earning less than it costs to keep one person in prison for a year. Such a state of affairs is alarming, and I feel that we should do everything in our power to stop this tendency towards crime and delinquency. I commend the Motion to Members of the Council and I hope they will see the necessity of recommending to Government the introduction of a minimum wage law.

In replying to the various speeches which have been made I wish first of all to thank Hon. Members for their expressions of interest in those workers whom I seem to have excluded in my Motion - those people who are employed by small concerns which one Hon. Member referred to as "*sweat-shops*." I definitely had those people in mind, but I anticipated that argument would be raised as to the ability of those small concerns to pay a general minimum wage. For that reason I thought we should start with the big establishments first, and then the others would follow automatically. But I definitely agree with the views expressed on that score: that there are certain concerns which employ less than 10 persons, paying them \$3 and \$4 per week. Such employees definitely need protection. I therefore ask that in the Resolution of my Motion the words "*employing more than ten persons*" be deleted.

The Motion will read as printed, except for the deletion of the words "*employing more than ten persons*". I am very grateful for the support Hon. Members have given my Motion, and I quite realise the disadvantage to employees in small concerns if the Motion was passed as today. Very eloquent argument in favour of collective bargaining has been made, and we have been told that we must follow the example of the United Kingdom. I quite agree, but in copying legislation or taking the lead from the United Kingdom we must at all times be sure that we have similar conditions prevailing in this country. In the United Kingdom the workers have a history of trade unionism extending over nearly two centuries. We in this country are very young, very immature so far as trade union development is concerned, and if there was no necessity for a minimum wage law in Great Britain it shows that the Trade Boards or Unions set up there are effective enough to handle the situation, and to argue for and on behalf of the workers. As the Hon. Member for Eastern Demerara (Mr. Debidin) said, we do not have such conditions in this Colony.

If a Motion was brought to this Council for the introduction of legislation for a Closed Shop - to compel all industrial undertakings to employ only persons who are members of a trade union, we would probably have many individuals objecting. The preamble to the Motion sets out the case of the Trades Union Council of British Guiana. If those Unions which are

members of the Trades Union Council were effective in their collective bargaining the Council would not have had the necessity to pass a Resolution year after year at the annual May Day demonstrations on the Parade Ground, asking Government to legislate for a minimum wage of \$2 per day. One Hon. Member referred to the proposal as class legislation, but I believe that he is rather hazy as to what is really referred to as class legislation.

But surely it cannot be said that what is the minimum is easily accepted as the maximum. I do not accept that argument at all. The Hon. Member for Georgetown Central (Mr. Fernandes) has pointed out that because of the advantages which were being taken over the watchmen, Government saw it fit to introduce a minimum wage for watchmen. It is for the same reason we accept the principle of a minimum wage law and feel that Government should set up such a minimum that all industries and undertakings could start from there but not necessarily stop there. Today in the U.S.A. there is a 65c per hour minimum wage law, but that does not mean to say General Motors Company or Ford Company or the Steel Undertakings stop there and that there is not a wage which extends to \$1, \$1.50 and \$2 per hour. If there is a minimum wage it does not necessarily follow that it will become the maximum. It is true that in this country wages are so low, as the Hon. Member has pointed out, in these "*sweat-shops*" that \$2 a day does look like a great sum. As the Hon. Member has said, a wage of \$2 per working day only means about \$44 to \$45 a month, which is really a small wage which a worker needs to support his family and cannot do with less. However much I agree with this matter being gone into by a committee, I see that the necessity for it is urgent and, therefore, I do not see that a committee, which might take a year or two years deliberating this matter, will solve this problem.

Another Hon. Member referred to increased production. It seems that these words "*increased production*" have become a panacea for all our economic ills whenever we have a problem to face. Take major industries like the sugar industry, or the bauxite industry, it is not that the workers are not producing at their maximum and therefore must produce more; for their productivity to be increased modern methods have to be brought into the picture. How are they to be brought? If we are going to accept the theory, as they have accepted it in certain countries - Japan - that it is cheaper to employ people to load the ships from the cargo station than by machinery - if we are going to employ the same means in this country, the worker cannot be blamed for low productivity. It is for the employers, the industrial captains, to introduce those measures and, as my friend, the Hon. Member for Eastern Demerara (Mr. Debidin), has said, when those and various other things are introduced in the economic system of this country then productivity of the workers will be increased, and we want to be assured that those capitalists will not take advantage of increased productivity in not giving increased wage. So, Sir, I quite agree that production must be

increased, but the workers must not always be blamed for not increasing production. They are working at the maximum really for the small wages they get; they are giving quite adequate service and cannot be expected to give any more as their bodies cannot stand it. The increased productivity of the worker can only come about when this whole issue is tackled on a big basis, when industry is mechanised.

In the meanwhile, I am suggesting that a minimum wage law is necessary to protect the living standards of the working people of the country. We have to see that they live decently and in healthy surroundings. Even the things that are produced today we must be assured will not be curtailed. I hope this Motion will meet with the acceptance of Members of this Council. The principle is definitely sound. Minimum wage does not necessarily mean it will be the maximum; it only means a certain point from which the labour organisations will have their hands strengthened to continue collective bargaining.

Base Buildings for School Purposes: Wednesday November 9, 1949

Dr. Jagan: What I was anxious to hear was that Government realises the need not only for educational facilities to be provided, but for other things which it appears Government is always willing to concede. I believe that what we are interested in, in this Council, is not only an admission that the need exists, but that some effort will be made to see what can be done about that need. As the Hon. Member has said, even if those buildings last only a few years they will have satisfied the temporary need which is very urgent.

I have already quoted some figures in this Council which I obtained from the Director of Education. Some time ago I wrote asking him to tell me what were the normal requirements of the schools in my constituency, the number of places which each school provided, and the numbers on roll, and it appeared from the figures I received, which I am sorry I have not with me at the moment, that in every school there was overcrowding to the extent of 1½ to twice the normal capacity. A few months ago a school was erected in Campbellville, and two months after it had an enrolment of 500 pupils. That will give an idea of the extent of the overcrowding in the schools in that area. The Hon. Member has suggested that some of those buildings at Atkinson Field might be placed alongside existing school buildings or nearby, and I agree with him that there is urgent need on that score. I know of one district in which the people have petitioned Government to no avail. In the Ressenouvenir- Chateau Margot section there is a large population, and the children have to travel long distances to the schools. Some go to the L.B.I. school, and others to the school at Vryheid's Lust. In many cases those children have to cross trenches over which planks are placed, and at one point on the sleepers of the railway which are laid across a trench - a very dangerous procedure.

The Hon. Member also referred to the school at Port Mourant which has a normal capacity for between 300 and 400 pupils, but is at present accommodating over 600, and many pupils have to be taught in the open. In fact it is referred to as the "*Tamarind Tree School*" because many of the children have to sit under a tamarind tree. There is also a school at Hague backdam, the roof of which leaks at all times when it rains. Those are conditions which are not satisfactory. If Government recognises the urgent need for more schools here is an opportunity which it should grasp so as to alleviate those conditions immediately.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary made a statement to the effect that all the buildings at Atkinson Field could not be handed over to the Education Department immediately, because there are other Departments which have

needs, as for instance the Medical Department. We know that there is need for buildings at the Best Hospital and for residences for doctors, and there is no doubt that many of those buildings could be utilised for those purposes. What I think the Hon. Mover had in mind is that none of those buildings should be sold. I do not think he would object to other Departments having priority, but what he objects to is the advertisement calling for tenders which would permit those buildings to be sold. In my opinion they should be allocated to the various Government Departments. I believe the barracks referred to by the Mover are quite suitable for conversion into school buildings, and that they would not be very much required by other Departments.

As the Hon. Member for New Amsterdam (Mr. Kendall) suggested, I should have liked the Director of Education to be here to give us his views, not only on the urgent need for school buildings, but whether those buildings at Atkinson Field could be utilised, even for a period of five years, and how much it would cost to remove them. We have been told that it would not be practicable, but I think figures should be given to show what it would cost to remove them, and what sum it is proposed to sell them for. If they have already served a period of 7 years of an estimated life of 10 years, then certainly they cannot be worth very much. If they are not very valuable we would not be losing very much if we used them for a short time. I hope that some figures will be given to show whether it is really impracticable to utilise those buildings for educational purposes.

Grant to Trades Union Council: Wednesday November 9, 1949

Dr. Jagan: I know that this matter has been fully discussed in Finance Committee, but I thought that since Government is very much in favour of this Motion we would have had a complete debate of this issue – a proposal that \$1,250 should be expended from the Colony's funds to send a delegate to this Conference. I would have liked to hear what are the views of Government in bringing this matter for discussion here this afternoon. So far, no reason has been given. When this matter was brought up in the Finance Committee, the Hon. Mover of this Motion was asked what would be the purpose of this visit by a delegate from this Colony and he simply intimated that it would lend imperial support to this organization which is now being formed. I should have liked that statement to be fully elaborated in the Council so that we could see whether in giving imperial support to a trade union or any other organisation we are throwing away the taxpayer's money. I, Sir, feel very hurt about the things which are happening in this country and in this Council particularly. Only a few minutes ago we turned down a Motion – a very admirable Motion which I feel should have been passed by this Council – for the simple reason that we need money – and we need to look after many things, particularly those dealing with education. We have not got money to educate children, but we can send a Trade Union delegate to England and rifle team to Bisley. Let Government say that would be achieved by the expenditure of this money; surely no explanation has been given. Government recognises the need for education as it does with respect to many other things.

The other day when the Minimum Wage Bill – seeking a minimum wage of \$2.00 per day for unskilled workers – was considered in this Council, Government said it recognised the need for such a thing. In other words, people are starving in this country since they cannot afford to eat properly. I feel very strongly against this Motion simply because I see that no purpose would be served by wasting this money. This matter was discussed in Finance Committee and, as the Hon. Mover mentioned it was passed by nine votes to seven. Later the same day, however, two other Members who were not present when the voting took place stated that they were against the Motion. They were the Hon. Member for New Amsterdam and the Hon. Member for Berbice River. The Hon. Member for Western Berbice, if I remember rightly, also said he was against the Motion; so that in fact there were nine Members "for" and ten "against" it. Government, however, having found out what were the views of the Members of this Council have sought to bring this matter again before us.

I remember that about two weeks ago the Hon. Mover of the Motion

indicated that he intended to bring the matter up here and I suggested to him that that would have been of no use because he was aware that the majority of Members were really and truly against the proposal. He replied "*You have forgotten the Official Members of the Council.*" There again, because of the nature of our Constitution, he was able to say that. If a few Members vote as a minority, then the Official Members can readily lend their weight to them and turn the table on the other side. In this matter, if the Official section feels so strongly I would like to hear the real grounds on which this Motion would be passed and this expenditure approved. Perhaps it would be good at this time when so much is being said of free trade unionism and non-British Trade Unionism that the Members of this Council be made aware of what is taking place and also from what representative body it is proposed to send a delegate. I noticed that this Motion says:

"...to enable a representative of the Council to attend the Free World Labour Conference to be held at London in November, 1949."

Now, Sir, I would like to know why are the words "*Free World Labour Conference*" used here. Why have they been put in this Motion? Is it to fool the Members of this Council or, as one Hon. Member suggested in Finance Committee to further the aims of the Cold War that is now going on and to divide the World Trade Union movement into two classes – to allow the working-class people to be fooled and dominated by a certain section who are now stressing the words "*Free World Labour Conference*"? Has Government given this Conference its final blessing? If so, why doesn't it come out and say so? I have a booklet before me which deals with this whole question of the World Federation of Trade Unions and this new organisation to be formed now. This booklet is called "*Wreckers*" and it comes from no less an authority than the people who are organising the Conference which is now being called the Free World Labour Conference.

It has been published by the *Daily Worker* and printed in Great Britain. Before I quote from this booklet, however, I would like to ask what has become of the other labour conference to which we sent two delegates whom this Government lent money, and which money has not been repaid to this day. Further, I would like to know what has the Colony gained from the expenditure of this money. That World Trade Union Conference is now supposed to be a communist-dominated body of trade unions, and now it is proposed to form another movement. As one Hon. Member mentioned in France, we are now being asked to support the new Conference - the Free World Labour Conference - and not expose the capitalists and those supporting them.

I will quote now from an article in *Wreckers* by George Sinfield, who writes:

“Under the heading ‘W.F.T.U Not Soviet Tool’ the Daily Herald reported the following news item on July 21, 1948:

“Vigorous denial that the World Federation of Trade Unions was acting as a tool of Soviet imperialism was made by Mr. Arthur Deakin at the International Transport Worker’s Federation Congress in Oslo yesterday. Mr. Deakin, General Secretary of the British Transport and General Worker’s Union, and President of the World Federation of Trade Unions, said:

“I am one of the leaders of the W.F.T.U. and very far from being a communist. I take no orders from Moscow.”

“That was in July, but less than two months later, to be exact, September 8, Mr. Deakin, speaking at the Margate Trade Union Congress, bitterly attacked the W.F.T.U. and accused it of being ‘nothing more than another platform and instrument for the furtherance of Soviet policy.’”

Here is a gentleman who, as the President of the T.U.C. in Great Britain and President of the W.F.T.U., on the 21st July, 1948, denied that the W.F.T.U. was a communist organisation, but on September 8, less than seven weeks after, he discovered that the organisation had suddenly become communist. I am bringing out these issues because we must not be fooled by the propaganda which is going out that we are sending some body to England simply because we want to fight communism. Regardless of our private views on this matter, we must ask ourselves whether any real purpose would be achieved by the expenditure of this money. I cannot see that any purpose would be achieved. Our delegate may go there and listen, and we all know what these big conferences are like. Small people from the Colonies really have little voice, and are merely lookers-on. Are we going to allow ourselves to be caught in this tide which is now sweeping the world – this tide towards another war? What are we going to gain from it all? I can see that we have nothing to gain.

This sum of money can be spent much more usefully right here in this Colony. The Hon. Member has said that it would be a moral force, but the moral force in what respect? A moral force in dividing the trade union movement of the world, or in dividing the working-class organisations of the world. Is that what Government is sponsoring or supporting? The T.U.C. in England is the sponsor of this Free World Labour Conference, but what is it doing for the trade union movement in Great Britain? What is it doing to see that we have real trade unionism in this Colony? What is it doing to see that we have real collective bargaining in this country? Nothing. But we must send a delegate to the conference at the Colony’s expense, simply because the T.U.C. and wreckers like Deakin are sponsoring another Federation which will really wreck the working-class people’s organisation in

the world.

I cannot help mentioning it again in this Council, that only a few months ago I appealed to the Executive Council by petition that Government should defray the expenses of a student who had been selected by the Government of India for an engineering scholarship, but Government turned it down, despite the fact that the Governor and other officers of the Government have cried out at all times that we need technicians in this Colony. When it came to helping that student to go abroad and qualify as an engineer, of which this Colony is badly in need, we find Government unwilling to give its support, not even by way of alone. I have other instances which I can give. Many things are vitally necessary in this Colony. Schools are urgently required, and the people in my constituency are wallowing in mud; they have no roads. The people at Industry, for instance, have been trying to get Government to make roads for them for a long time, but no roads are being made. We need every penny we can save. If we have money to waste then let us reduce taxation. We should not allow wasteful expenditure of this kind.

Only a few months ago two representatives from the Trades Union Council were selected to go to Barbados where they received advanced training for the furtherance of trade unionism in this Colony. They have come back and given a few - unfortunately very few - lectures, but apart from those two or three lectures, what have those two gentlemen done? They have probably gained very valuable knowledge from that course of study in Barbados. I think we should creep before we try to walk. Let us not worry about these international conferences, but try to impart the knowledge we already have to those who have not that knowledge. Let those gentlemen impart the knowledge they have imbibed at the course they attended, and from the textbooks they have read and the numerous reports they have received from the various conferences for the benefit of the people of this country. We should not merely send a delegate to add a moral force in perpetuating the Cold War which is now going on, and in dividing the working class movements of the world.

I hope that Hon. Members will stick to their guns and not change their views now that the matter has been brought forward in open Council. I know that on many occasions Members of this Council have somersaulted. I recall one issue in which a proposal to send Mr. Gordon to Africa was turned down in Finance Committee, but it was brought up again. That seems to be familiar tactics by Government, and the same thing has happened in this case.

Grant to Trades Union Council: Thursday November 10, 1949

Dr. Jagan: As I look at the minutes I see we had two amendments introduced yesterday. Another one has been introduced today by the Hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Roth. So far as the first amendment is concerned - that a representative he appointed by Government - that representative being a member of the Trade Unions of this country, I feel that is really not the correct procedure, because in a matter like this if any delegate is to be sent it should be left to the Trade Unions themselves to make that selection. So far as the second amendment is concerned - that a free grant be given to the B.G. Labour Union - it seems to me that most of the Members of this Council who opposed the original Motion, opposed it and in its place proposed that one particular individual - Mr. Critchlow who is really the father of Trade Unionism in this country - should actually be chosen. Therefore it seems to me that even this second amendment will not really receive the favour of the majority of the Members of this Council.

A third amendment which was introduced specifically named a certain person, Mr. Critchlow, as the one who should be voted this sum of money so that he could proceed to England. I feel that is really an important amendment but before we decide on it - and it seems to me that the majority of the Members of this Council are willing to support it - we must turn over in our minds, as the Hon. Member for Eastern Demerara has stated, the question whether in choosing this particular gentleman we would not be sacrificing an important principle, as even the Colonial Secretary mentioned yesterday.

The T.U.C., as we all know, is the parent body in this Colony and the British Guiana Labour Union is merely an affiliate of it. Therefore, if we are to send anybody an individual from the T.U.C. could certainly be selected, otherwise it would create a precedent and cause a lot of trouble - wrangling in the other unions - apart from the T.U.C. and so on. Furthermore, I know that the Assistant Secretary of the B.G. Labour Union is in Great Britain at the present time on a scholarship. Information has come to the effect that he has just left for home, but I am not quite sure whether that is true. It seems to me that when these two organisations - the T.U.C. and the B.G. Labour Union - received the invitation from this Conference they should have cabled their representative who was in England at the time and got him to stay back until it was decided whether he should attend, rather than allowing this Government to incur a lot of expense as is now proposed. This sum of money, as I pointed out yesterday, may be considered small, but I know that a lot of other uses can be made of it at present.

I have in my hand here some quotations which I received today and

would refer to them in this way: Patients in the hospital are sleeping on the floor at night and Government can take this same money and provide cots and mattresses for them. We can provide about sixty folding cots with the same money which is being requested to send a delegate to Great Britain. It was only on Friday last that I had to take up a case with the Medical Advisory Committee on behalf of a pauper patient for whom some hetrozan was prescribed in the treatment of filaria. This patient was told that there was not enough of the drug in stock, and when the matter was put before the Medical Advisory Committee the Director of Medical Services said that because the drug was new and because it was expensive it could only be administered and retailed to important members of the public.

We need many things on which this money can be expended usefully. I have before me a dental chart comprising eight pages of useful information and which is self-explanatory. It can be obtained from the Dental Medical Association for \$1 and with the sum of money we are going to spend on this delegate we can supply all the schools in the Colony with this chart. We are wasting this money and I am not going to support any of these amendments, but Government seems to be quite willing to carry this matter through and to meet the vies of those Hon. Members who indicated that they are not willing to support the sending of a representative from the B.G. Labour Union. Even though I am against the principle I am forced to introduce another amendment which reads as follows:

“That, this Council approves of a sum of \$1,250 being provided on Supplementary Estimate as a free grant to the Guiana Industrial Workers’ Union to enable a representative of that Union to attend the Free World Labour Conference to be held in London in November, 1949.”

If this thing is to become a joke, let us have it. I am moving this very seriously. I am sorry I came late today since I intended to move that this Government defrays the expenses of a certain student who is now travelling to India to take up a scholarship. I have introduced this amendment because this Union, in spite of the various views about it, is one of the largest trade unions in the Colony today so far as membership is concerned. We find, however, that in the field in which this union is operating - primarily on the sugar estates - it is not recognised and not only that, but most of the sugar estates that are associated with the British Guiana Sugar Producers Association - primarily those being controlled by Messrs. Booker Bros., have issued trespass notices against the leaders of the union. The result is that those Officials cannot go into those estates to speak to their trade union members or to examine working conditions and perform other trade union functions. Therefore, if anyone at all should be sent to this Conference which is supposed to be for the “Free World”, then by all means this Council should support the sending of a delegate from this organisation because it has an aim to fight for. Being a very large union it should be

recognised and the only way that can happen – because Government, apparently, has no intention of seeing that it should be – is to send a delegate to this Free World Labour Conference from this organisation and let it fight for recognition and for the withdrawal of these notices which restrict its activities. This organisation is not only fighting for itself but for vital trade union principles.

The United Nations passed resolutions the other day to the effect that peoples all over the world should have the right of free association, whether in trade unions or in other organisations, and if these resolutions are to be respected I feel that we should do everything in this Colony to support the struggles not only of this union but of other organisations that are seeking the right to organise workers voluntarily. I do not think any worker would believe that this union is under Soviet influence or anything like that, and that it is not a free trade union. This union, like any other trade union in this Colony – like the British Guiana Trade Union for instance – is registered with this Government. It has a right to go and speak to persons who may become trade unionists and to those who are already trade unionists, and if it has the support of the workers it should be allowed to bargain collectively for and on behalf of those workers. Only a few days ago I moved a Motion in this Council urging that a minimum wage be fixed for unskilled workers, and the argument raised by Official Members was that it would cut across the functions of collective bargaining.

Here is a large trade union in this country fighting for the same principle - the right to collective bargaining - and yet recognition is being denied it. I believe that this is a good opportunity - and Government should see it - to assist this union in getting the facilities which would enable it to bargain collectively for its members. If we are going to send any delegate to this Conference, we should send one from this particular trade union.

New Amsterdam Town Council Bill: Thursday November 10, 1949

Dr. Jagan: I think we are worrying too much about whether this Town Council would be trespassing too much on the territory of private business. The Hon. Member has spoken about communistic suggestions, but I can assure him that in places like Norway and Sweden there are Municipalities which carry on insurance business, run buses, and even make things like electric bulbs and so on. When the time comes and the New Amsterdam Town Council feels that it could embark on such a project it would not only bring in a communistic suggestion but would bring in revenue. I know from going around the country districts that one of the main troubles on the part of municipalities here is the fact that they have to depend only on the revenue from municipal business. I can assure Hon. Members that Municipalities would have to invade the sacred grounds of private business in future by engaging in things like insurance which the New Amsterdam Town Council contemplates but which we in Georgetown have not done. I think the Hon. Member is justified in asking that it be provided for in this Bill, that if the New Amsterdam Town Council desires in future to run an insurance business in order to bring in revenue they would be able to do so.

Land Settlement in Berbice River: Friday November 11, 1949

Dr. Jagan: I too would like to join in support of this Motion and to congratulate the Mover on bringing this Motion before this Council. It is really a tragedy that in such a large country as ours, under-populated as it is, there is really and truly a land hunger among the people of this Colony today. With the present shortage of food I think we should do everything possible to increase the production of food. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation has said in no uncertain terms that for many years more to come the world production of food has to be greatly increased in order to avert the present shortage and the death rate and misery resulting from this shortage of food. I remember, Sir, the Mover of this Motion getting some replies from Government only a few days ago, when it was said that citrus fruit and juice were imported into this Colony and, I believe, to an alarming extent. For instance, citrus fruit - the importation was increased from \$9,368 in 1947 to \$18,654 in 1948; citrus juice - the importation was increased from \$8,261 in 1947 to \$29,569 in 1948. This is really an alarming state of affairs, when we really know that we have suitable lands in this country which can grow the necessary amount of citrus fruit and juice not only for the consumption of the population of this Colony but possibly for export to our neighbouring colonies and, if necessary, further afield.

I remember, Sir, reading Dr. Giglioli's Report which was appended to the Sub-Committee's Report on the Ten-Year Development Plan, and in that Report he gave some statistics showing that for the past ten years the population on the sugar estates had increased from about 40,000 to about 60,000. He predicted that with the advent of DDT that population was expected to increase to about 100,000 within the next 15 years. The Hon. Mover of the Motion has referred to the question of mechanisation, but if there is to be mechanisation on the sugar estates - and if we are considering for a moment that production in quantity must be increased materially it would be so - then it means that the existing population which is ample will probably become redundant, not to mention the natural increase that will take place as Dr. Giglioli has predicted.

I remember quoting some figures which I got during the labours of the Venn Commission showing that from 1943 to 1947 some 2,000 acres of land were taken away from the people who planted rice on the sugar estates, while about 1,000 acres which were under ground provision were also taken away. It may be that the sugar estates needed these lands for the extension of their cultivation by mechanisation and so on, but the fact remains that during the last three years some 3,000 acres of land were actually taken away from people who engaged in the cultivation of rice and ground pro-

vision. The result is that we have to make other lands available to these people who have to produce not only for their own needs but to increase the production of sugar and other things on which revenue and taxation depend.

In moving this Motion the Hon. Member asked that a Committee be appointed to investigate the desirability or otherwise of a Land Settlement Scheme being started in this area, but I would like to state that the Committee should go a bit further because, from my experience, the Land Settlement Schemes we have at present in this Colony are no more than glorified private plantations. If these things are to succeed and to be run efficiently, they must be run on a different basis. I remember that in February, last, when the estimates of the Department of Agriculture were being considered, I made some remarks which I should like to quote from the Hansard of February 2, 1949. It will be seen in column 192 that I said:

"...On the other hand, there should also be what I would like to call Cooperative Farms. I find that the Government of Guatemala is doing it now. We have the Cane Grove Land Settlement and the Vergenoegen Land Settlement, and I feel what is necessary is to have an Agriculture Department, a Land Settlement Department and a Cooperative Department getting together and to have the people cultivate the whole area as one entity instead of each individual farmer cultivating piece by piece. As long as we cultivate in a piecemeal manner it cannot pay. It would be the same old story and we would get nowhere."

That is exactly what is happening today, Sir, in these Land Settlement Schemes. The people rent an acre or two, or if they can get hold of more land they would take about five acres -each, but there is no concerted plan whereby they can have things like ploughing and so on done at the same time - on a large scale and with general efficiency. That is the way in which these land settlements should be run. If possible, Government should take over a certain section of these estates and work them as one entity - showing the people how things should be done by various technical means and letting them realise that it would be more profitable to work along those lines. In that way I am sure the people themselves would adopt those methods for their own benefit.

I am sorry that up to the present time we have not had the Report which has been promised by the Colonial Treasurer with respect to the Government Rice Production Scheme in the Mahaicony-Abary area. When we get those facts and figures they may be an incentive to other producers and help them to decide whether the undertaking of such a Scheme on a cooperative basis - or as a single entity - would be of greater benefit to the people concerned. I am sure if those figures become available and they answer the question in the affirmative, those people who are at present living on the land settlements at Vergenoegen, Anna Regina, Cane Grove and elsewhere, will follow the example of Government and do things on a coopera-

tive basis. I hope that Government will soon give us the figures I have referred to. I feel strongly about this matter - that it should be undertaken immediately so that the excess population on the coastlands would have somewhere to go instead of having to loaf about doing nothing and getting themselves into trouble. The Hon. Member for Berbice River is to be commended, as I have already stated, for bringing this Motion before the Council at this time.

Motion - Amerindian Policy: Thursday November 17, 1949

Dr. Jagan : I too have read with very great interest the various reports on Amerindian affairs which have been submitted to us. I think the time is certainly ripe when we should give such protection as is necessary to the people who have contributed so much to the early development of this Colony, and who can contribute more to its greater development. In reading the report submitted by Mr. Peberdy, which is indeed a very valuable and comprehensive document, I can see that the Ordinance of 1910 was not adequately administered, with the result that in many cases those people have not been given adequate protection of their rights and privileges. Those "rights and privileges" have been pointed out by the mover of the Motion and have been lucidly set out in the report by Mr. Peberdy. However, we are now in modern times, and I feel that with the great amount of study which has been undertaken by this officer and by the Commissioner of the Interior, we should act on the very valuable advice which has been given in those two reports, and in that way arrive at a very clear policy to help those people to improve their material conditions of life.

I was particularly interested in the report by Mr. Peberdy because, if I may quote from a certain paragraph it clearly emphasises the desirability of a new orientation in the matter of Amerindian policy. In the past those people were allowed to drift, protection being given them in certain areas, which protection was wholly or partially inadequate. In his report Mr. Peberdy sees the desirability of embarking upon a new plan of cooperative development, whether it is the cattle industry, timber, balata, or the mining industry, and in view of the fact that we are now endeavouring to embark upon a great cooperative programme for the Colony as a whole, I think this officer should be praised for setting out in such great detail an economic plan for the Amerindians of this Colony on a cooperative basis.

I am sorry to see that some of Mr. Peberdy's recommendations were not and have not been included in the report of the Commissioner of the Interior and by the Committee which was set up to investigate the proposal made in the various reports. Mr. Peberdy, dealing with industries, states as follows in para. 123 of this report:

"Cooperative enterprise in the industrial timber, balata, and on a scale alluvial mining, in selected and declared Forest Reserves and Amerindian Districts offers an economic pivot on which to resolve and to build Amerindian Community progress, social and cultural."

He seems to base his whole argument on his experience after a very

comprehensive period of five years — a period during which he made comprehensive tours through the various parts of the Colony and contacted the various tribes of Amerindians— and to have come to the conclusion that if these people are to take their places and to *contribute* to the economy of this Colony, they must plan on a comprehensive and a cooperative basis. The Hon. Mover of the Motion referred to these same people who contributed really to the economy when the Dutch first came here. The Dutch established their trade bases, and it was from the produce which these people originally brought that trade was established with Holland. That was really the principal means of the economy of that period. So it seems to me that aside from the experience these people have had in the industries of timber, balata, cattle rearing and the others, as enumerated by Mr. Peberdy in para 126 of his Report—Gums, Resins, Wax, Incense, Medicinal Barks, Tonka Beans, Vegetable Oils, Perfumes, Vegetable Pigments and Dyes, Poisons, Nuts— all of which the labour force can provide at the present time without thinking of foreign immigrants. etc., these industries can be established with the help of the present Amerindian population, provided they are done on a well planned basis which to his mind really means “*on a cooperative basis.*”

The Hon. Mover of the Motion also referred to the fact that there is no doubt that these people have to be brought up to accept the blessings of western civilisation. We all look forward to that time when they will not be accepted as museum pieces but as willing partners with the other peoples of this Colony for the future development of the economy of this Colony. But I cannot help but say from this Report by Mr. Peberdy that some contacts which these people have made with the elements of what we may term “*western civilisation*” have not been very fruitful in the past, and we have to take good care in the future that we do not make the same mistakes. In para. 28 of the Report he states:

“The limited benefits derived by the Makusi, mostly of an impermanent nature, from rancher occupation, have not sufficed to replace tribal customs of self-sufficiency based on tribal laws which constituted the very backbone to racial dignity and independence.”

Then in para. 26 he goes on to state:

“Euro-Guianese-American culture contacts have undoubtedly influenced adversely Amerindian life and customs resulting in drunkenness, sexual promiscuity and general moral degeneracy. This unfortunate deterioration in Amerindian character is particularly noticeable in settlements adjacent to mining townships in the North West District and along the coastlands. Mr. A. W. B. Long, for many years Commissioner of the North West District, has reported in his able memorandum on Amerindian Protection that it is useless to disguise the fact that multitudes of Colonists have availed themselves of the Amerindian population to work

their farms and help in other activities and to use their women as concubines."

I believe Mr. Peberdy in his recommendations sought to prevent the pitfalls into which these people have fallen in the past through their contacts with that "*western civilisation,*" and his admirable proposals to give these people adequate protection to put them on a sound footing. Certainly he has been at pains to set out the various schemes which he thinks will materially and spiritually help them. As far as the Makusi tribe is concerned, he states that from their contacts with the rancher population they had benefited greatly. I will quote his recommendation in para. 141 of his Report.

"I consider that in the Central and Northern Savannahs any rancher who has occupied land there for 15 years or more should be permitted to apply lease over a 10-acre lot and to graze up to six head of cattle for domestic use. Apart from his 10 acre lot the remainder of the savannah should be thrown open to communal grazing and that the rest be charged as a "Head Tax" on cattle - a certain sum for each head of cattle using the Communal pasturage."

I believe he made that recommendation because of his reference to the fact that it has not benefited greatly in this area—the northern and middle savannahs of the Rupununi— and he feels that it should be thrown open instead of as at the present time where you have settlers or peoples from the coastlands occupying large tracts of the lands.

(Mr. Roth: The people from the Coast are small cultivators of 30 or 40 head of cattle. The majority of the savannahs is occupied by ranchers.)

Dr. Jagan: I am glad for that explanation. What I mean is, most of that land is held by ranchers who may be of local stock or may be from the coast, and it seems to preclude a large number of these Amerindians from establishing any industry of their own a cooperative basis or not. The mere fact that they cannot have enough land on which they can do - individual or collective - cattle-farming means that they will have to go and work with the ranchers for wages which, Mr. Peberdy stated, has not really brought forward any great beneficial results to the Makusi tribe. Another aspect which must be also looked at in this question of cooperative enterprise is one relating to nutrition and food. Again I would like to quote from his Report, para. 90:

"Dr. Waterloo has stated that a good state of nutrition means that there is a balance between food sources and food requirements. This balance is easily upset, and one of the most powerful disturbing factors is a change in the social and economic conditions of life in which people turn away from the production of food for subsistence and become labourers for wages in cash. The deficit of food so brought about must be made up by imports into the area; at the same time the demands for

things other than food tend to increase."

Then in para. 92 he states:

"For instance the Amerindian population in the Upper Mazaruni drainage basin was decimated in the early 1920s through the disruption of tribal economy by artificial conditions of labour introduced by balata operations. ..."

That is again referring to the point made a few minutes ago by the Hon. Member for Eastern Demerara (Mr. Debidin) when he said we must at all times try to preserve the sociological mode of living and also the tribal economy to which these people are accustomed. If we permit them to work for wages, whether with the mining companies or the cattle ranchers, it may really and factually tend to the serious results which had already taken place in the year 1920. Mr. Peberdy seems to assume and proposes in his recommendations that under a comprehensive cooperative plan these people, aside from growing and producing the things which would bring them money, such as Balata and Timber and certain mining minerals, would also grow the very food which they would need for their own consumption, thereby producing for themselves an economy which will result in a greater amount of benefit.

I am sorry, Sir, to see that the Commissioner of Interior does not really seem to accept the Report of Mr. Peberdy which deals with the Development Company and with the recommendations for the Amerindians in that area. Mr. Peberdy in his report requested that Government provide the necessary funds to purchase that area, because the area includes the holdings of this Company, and at the same time try to retain the skilled management of the Company for the benefit of the Amerindian population.

But unfortunately in the Report of the Commissioner of Interior this suggestion has not been accepted. It would have really a great venture which would not have benefited the Amerindian population of this country but would have set a great example to the coastal areas of the Colony – in other words, the undertaking of a cooperative venture on a large scale whether or not such an experiment undertaken in the Rupununi area would really work and, if it worked, whether it should be applied on a larger scale on the coastal areas. I really grieve me that this recommendation has not been accepted, because it seemed to me that during our discussion about the Company's cattle ranch in the Rupununi that much of the work there is done by the Amerindians – the bringing in of the cattle, the grazing of the cattle, the herding of them and bringing them together in the pens. The doing of all necessary surgical operation which we have seen there, skilled management or supervision probably is very necessary at this time to be maintained, and I feel if the recommendation of Mr. Peberdy is accepted it would have gone a very long way in helping the Amerindians in that area

and in protecting what really is theirs. These people have inhabited these areas for a long number of years but they are finding themselves really enclosed and limited to very small sections of that vast area. If I may read the recommendation in para, 183, it says:

“I consider that in the interests of the Amerindian population, of the cattle industry and of the district’s welfare, the Southern Savannahs, at present rented by the Rupununi Development Company, should be declared an Amerindian District for developing a permanent cattle industry for Amerindians, and that a loan-in-aid, free of interest, should be sought from Government for the outright purchase of the Rupununi Development Company for this purpose.”

Then in para 139 he states as follows

“In the whole area of the Rupununi Administrative District, over 40,000 square miles, there are approximately 4,000 square miles leased, under Grazing Rights - by ranchers. 456 square miles are reserved for Amerindians. These Reserves - have not been occupied to any extent; chiefly because there have been no amenities offered to Amerindians to reside within the Reservation.”

These areas can really be developed, provided Government gives the necessary help which is really necessary at the present time. I feel sure that in accepting this Motion by the Hon. Member that Government has in mind the implementation of these reports in bringing forward the necessary protection to the Amerindian population.

I have great pleasure in supporting this Motion, and I hope the admirable proposals and recommendation which have been made by Mr. Peberdy after careful and long study of the Amerindian problems will receive the support of Government in framing the Regulations and policy generally.

Agreement with B.G Broadcasting Co.: Friday November 25, 1949

Dr. Jagan: I feel that the time has come when the Government of this Colony should acquire the rights of the British Guiana Broadcasting Co. and operate its own radio station. The Hon. Mover of the Motion in his opening remarks referred to the fact that in some countries broadcasting is done by the Government, and in other countries like the U.S.A. it is done exclusively by commercial enterprise. I feel, Sir, that some procedure should be adopted in this country, either we should own and run the broadcasting station or we should leave it to private enterprise with the necessary amount of control, and let it be run for the best interest of the Colony.

Much has been said about various clauses in this Contract. I, too, would agree with the Hon. Member who has just spoken that it seems there is an anomaly in granting permission for 15 years and only giving an exclusive licence for five years. Both should be the same period so that if at any time Government desires – not only Government but any other undertaking – to establish a broadcasting station it would be known that within a certain period of time it would be permitted to do so. Why grant an exclusive licence for five years and at the same time enter into a contract embracing terms to last for 15 years? It may be that we may want after five years to make a contract with another company which may be willing to operate without a subsidy which it is proposed to give to this Company at the present time. I do not see it is really necessary and I feel that this agreement should be amended so that both periods of time would be the same – a period of five years.

But that is not what is really worrying me, so far as this broadcasting station is concerned. As I look into the history of this Company I also find, in the words of the Hon. Mover of the Motion, that a band of energetic and public-spirited people had to do with the bringing forth of this Company. But now that it has been brought forward and now that it has assumed an important place in the community not only of British Guiana but as far as Australia, I feel steps should be taken to see there is thorough freedom of information by this broadcasting company. Reference has been made to clause 10 of the Contract relating to propaganda of a social, religious or economic nature. It is true that the clause refers to foreign broadcasting stations and attempts to put the ban on propaganda of that nature which may emanate from a foreign source but, as the Hon. Member rightly said, what is to prevent the propaganda emanating even from within British Guiana? I find today that certain persons who control the local station are definitely using the station to spread propaganda of one kind or another to suit their particular purpose. I find in the Articles of Association of this

Company, if I may be allowed to read Article 22 - it says:

"The first Directors of the Company shall be Alexander Mackey, Charles O'Dow, F.H. Martin-Sperry and Oscar Wight, being respectively the nominees of Booker Bros., McConnell & Co. Ltd., William Forgaty Ltd., Wieting & Richter Ltd., and Argosy Co. Ltd., and each of them shall hold office until he dies, resigns or ceases to hold such qualification as may be prescribed, or his appointment is revoked."

Article 23 says:

"Each of the Companies referred to in the preceding article shall, so long as it holds 500 shares in the Company, have the right to nominate any person to be a Director of the Company and such person shall hold office until his appointment is revoked by such company."

What alarms me is that these same individuals who are Directors and Shareholders of this private company are the same individuals who own and control the three daily newspapers of this Colony. I find for instance every morning we get the editorials of the *Guiana Graphic* read over station "ZFY". It may be said that is not propaganda, but certainly that is an editorial opinion which to some of us is full of propaganda, and some means should be found to stop that. But presently the Company being constituted as it is within the four large companies- Bookers, Argosy, Wm. Forgaty, and Wieting & Richter- who are the chief Shareholders and can nominate Directors, it follows that they can put over the radio station whatever opinion they feel is in their own interest but probably not in the interest of the Colony as a whole. So when Members refer to propaganda emanating from local sources I feel that something definitely should be done in that respect. I remember the Hon. Member for Essequibo River (Mr. Lee) was trying to get some information some time ago and was told that no political opinions are usually permitted on the radio stations, but nevertheless we do find that political propaganda is aired regularly over this radio station. If that is allowed then it should be allowed to all individuals, and no exceptions should be made.

One of the terms of this Contract is that we should provide for 90 per cent of the annual receipts obtained from Radio Licences, which amounts to approximately \$9,000, to be given to this Company as a subsidy. Is Government satisfied that this Company cannot operate without this subsidy of \$9,000? Have the figures been gone into very carefully? Has the expenditure of the Company been gone into very carefully? Lately we have had a whole series of managers managing this station. Perhaps there may be some fault in the management of this Company. On the other hand, the question of selling broadcasting time should also be gone into very carefully. Are the newspapers who are presently advertising or having their news items

and editorials read on the broadcasting station programmes paying for those facilities at the present time? Are the Companies which are the chief Shareholders in this Company paying the same rate of advertising charged as other people outside have to pay? I have been informed, Sir, that the rates which are charged are very low with the result that the income of this Company necessarily is low also. I have in front of me, Sir, the amount of revenue of the Company for the year ending December, 1947, and the statement of the Sale of Broadcasting Time. The sales amounted to \$18,150.73 and Government Subsidy amounted to \$8,107. Whilst it is true we do not want a radio station with its broadcasting being bottled up with advertising, nevertheless I am not quite satisfied that with the present limit of ten minutes to the hour for advertisements this Company properly managed cannot get so much more revenue so as to be able to carry on without a subsidy from the Government. I feel sure that if proper charges are made - and we know that many of the Shareholders do a great deal of advertising - it would not be necessary for this Government to pay a subsidy because enough would be earned despite the fact that Government places a limit of ten minutes to the hour for radio broadcasting of advertising matters.

Another item which I would like to refer to is the one dealing with radio diffusion. No mention is made in this Contract to that item. Possibly it is held that with the introduction of another type of receiving set and broadcasting set the community will then be able to obtain long wave sets at low prices and be enabled to enjoy the benefits of radio broadcasting. But I feel sure it would be less expensive to have the system which is now in operation in Trinidad, and that is the system of re-diffusion whereby persons in the community who cannot afford to pay the price of a receiving set can still get the benefits of radio entertainment. Presently in this Colony we have a very limited radio audience. I know that the B.P.I. has been trying recently to compile figures to find out how many people are really listening to very important broadcasting programmes from this station. There is no doubt that a large section of the community, particularly those in rural districts, is not today enjoying the benefits of radio entertainment and the educational benefits obtained from the station, and I feel that some attempt should be made to consider the possibility of radio diffusion to permit people in the various parts of the Colony to listen and obtain valuable information.

I certainly would propose that Government purchase the assets of the B.G. Broadcasting Company and operate it as a Government station. I feel that in that way there will be more in control. Even though it is suggested in the terms of the Contract that two Directors will be appointed by the Government, I do not feel that is enough because at the present time one Director is appointed by the Government whereas this Company has four Directors. So if Government will have the right under this Contract to appoint two directors it does not necessarily mean that the opinion of those two Directors will be carried. Consequently, Sir, I do not know if I am in

order, I would like to move an amendment to read as follows:

“That this Honourable Council recommends that Government takes immediate steps to purchase the assets of the B.G. Broadcasting Company and operates a Government Broadcasting Station.”

Agreement with B.G Broadcasting Co.: Thursday December 1, 1949

Dr. Jagan: There is no doubt that the new amendment which has been brought forward by the Hon. the Colonial Treasurer seems to satisfy most of the points which were raised in this Council, but nevertheless I do agree with the statements which were made by the Hon. Member for Eastern Demerara (Mr. Debidin) that a complete investigation should be made, as so far as this Company is concerned all is not so well with the organisation of this Company - several managers have been removed within a short period in the past and there has been some dispute between the Secretaries and Managers on questions of expenditure of money, etc. If we are going to give an amount which would vary probably between \$9,000 and \$15,000 per annum to this Company, then we want to see that this money would be spent in the best interest of the people of this Colony. It is said in this amendment that a sum of \$80,000 is to be expended in new improvements, but certainly there is no guarantee so far as that is concerned. In the past, I believe, a similar undertaking was given when Government gave a subsidy to this Company that improvements would be made and so far, I believe, a sum approximating about \$40,000 has been already given to this Company, but up to now I do not think the people have got any real value in terms of improvement for the subsidies given in the past.

If the Company had been managed correctly and properly, I submit, we would have had all these improvements which are now being talked about, with the amounts of money already given. I feel that instead of accepting the amendment, as it is, suggested here, we should agree to have a complete investigation into the whole organisation of this Company and see whether Government should support it as it is or should run a company of its own. I certainly feel it would be in the best interest of the people of this Colony if this broadcasting station is run by the Government completely for all concerned.

Reconstruction of Corentyne Road: Thursday December 8, 1949

Dr. Jagan: I too would like to add my support to the Motion. The construction of the Corentyne road should definitely be given priority over the East Bank road. In his report the Economic Adviser has stressed the necessity of spending money on development projects. From what the last speaker has said it definitely appears that the East Bank road cannot be considered a great development project, whereas the construction of the Corentyne road is definitely a development project, for the simple reason that it would bear the traffic, largely of rice, which will enhance our national income and give us the revenue which we so much need. I agree with the last speaker also that if the construction of the East Bank road is given priority, by the time it is completed there would be no money for the construction of the Corentyne road.

I think we are placing too much emphasis on the importance of the small bit of road on the East Bank. If a few tourists or a few individuals come to this Colony and complain about the road from Atkinson Field I think we should forget about them. We are already spending \$10,000 a year to attract tourists to this Colony but I do not think they are really doing a great deal to enhance the revenue of this Colony. Given the opportunity, the people will increase the production of this Colony, and if they are to increase production they should be given every facility. As the Hon. Member has said, there are certain areas without roads where rice is now being planted, and the people should be given proper facilities for the transportation of their produce. We should not worry too much about what a few tourists may think or say about the bad condition of the East Bank road. The East Bank is fortunate in having the Demerara River at its disposal, and water transport is supposed to be the cheapest form of transport. I therefore cannot see the necessity to give priority to the construction of the East Bank road. I heartily support the Motion.

Subsidised Steamer and Road Transport Services: Thursday December 8, 1949

Dr. Jagan: Sir, knowing the Hon. Mover of this Motion as the champion of private enterprise, definitely I can see why it is disturbing to him to see Government lose so much money in running the road transport and steamer services of this Colony. But, Sir, just giving the loss is not enough; more should be said. Recently it has come to me from a very good source that the Advisory Committee of the Transport and Harbours Department agreed in principle and recommended that there should be an increase in the freight and passenger rates, but unfortunately we saw only the passenger rates increased. The freight rates were not increased. That also has really contributed to this great loss which we have to suffer every year. The Hon. Mover of the Motion also referred to the fact that at the time when the subsidies were given they amounted to approximately \$30,000 per annum. But, Sir, he also overlooked the point that we are paying today as an annual subsidy to the former Shareholders of the Company an amount equivalent to \$80,000 a year, a perpetual subsidy. That is also a big millstone around the neck of the Colony.

(**Mr. Roth:** To a point of correction! I think the Hon. Member is referring to the old Demerara Railway Company. This Motion only deals with the Steamer Service. It has nothing to do with the railway whatever.)

Dr. Jagan: I am glad the Hon. Member has corrected me. I somewhat had the impression that he was dealing within the whole Transport and Harbours Department Services. However, as the last speaker said, if Government cannot find ways and means of operating the Service at a price which would reduce the loss then some investigation should be made as to why this loss is being incurred year after year. I do not think it would be necessary at this stage after the Services have been operated by Government for a long number of years, to revert back to the policy of giving a grant or subsidy every year to other individuals to run the services. I feel that the Transport and Harbours Services really should be considered as a whole. We have already decided on a policy and I may be allowed to digress a moment and deal with the railways. We have already decided that the railway be operated for a period of 15 years as a trial to see whether it should be continued to be operated by Government or whether it should be scrapped, and we have brought out new equipment to the tune of a half million dollars. So until such time as a definite decision is taken by Government that the Transport and Harbours Services should be abolished as a whole, I think this Council cannot agree with this Motion as it is pre-

sented at this time. I feel that if anything should be done at all, Government should appoint a Special Committee to find ways and means for improving the situation at the present time and, if needs be, to accept the recommendation of the Advisory Committee to increase the freight rates so that the Colony would not have to undergo the large deficit which the Hon. Member pointed out. I certainly do not see the necessity for this Motion at this time, and I do not see that this Council should really support it.

Flooding in Rural Districts: Friday December 30, 1949

Dr. Jagan: Before the Order of the Day is taken, I crave Your Excellency's indulgence to make a few observations with reference to the very serious situation which now exists on the East Coast, Demerara. There is no doubt that the heavy rainfall has to a great extent contributed to the very serious situation existing there at the present time, but in certain places there are other conditions which, I feel, should be immediately gone into so that relief can be brought to those distressed areas. I have in mind the area of Buxton particularly. That area has had five floods already for this year. Aside from the fact that we now have an unusual amount of rainfall the floods continue to ruin the crops of the farmers in that area, and certain things should have been done but were not done. One is the defective dams which separate the village on either side from the plantations of Lusignan and Nonpariel. The water is seeping through the pegasse dams, and at the present time the township area is being flooded through the water overflowing the very dams themselves. I know the residents have sent telegrams to the Director of Public Works and other officers and they have been to the area and seen the state of affairs there. But, Sir, I feel that at the present time some emergency operation should be undertaken in this area and, if it is possible, the reconstruction of the dams be immediately embarked upon and also the question of natural drainage given attention. I know, Sir, that sometime ago a former Chairman of the village, Mr. Younge, experimented with the idea of natural drainage so as to help the pump which is doing most of the work there and, I feel, if that is tried at the present time it would alleviate the situation which is creating serious hardship for the residents of that area.

I also have complaints from the residents of the Bel Air – Subryanville – Campbellville area. This area is now flooded and the situation is aggravated by the water from Booker's Housing Scheme area. The Cummings Canal is not able to take off all the water which is being lodged in that area at the present time so that the water which is being pumped out of the Housing Scheme area is really aggravating the situation. The Georgetown Town Council debated yesterday this matter of having a pump installed so that it can aid in the drainage of the City. The Cummings Canal runs through the City and its water is drained by means of the tide. I feel that if this pump is installed in a very short time, perhaps, not immediately but in the future, it is going to alleviate the suffering which these people have to undergo at the present time.

I have already spoken to Mr. Cleare, the Acting Director of Agriculture, to see if it is possible to move the people's cattle and other livestock from

the Campbellville – Subryanville – Bel Air area to the Thomas Lands for the time being, and, I hope, Sir, that it will have the sympathy of Government because these people have no other means of livelihood other than the crops and small amount of livestock at their disposal. I hope something will be done immediately to relieve the distressing situation in this area.

Budget Debate: January 6, 1950

Dr. Jagan: It is now a little over two years that I have been in this Council, and this is the third Budget Statement that has been presented, and after all this time I am beginning to wonder whether I am not wasting not only my own time in this Council but also the taxpayer's money. I should say not only I but this whole Council, whether we are not merely wasting so much time in talking and talking. The Hon. Member who has just taken his seat (Mr. Ferreira) referred to the various plans we have had, numerous commissions of inquiry and what not, but the same old story continues from year in to year out. It is true that the Hon. The Financial Secretary and Treasurer has again with his usual skill presented to us a Balanced Budget which seems to be the aim of the Government. But again in the words of the Hon. Member who has just taken his seat, should we be content with merely balancing the budget year in and year out when we see around us – to quote the words of the Hon. Member from South Georgetown (Mr. Carter) – the wealth of human suffering which the masses of this country are experiencing. We have heard in this Budget Statement facts and figures which are admirably set out and which cannot be denied, but we want to go behind the scene. We must look around us and see how the people are living and whether all is well.

Turning to this statement we see that as much as 25% of the Colony's expenditure goes towards administration whereas in social services we have an amount of 29.54%. In other words, we have an almost equal amount of money being spent for administration and the general welfare of the people of the Colony. No wonder you have the various ills of our community. You go the public hospital – I have been there only a few weeks ago - and find people sleeping on the floor. Perhaps they cannot afford to pay, but is that the way Guianese are to be treated, citizens of this Colony? When they sleep on the floor the persons on the beds have to give either their mattress or blankets. I have to say these things now because I am fed up with being on these Committees. We go to the meetings of these Advisory Committees for an hour or an hour and a half or for two hours, have a little talk and go away, and the story remains the same as it was before. I would like to agree with the Hon. Member for South Georgetown that what we need in this Colony is a complete overhaul of the System of Government. I am not trying to blame the current Administration for the ills of the Community at this time. The Hon. (Mr. Debidin) made a speech, which I would have liked to make, about the present floods and the conditions of the people in this Colony but, as I said, it is not to be put at the feet of this present Administration only. It is the system which we have inherited, and if we do

not wake up and change that system quickly these floods are going to be with us for a very long time.

Sir, this Budget Statement is planning for expenditure and revenue of over \$20,000,000 but for such a large country as this \$20,000,000 is not enough. We need more schools. We need more hospitals. Take the T.B Sanatorium Society. The last annual report of the T.B Society said that in 1947 there were no people on the waiting list but today there are over 200 persons on the waiting list for admission into hospitals which are not there. The Hon. Member of Eastern Demerara wanted to use some of the Base buildings for educational purposes. But some of these buildings can also be used to house some of these unfortunate people who are roaming the streets, living under crowded conditions and getting no proper food to eat. They go to the hospital but unfortunately when they come out they are worse off than when they went in as the result of the kind of diet they get in the hospitals of this Colony. I wish Hon. Members would take a look at the hospitals sometimes and have a look at the kind of food the people there have to eat – a bit of rice, a piece of meat, if not meat it is fish, and a piece of plantain – and that continues day after day without much variation. A man goes in there suffering from malnutrition and comes out there suffering from more malnutrition. That is the kind of medical service we are getting. If a real survey were made around the streets of Georgetown with proper equipment, I am sure that the T.B Specialist would find not only 200 persons roaming the streets of Georgetown but thousands more suffering from that dreadful disease. I say “dreadful” because if the people so afflicted do not get proper treatment, food and hospitalisation the disease becomes dreadful. Those people are not only exposing themselves but other people in the community among whom they have to live under overcrowded conditions to the ravages of that disease.

I hope, Sir, that the Government would take urgent steps in this matter because I know we have been discussing in the Medical Advisory Committee this question of housing for the unfortunate people for the last two years. First of all we took nearly a year to decide on a site and we are still to find the building. The buildings were there with the Planters but we have had no cooperative action with the result there are no hospitals for these unfortunate people. I mention this as an example to show that even if we have a Balanced Budget all is not well with this community of ours. We need many more services, and I would like to agree with the Hon. Member of Eastern Demerara that the Administration is top-heavy. There are lots of people who can be eliminated, and efforts should be made by the Government to see if certain posts cannot be removed and whether others cannot be reshuffled etc.

I would like, Sir, to comment on a few items in this Budget Statement. I was alarmed to hear about the \$400 per day expenditure which we will have to incur for the running of the Base which we have now taken over. I should like to know, Sir, I know one Hon. Member who is sitting next to me

on my left (Mr. Fernandes) has already asked that a full statement be given to this Council as to the various articles which have been purchased from the U.S. Government, so that this Council will be in a position to know what are the assets which have been acquired. But so far we have not been given that detailed information - I do not know if it is correct or not – that goods have already been sold. We would like to know how those goods are sold, because I have not seen any notice in the papers. I do not know if there had been any advertisements of those various articles for sale, but if those goods are not sold in the open, then there is the danger that certain individuals and certain individual's friends will get great benefits from the expenditure which have been incurred with a large amount of the tax payers money. So far as this Base is concerned I hope it will not be far distant when we will be presented with a very comprehensive detailed report of the running of this Base, showing what it is really going to cost us and whether it is a paying proposition. The Hon. Member for Georgetown Central (Mr. Fernandes) has already told us that after a while we are going to find it a milestone around our necks.

Speaking of the Base, Sir, I would like at this moment to take the opportunity to refer to the petition which I have had the honour to present in this Council on behalf of the Base workers. We are all aware that during the time the American Authorities were here occupying this Base, wages were in conformity with the wages paid in the U.S.A and the U.S Possessions. The people of Barbuda who were employed at Bermuda Base brought an action against the U.S Government or the Contractors to the U.S Government, and were successful in the Supreme Court of the U.S.A which ruled by a majority decision that the bases which are on leased territories in British Colonies are really to be considered as U.S. possessions and as such come within the Fair Labour Standards Act of the U.S.A., which provides for a minimum wage and for overtime rates, etc.

I hope, Sir, that this Government will do all that is in its power in making negotiations with the U.S Government in the matter so as to see that the people, the citizens of British Guiana, many of whom are now roaming the streets of Georgetown looking for jobs that were formerly employed at this base, get their due share of the wages which are really due to them and were not paid because of certain reasons, probably through pressure from one source or another in this Colony. Incidentally, Sir, an interesting point arose when this case were brought up for consideration in the United States Supreme Court. Then, the majority decision was to the effect that these Bases were to be considered as possessions of the United States, but a minority decision ruled against that saying that if they were so considered they would lead to a great deal of diplomatic trouble so far as the administration of the people in the Colonies was concerned. We in this Colony would certainly like to know whether or not – now that we have taken over the administration of Atkinson Field- the Base is still the possession of the United States and whether we have actual rights there as in any other part

of the Colony? It seems to me that from the majority decision of this Court the United States has actually got extraterritorial rights there and that the Base is a possession which the United States is, fortunately, not claiming in this Colony.

The Chinese people have been fortunate in getting rid of all the extraterritorial rights which were held there by foreigners, but we find that the United States of America now seems to be holding a fine slice of our Colony. We hope that the position will be shortly defined by the Government so that the inhabitants of the Colony would know whether or not we are spending \$400 a day to maintain the base so that if the Americans decide to come back and take it over again we would then have to consider the question of building an airport closer to Georgetown. We want these things elucidated so that we can go back and tell the unfortunate taxpayers of this Colony exactly where they stand.

There is another point I would like to dwell upon and that is a question of our foreign exchange. It is true, unfortunately, that we now have to divert many of our purchases from hard currency areas because of the dollar shortage, and for that reason we may experience - as we have already done - an increase in the cost of living. The Hon. The Financial Secretary and Treasurer has given us the cost of living figure in his report and this shows that it has already jumped to 216 although it was around 200 at the beginning of last year. It is expected that it will go up another few points shortly, and I, Sir do not share the sentiment of the Financial Secretary and Treasurer when he says in his Budget Statement:-

“ We may also reflect that, as was assumed by the Commission, even with the Index within 212 to 220 the position of the worker would be less favourable than that which obtained in 1948.”

It may be that the position of the worker will be less favourable than it was in 1948, but what the Hon. The Financial Secretary and Treasurer failed to mention is that it would not meet up to the standard of living which the people enjoyed in 1939 - before the war. Perhaps we should not worry too much about that because only a few days ago we read in the newspapers that there would be currency decontrol in the United Kingdom as from January 1, and this would permit exports into the investment countries and capitalists from some of these countries may go to the United Kingdom and invest money there. If people from the United States do go to Great Britain and set up factories there, then they would be permitted to take back some of the currency they have earned to hard currency areas. Therefore I think there is a great deal of hope in the future - hope in the sense that Professor Ridley has expressed it - that we would be able to buy from the United States at cheap prices but at the sacrifice of the Commonwealth and the “Buy Britain” policy as a whole.

(The President: What paper is the Hon. Member reading?)

Dr. Jagan: This paper is called the "*Vanguard*", of Trinidad. In it there is an article headed "*Is Britain becoming the 'White Nigeria' of America.*" And written by George Padmore. Mr. Padmore is a well-known writer on West Indian affairs and he is quoting Professor Ridley who describes the United States as "*the first World Empire*" and states that Britain, the greatest Empire since Rome, is fast becoming the "*White Nigeria*" of Wall Street bankers. What he is saying is that the Empire markets may now suffer greatest because of devaluation and competition from the dollar areas. What is going to happen is simply that by currency decontrol capitalists from hard currency areas would go to England and Australia and set up factories there so that instead of buying foreign goods direct from America and other hard currency areas we would buy them from the United Kingdom or from Australia. If I am permitted, I should like to quote from the "*Economic Notes*" of December, 1949, which refers to a memorandum issued by the Research Associates of Montreal. The memorandum says that the United States "*obviously wanted the British pound and other currencies to be devalued.*" The reason is that:

"Devaluation opens up wide opportunities for American investment in the devaluing countries and their colonies. It enables the U.S. to buy up existing investment at bargain prices. It also provides the possibility of tremendous markets for U.S. heavy industries in new investment projects abroad. It brings a step nearer the elimination of exchange controls and the opening of trading areas now closed to U.S. goods and services."

So, I think that even though we may be breaking up the Commonwealth now we are doing very much to ensure the earning of some of the almighty dollars which Great Britain is trying to get.

(The Financial Secretary and Treasurer: I am quite sure Sir Stafford Cripps would be very pleased to know that the Hon. Member agrees with his policy.)

Dr. Jagan: That is not the way I would like to put it. Sir Stafford Cripps in trying for development, is now breaking up the Colonies and the Empire for American dollars. That is what it amounts to. I shall now go back to the point I was making. We have recently had the Venn Commission in this Colony: and a few years ago we had a ten-year Development Plan on which a great deal of work was done. I hope, Sir, that what Lord Baldwin recently said about Commissions would not prove true as regards British Guiana. I think he said that if the Leeward and Windward Islands had one-third of the amount of money that has been spent on Commissions relating to the

development of those colonies, they would really have been developed a long time ago. I think we can say the same thing as regards British Guiana. We have spent a large sum of money and wasted a lot of time in producing the ten- year Development Plan, and in dealing with this subject in his Budget Statement the Financial Secretary and Treasurer says:-

“Another important matter which events in 1949 have brought to a head is the urgent necessity for a comprehensive review and revision of the Development Plan. It is clear that the provision for practically every new work and service embodied in the Plan is now under – estimated, and the financial provision for the Plan as a whole is consequently inadequate. That review must also accordingly embrace a re- assessment of financial resources actual and potential, available for its implementation. Unless and until such a review and re-assessment have been made we run the risk of having to take ad hoc decisions wholly on the basis of our judgment of immediate priorities without giving due weight to the requirements of the Plan as a whole.”

We took the trouble a few years ago to prepare this Development Plan for the benefit of the Colony as a whole, but up to now the schemes have not been implemented. The schemes estimated then will cost very much more, so that in the words of the Financial Secretary and the Treasurer we can regard them as being a waste of time. We are now running the risk and danger of taking ad hoc decisions – considering these and other schemes as they come along because we are working with a limited budget of only \$20,000,000 a year. Indeed, we are wedded to the United States and the dollar question, and so I say let us go the United States with hat in hand and tell President Truman that we want so many million dollars for the development of our country. If the United States can give billions of dollars to the Reactionary Chinese Government to fight a people and a non- existent type of evil, she should be able to lend us all the money we want for the development of this Colony.

The Hon. Member has referred to the amount of money Great Britain has wasted in trying to pressure the old order in Europe and particularly in Germany, and if the United States also can waste so much money for such purpose let us go hat in hand and say that we have been waiting for a long time to see the development of this Colony but, unfortunately we have not seen any result as of yet. The Venn Commission as we are all aware, has cost the Colony a few thousand dollars, and I hope the opportunity will be presented to have a full debate on the whole issue of the sugar industry. The Hon. Member from Georgetown South, in his admirable speech a while ago, has told us many things about exploitation – the profits which the sugar producers continue to make and the miserable conditions in which the labourers continue to live in the industry after so many years of its existence in this Colony. We have had a Commission to give us all the facts, and this Council should be given the opportunity to go into all the details

of the reports so that the people of the Colony would know whether those facts are true and what Government intends to do about them. Let us hope that the \$19,000 or whatever was spent for the bringing of the Commission to this Colony would not be considered a wasteful expenditure.

Now, Sir, as regards the bauxite industry, reference has also been made to it in this Budget Statement. I am not going to refer to the working of the industry because the Hon. Member from Georgetown South has already done so, but there is one point which, I think, should not be overlooked especially as we have before us the estimated expenditure for the coming year. Even though we feel that this would be balanced, we know that on the other hand there are surplus funds in the vicinity of \$250,000 under "*Refunds of Loans made by the Colony*" which would come in. These loans which were made last year would come in this year to buoy up the revenue but we would not have anything to give back to the farmers. Hon. Members have referred also to the huge supplementary estimates nearly \$6,000,000 which we have had to vote last year. Provision has not been made for any such estimates this year and we know also that there have been certain recent votes to which the Hon. Member for Eastern Demerara referred yesterday. We may have to expend a few smaller amounts for flood relief as I am sure Government will have to make a review of the position.

As regards the bauxite industry, I know that development has taken place and because of that the exports to Canada will earn a greater amount of dollars for British Guiana. In 1947 when we first came into this Council we found that the export tax on bauxite was on the ad valorem basis – I think it was 71/2 per cent on the price per ton- but that was abolished in favour of a tax on 30 C per ton. This tax was being levied for the last two years, but now the further development has come upon the scene and the price of bauxite would be higher, in effect, I think some effort should be made to reconsider this tax so that a greater amount – corresponding with the development of the industry – would accrue to the revenue of the Colony. I hope consideration will be given to this suggestion and I am sorry to see that it was not included in the Budget Statement. I notice in the Statement, however, that we had a trading deficit of about 5½ million dollars for the last year, our exports being 5½ million dollars less than our imports. That seems to be a chronic illness on the part of this Colony.

(The Financial Secretary and Treasurer: I should like to be permitted to interrupt the Hon. Member right away less that information gets too widely abroad. It is not true to say that a mere deficit between exports and imports represents a chronic illness. One requires to make a very careful analysis of the facts before one takes such a view. In a case where we have a certain amount of capital development going on and it involves the importation of heavy machinery and equipment – such as the capital development we are having now - you may regard it as a good sign indeed. Further, where there is capital invested abroad and there is income coming in – in the form

of remittances – it is a good sign and not a bad sign. I do not want to get abroad that what occurred last year and also occurred in the year 1948-1949 is a chronic illness. Much of the deficit is offset by new capital coming into the country and so long as that goes on it is a good sign indeed.)

Dr. Jagan: Thank you, sir. I was really going into some of the causes and I am very glad the Financial Secretary mentioned some of them. We must be interested in the causes of these things because of the facts alone – such as these – do not tell the whole story. I have just been given some facts which I may have overlooked. We find very often that we have to pay the highest prices for what we import while we sell our goods at prices that are fairly low. I think something should be done so far as our exports are concerned. I see that the sugar producers and in fact most of the newspapers of the Colony are today making serious attempts to get a good price for sugar from Great Britain, and they also want a long term contract. As a matter of fact, some of the newspapers have gone even further than that. The *Guyana Graphic* has supported – in referring to the expected breakdown of sugar talks in Great Britain – the references made of the policy of Colonial exploitation, and I think it is something new to find this newspaper talking about colonial exploitation. Then we have the M.P.C.A. stating that if a new price is not given for sugar all the sugar workers will go on strike in the Colony. I think Government should take steps to see that these people do not go around creating strikes and disorder in this Colony (Laughter). That is the situation, Sir, when it comes to a big industry. We have a good case, but it is not as strong as we would like to make out because we are trying to get an even better price than the world price which is usually controlled by Cuban sugar.

That brings me to the question of rice. Quite recently there was a pronouncement by the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation about the scarcity of food and we find that in spite of the fact that a large amount of food is being wasted in British Guiana millions of people are being starved elsewhere and food is still a scarcity among them. The new state of Indonesia could have been allowed or induced to buy rice from British Colonies in the area, but it is going to be supplied by a country which is a long distance away- the United States of America- at a cost about 15c per pound. That brings me to the cost of rice in British Guiana. If we going to meet the balance between our exports and our imports we should see to it that whatever products are sold abroad are sold at the best possible prices we can get. Why is that our rice is not getting the world price now being demanded by places such as the United States of America. Is it because the industry is now in the hands of small people – the small farmers, many of whom are constantly plagued by floods and droughts etc.? Why is it that the newspapers – with one exception – have not made similar claims for rice as they have done for sugar? They are claiming a price for sugar which is really above the world price, but when it comes to rice

we find that no such advocacy and no such claim is being made. We hope that within the coming year Government will terminate the contract for the supply of rice that it has made to the West Indies and make new contract which would secure a better price. Why should we feed the people of the West Indies with our rice without getting a proper price for it

(**The Colonial Secretary:** To a point of correction: The contracts are not between Government and the West Indies they are between the West Indies and the Rice Marketing Board.)

Dr. Jagan: The Rice marketing Board and the Government are one. They are all bound by Ordinance and the whole thing is already done. We have to pay for imports at world prices – we have to support the English manufacturers whose prices are going up because of the devaluation of the Pound – and I feel that the UK Government should see to it that if they are subsidising the people of the West Indies they should be made to pay world prices for the rice they receive from British Guiana, I do not see why we should be made to feed these people despite of the fact I am in favour of federation and regional control and so on. Conditions being what they are today we must get a world price for our rice so that we can proceed with the development of the Colony as a whole.

If a world price is obtained I feel that much more would be done as regards development which is very much talked about, and it would come of course.

Your statements, Sir, as regards forest development is very admirable indeed. We are glad to see that such a huge concern as the Colonial Development Corporation, with a large amount of capital at its disposal, intends to develop our forest resources. We have also noticed from your statement, Sir, that this corporation and this industry would be helped tremendously by Government in one form or another, and it is a pity, as the Hon. Member from Georgetown South as stated, that the same kind of assistance was not given in the past to similar operations in the Colony. I think we should also make sure that the C.D.C. would not swallow up the small man in this Colony.

There is another thing in which I am particularly interested, but of which I have not seen mentioned in the Budget Statement, and that is the question of profits - whether the profits made by the Corporation will be used for the future development of the Colony. It is true that we are going to give the C.D.C. certain concessions, and Government will not levy duty on the machinery that will be brought in, while it will waive duty on gasoline and so on, but I think something should be said about the profits which will be earned by this Corporation. If the profits to be earned by this Corporation will be used for the further development of this Colony, Guianese will not begrudge the concessions being given to the Corporation. We have not been told about the wages and conditions under which these people

will work. Let us hope that the wages and conditions will not be the same as those which the Evans Commission so minutely set out in their report. I certainly will not begrudge the concessions to be granted to this Corporation, but at the same time I would like to have some pronouncements as regards its future plans and the investment of the profits in this Colony. It is no use giving control to capitalists if no control is to be exercised so far as their profits are concerned. This is what retards the development of this Colony.

In the 1942 report on the economic state of this country it was stated that about two or three million dollars was leaving the Colony every year. That is something to be worried about. Those are the things which retards the development of this Country. We must not only be interested in the capital that comes in: the money is drained out of the Colony again. We must take steps to stop that sort of thing.

I hope that at the end of my term I will one of those Members who can say that my time has not been wasted here. I agree with the statement of the Hon. Member of Georgetown Central (Mr. Fernandes) yesterday that in 50% of the votes taken in this Council the wishes and desires of the people's representatives failed to gain support because of the nature of the Constitution. I would go further to say that that has happened in 80% of the cases. A legislator from Trinidad who recently came here remarked that the guillotine operates, and when it falls the people's interests suffer. We want a change of that system. In this Colony we have officials who seem to be more interested in drawing their salaries and pensions than in the welfare of the people themselves.

We have had during the past year huge expenditure on the Public Works Department. We have had breaches occurring all over the place. We have not been told of the expenditure on the Bonasika and Torani schemes. According to my information, the Ruimveldt breach occurred because certain individuals, who are supposed to be experts, did certain things contrary to the advice of other individuals who were supposed to know. Certain individuals in this Colony seem to have too much say in certain matters, or too much power. I have in mind the housing scheme at Bel Air which, I believe, is being put up for certain employees of Bookers - Directors and other officials. Those persons are living, or will live in an area which has common drainage through the Cummings Canal, and they have been permitted to install a pump which pumps water into and floods the Cummings Canal, with the result that the surrounding area is flooded. They should have been made to put another pump on the other side to pump the water into the river. My friend the Hon. Member from Georgetown South (Mr. Carter), lives next door to this housing scheme at Subryanville. The housing shortage has chased several people to Subryanville.

(The Financial Secretary and Treasurer: They pay less tax.)

Dr. Jagan: I believe in what is much talked about – good – neighbourliness and doing unto other as we would that they should do unto us. Here are two Hon. Members from an area which is flooded because of the operation of a pump which is allowed because certain individuals have power. When I was acting as a member of the Central Board of Health a Public Works Official said that an infinitesimal amount of water would be thrown into the whole area. I certainly would not like to know that my neighbour is causing my yard to be flooded by using a pump which is to keep his yard dry.

I remember discussing in this Council the question of roads in this Colony, and Mr. Seaford remarked that if we are to attempt to construct very good roads in this Colony we would find that there are no foundation because of the nature of the soil. That is exactly the situation which has risen at Bel Air as a result of Bookers being permitted to dig a trench adjoining the road, no doubt to collect the water so as to prevent flooding of their area. As a result of that the parapets of the road are breaking away and falling into the trench, and taxpayers money will be wasted there again. Unfortunately, these things are not mentioned in the Budget Statement, but we have to be interested in them because I hope that in the very near future something will be done to remedy these awful conditions in this Colony.

I believe that I can go on speaking on many more subjects, but I do not think I should waste the Council's time even though I realise that this whole thing is a waste of time. The present Constitution being what it is, I think instead of persecuting you to listen to our speeches we should allow the Administration to carry on in the way it thinks best. As I see it, we achieve very little in this Council. My friend pointed that out yesterday- that we criticise and advise the Government, but we achieve nothing much. I hope that next year when the Constitution Commission comes, we will make strong representation that if we not get real self-government, and if power is not placed into the hands of the people we might as well stop all this waste of time and payment to legislators of \$37,000, and let the Government be run not only as it is being run today but as time immemorial with influences behind the scenes. Those are the things which have been bothering me, and I am glad for the opportunity to voice them. I hope in due course they will be corrected.

Estimates - Agriculture: March 2, 1950

Dr. Jagan: Following upon what the last speaker has said, I would like to point out that I have a similar complaint with respect to this Department. I am a member of the Agriculture Advisory Committee which, on occasions, has discussed the pig industry, the coconut industry and fisheries, but what I find lacking is a concerted policy in this Department. For instance, if one tries to find out what is wrong in the coconut industry – why we cannot have more coconuts – one cannot get a satisfactory explanation. A few days ago a hue and cry was raised about the pig industry, and I remember reading Dr. Fulton's statement that the industry was going down simply because of inadequate supplies of feed such as coconut meal. Recently I sat on a Committee which is attempting to increase the production of copra meal, but basically the whole question of trying to increase the production of copra meal, and the pig population in this Colony, depends on a through reorganisation and overhauling of the coconut industry and the policy of Government. The production of coconuts is more or less limited to the large estates. The people of this Colony as a whole have not the facilities to undertake coconut cultivation. I remember reading in the main Development Committee's report, and the reports of the Sub-Committees, directives for increasing various products, but what I think is necessary is that the Department of Agriculture should tell us how increased production can be achieved.

During the period of one year, since I have been a member of this Committee, I have been endeavouring to get it to discuss policy generally and broadly, but up to present we have not been able to do so.

I lay particular stress on the coconut industry because I feel that, given the opportunities, we could produce sufficient coconuts in this country, not only to supply the needs of the people so far as oil is concerned, but also to supply requirements of the pig industry, and have an exportable surplus. If the question is to be tackled in the right way it means that Government will have to go into it very thoroughly. Most of the coconuts are produced in large estates. There are the Villages of Beterverwagting and Buxton where there is an ever increasing population with very little land at their disposal. The available land is fully cultivated with sugar in most cases, and in other cases with ground provisions and other crops. If land is made available to those people in the overpopulated villages I am sure that each family would be able to put about two acres under coconut cultivation. The problem is where the land is to come from?

Your Excellency has recently appointed a Committee, as a result of the Motion from the Hon. Member for Berbice River (Mr. Ferreria), to consider

the question of land settlement schemes in the Berbice River District, but I think there is one other avenue that should not be left out of consideration. I refer to the estates which adjoin the villages of the East Coast. I have some figures here which I would like the Council to consider. They show that immediately surrounding the villages there are available lands, most of which are at present idling.

For instance, in the Ressonvenir estates in my constituency there is a total acreage of 8,667 acres, of which 2,395 acres, approximately 28 per cent., are described in Acreage Tax returns of the Department of Land and Mines as waste land, dams and trenches. I am sure that much of that land can be put under cultivation if made available to the people of the villages. In the case of the Ogle Estates Ltd., whose area is flanked by the village of Plaisance, out of a total of 6,500 acres no less than 2,132 acres, or approximately 33%, are returned as grazing lands. My point is if we are to solve the agricultural problem of this Colony we have to make more land available to the people. There are large tracts of land owned by the various sugar estates which are not, in my opinion, very beneficially occupied, and I think Government would do well to give this matter very serious consideration.

With regards to fisheries an officer of the Colonial Office recently visited this country for the purpose of advising on the possibilities of fresh water fishing. We are spending a lot of money on research in this connection, and on the Fisheries Department which we have established. Government have even sent an Officer to England to study fishery in the North Sea. We have tremendous possibilities for fresh water fishing on sugar estates, but in many cases such opportunities are not available to the people. Only a few days ago a letter was brought to me by a resident at Lusignan in which it was stated that persons who continued fishing aback the estate would be liable to eviction from the estate.

There is another aspect of the matter which has to do with cane farming in my constituency. In the villages where I have already named a great percentage of cane framing is done, but recently the farmers have been pestered by the froghopper pest. I was present at a meeting of the Cane Framers' Committee recently, at which the Chairman the District Commissioner of the East Coast, intimated that he recommended to Government a grant of about \$30,000 for the purchase of anthracide to combat the pest. It was revealed at a subsequent meeting that the insecticide had been proven to be of great value, but up to the present I find that the recommendation has not been implemented by the Government. I hope that in the very near future something will be done, because the cane-farmers are saying that they wait on Government's decision too long. Government should tell them whether they should continue cane cultivation or revert to the cultivation of ground provisions and other types of farming. It is therefore very important that Government should announce its policy as quickly as possible in order that the cane farmers may know where they stand, because many of them have lost not only their labour but the payments

they have already made to the sugar estates for fertiliser.

I hope that as a result of these few observations I have made the time will not be too far distant when Government will go into the whole question of agriculture and enunciate a clear policy to benefit not only the farmers but the general tax payers who are saddled with a tremendous and rising expenditure on the Department of Agriculture.

Estimates – Cooperative Department: March 2, 1950

Dr. Jagan: I should like to know what the position is so far as quotas for the cooperative societies are concerned. I want to know whether there has been any change in policy. I notice that the expenditure on this Department is increasing tremendously, and I would like to recall that I was one who opposed the Department because I felt at the time that Government had no policy, especially with regards to consumer cooperatives. Up to now the question of quotas - the getting of adequate quantity of goods at short supply – is hindering the development of these societies. I think we will be only wasting the tax payers money if we are going to incur heavy expenditure on this Department without getting proper value for it. Government must be clear in its policy and even though it may be decision of the Colonial Office to encourage the growth of cooperatives societies in this Colony, if Government attempts to carry out the policy there should be a clear statement about it. It is no use our spending so much money to set up this Department when, at the same time, we have other things hindering the development of these societies. Numerous cases have been drawn to my attention in which people wanted to set up cooperative societies - cooperative stores - but owing to the question of quotas they were blocked. I have written several letters to Mr. Cheeseman – the head of this Department- on the subject, but to no avail. I think this matter should be tackled seriously, otherwise I should have to move at some future date that this Department be abolished.

Estimates – Education: March 2, 1950

Dr. Jagan: On this matter of average attendance or, as the Hon. the Financial Secretary and Treasurer states it, graded schools the Hon. Member for Eastern Berbice (Dr. Gonsalves), I think, has expressed sentiments particularly acceptable to most Members of this Council. I have been approached or invited by the teachers of my constituency to consider this matter, and I can assure this Council that the view which is held by the Hon. the Financial Secretary and Treasurer that a large percentage of the teachers are for this new setup is not so. As far as I can see, the two Members who have already spoken on this issue represent quite a large area which, taken in addition to my area, alone shows that a great number of teachers are against the innovation of this new system. The criticisms, which I see and which seem to bear some weight against the system of average attendance, deal with the scope for promotion and with the limited size of the schools. I know that right in the vicinity of Kitty, Bel Air and Campbellville there are several schools of various sizes belonging to or managed by various denominations, and even within those schools because of denominational control there is no scope for the head teacher to go from a school of a small size to a school of a larger size, or from one grade to another. The Hon. Member for Eastern Berbice has already made the point that promotion in many cases, even within the same denomination, is not always based on merit but other considerations, such as playing the organ or teaching in the Sunday School, have due weight in the selection and promotion of teachers.

When we consider that there are several denominational bodies that are governing schools, we find that in certain denominations there is very limited scope for promotion. I have particularly in mind the Lutheran Body. This body has two schools, one of which is at Bel Air. This School has an average attendance, I believe, below 200, or it is a lowest grade school. But this body has only two such schools and the Head Teachers of those schools will have no scope for promotion or improvement. Where are they to go? It means they will probably have to change their denomination for another denomination and hope for promotion in that respect. So this new system certainly will operate against certain teachers. Without going into the various arguments I cannot see really why this system is being pushed forward, especially since the Head of the Department is against it, and it appears to me that the majority of the teachers in the Colony are against the system. Why is it being pushed? In Campbellville a new school was built only a few months ago. This school has a capacity for the highest grade, over 400. If it was a policy of Government in building new schools to place

them under Government control, then those teachers like the Head Teacher of the school at Bel Air, would see scope for promotion in the new Government Schools which are to be built. But what scope is there for him as against an individual who will be taken probably by the Anglican body who will now manage the school at Campbellville? There is no opportunity for an individual such as one of the Lutheran denomination against an individual placed by the Anglican body in the school at Campbellville.

Another factor of which we are not farseeing probably at the moment but which in time may have some bearing in the future, when an adequate amount of schools have been built, is the question of grading. The teachers may begin to raid each other's district so as to maintain the level of the particular grade in which the school is placed.

(The Financial Secretary: If any raiding is done it is to surmount the bar and climb to the next grade. I have already said that as long as a head teacher is qualified at a particular salary in a particular grade he retains that salary whatever happens to the attendance of the school.)

DR. Jagan: If that is going to be so, then I can see what would happen. For instance, if the school at Campbellville has a capacity for over 400 and the schools in Kitty have a capacity for 200 each but there is no control or safeguard, the teachers of the two schools in Kitty - one at David Street and the other at William Street - can decide to raid the children in the Campbellville area and bring them into their schools in the hope, despite the fact that the children may have to stand on the floor and get their education, of increasing their enrolment and thereby raising the grade of their schools. I can see that it is going to lead to a tremendous amount of friction

(The Chairman: The different denominations would have to convert them as well . Would they not?)

Dr. Jagan: From my talks with the teachers it seems they would not object to this system if there was a different system of control of the schools, and I am hoping that Government would give this matter serious consideration because the Teachers' Association at their last conference moved a resolution against denominational control. I remember, one of the arguments against the taking over of the schools by Government was the tremendous expenditure which will have to be incurred because many of the schools were built by the denominations. But if the new schools are being built at Government's expense I do not see that same objection will have to

be met. Therefore these new schools, in keeping with the Resolution which was passed was that the schools should eventually pass over to Government control.

(The Financial Secretary and Treasurer: Which Resolution?)

Dr. Jagan: The Resolution passed at the last Teacher's Conference.

The Resolution of this Council was passed many years before our time. Conditions are changing rapidly and more schools are being built. The situation has definitely changed and we should look at the thing from a broader aspect. That is as much as I would like to say on the question of average attendance.

There is one other thing I would like to touch on, and that is the question of Class III teachers. These teachers are surviving at great disadvantage at the present time and have been surviving in the past, and even under the new rates it appears that they may be in a position which will not be so comfortable. I notice from a memorandum which was submitted to me that the Class III Head Teachers are made to begin at \$116 per month, while the First Class trained assistant teacher or Deputy who reached the maximum in 1949 commences at \$125. So we may have to face the anomaly of having a Class III Head Teacher earning less than his assistant who is a trained Class I teacher. I hope that matter will receive Government's consideration in order to see how it can be ironed out. There are a few other points which I would like to raise, but I do not know whether you wish to adjourn now as it is 5 o'clock.

Education Estimates (Continued): March 3, 1950

Dr. Jagan: I would like to make a few references to some aspects of our education. There is one thing which is particularly bothering me at the present time, and that is the question of school books. I believe the Government is very generous in making the offer of free school books to children in the elementary schools, but I find - and the Director has admitted - that the books which are to be given to these children are the West Indian Readers. My information, Sir, is that the West Indian Readers are badly graded books. The language used in these books is far removed from the pupils; the words are unnecessarily difficult and there is a lack of general interest in the subject matter. I am also informed that some time ago the West Indian Readers were rejected by the Trinidad teachers as un-educational. I do not know why it is that after these books have been tested and proved to be unsatisfactory they are going to be introduced in the schools of this Colony. Possibly the explanation is that they are the cheapest books. Sir, I do not think that in a matter such as this, the education of our children, we should consider the price is too high. Only yesterday we heard a statement from the Hon. the Colonial Secretary that in our functioning of democracy the people have to be properly informed. I am looking to the future when this Colony will be self-governed and when these children of today will have to take their rightful place around this Council table. If we are today going to be cheese-paring in so far as education is concerned, then I fear we would have alarming results in the future. I would like to know why it is the Caribbean Readers, which are accepted as being of a much higher standard than the West Indian Readers, have not been accepted by Government. Is it merely the fact that because the West Indian Readers are cheap that they have been accepted? If that is the reason then, Sir, I very much deplore the decision by Government to purchase the West Indian Readers.

There is one other aspect under this Head which I would like to refer to, and that is the question of Scholarships. On page 21 of the Estimates at items 31 to 39 - British Guiana Scholarships, and Allowances to Scholars, - Expenses of Examinations, etc., the expenditure is estimated at \$11,256. It seems to me that the time has come in this Colony when we must call a halt to the expenditure of money for which the Colony gets no benefit. With the very rare exception of a few cases, this Colony cannot be said to have gained very much by the granting of the Guiana Scholarships. In the past we have been giving one such scholarship but I believe, it is the intention of Government to grant another scholarship to be awarded to a girl. I feel, Sir, that if any scholarships are to be given, then they should be given under certain

conditions. This Colony, as you yourself have pointed out on several occasions, Sir, needs the services of qualified technicians, chemists, agricultural officers and others, and if we are to give these scholarships we must be assured that those people will pursue studies which will be of future benefit to this Colony and having completed their studies they will return and serve this Colony for a period of 5 or 10 years as may be necessary for the benefit of the people of this Colony. I feel, Sir, that instead of granting these scholarships it would be much better to offer many more scholarships than these two on the conditions that half of the sum expended will be given as a free grant and the other half is to be paid back by the candidate on completion of his education and after he has served the Colony for so many years.

I notice only a few days ago an advertisement appearing in the newspapers announcing the granting of a scholarship for Veterinary Science. It is proposed to expend over \$2,000 per annum for this scholarship. I do not feel, Sir, that it is fair to offer these scholarships to only a certain number of students who are so qualified in Science subjects, because a large number of students throughout the Colony have not been able to get the benefit of a secondary education at Queen's College or the Bishops' High School with the result that they have not acquired a Science course and, therefore, do not have an equal opportunity to contest for these scholarships which are now being offered by Government. When we examine the Heads, Queen's College and Bishop's High School, we find that the Government is subsidising the students attending those institutions to a very great extent. That is an advantage which they are already getting, and if we are to add to that advantage the other advantage of giving them a scholarship merely because they have had the good fortune of going to those schools and acquiring a Science course, then it seems to me we are at the same time creating an injustice against the other high school students throughout the Colony. These scholarships should be given, but they should be given with the understanding that when the holders come back to this Colony they would serve the Colony for a specific period of years and that they would pay back at least half of the amount which the scholarship has cost this Government. I believe that in that way we will be able to give more scholarships and thereby get more qualified people to render service to this Colony. At a later stage I shall beg to move that we do not continue item 39 for the offering of two Guiana Scholarships but should offer only one scholarship for the moment, provided that the conditions I have mentioned are placed so that, in future, the holders of these scholarships will serve this Colony for a specific number of years.

With respect to the salaries in the Teachers' Salaries Report I beg to make a few observations which, perhaps, I missed yesterday. I should say, Sir, it was the opinion of Members of this Council in Finance Committee that this whole question of Teachers' salaries should be gone into separately before the Estimates were included under this Head, but having now been in-

cluded under this Head it places this Council in a very serious position because we would have to vote out the whole Head if we do not agree with certain considerations which were submitted in that Report. I hope that in the future when I move the Resolution it will meet with the support of Members of this Council so that this whole matter can be gone into more fully by this Council again. In the Report, Sir, reference has been made to University Graduates. It seems to me that the Commissioners have given great credit to the University Graduates and have placed them in scales which will be to their great advantage against the other teachers. I notice that the figures recommended for an Assistant Teacher with a University qualification will be between \$122 to \$164 per month, as against \$80 to \$125 for the trained First Class Assistant. We all know the decision of the Board of Examiners in Great Britain is that in 1951 the London Matriculation Examination will be discontinued. So those teachers, who have not had the benefit of a secondary education and who may aspire to the getting of a University degree, will face serious difficulties in the future, whereas the students who go through the normal channels of the Bishops' High School and Queen's College and other High Schools in the Colony will be permitted to get their B.A. or BSc. and thereby get a peculiar advantage over other teachers who may not have a University degree.

In the recommendations the Assistant Teacher with a University qualification is offered a better scale of salary than the Deputy Head Teacher of the highest grade whose maximum is \$145. So the University graduate with a B.A. degree, if he is offered a position in a school, can go to a maximum of \$164, whereas the trained Assistant after going through the Training College can only go to a maximum of \$145. It is felt by members of the teaching profession that if the University Graduates are to be accepted and there is no doubt in their minds that these people should be accepted within the teaching profession after they have acquired their B.A. or BSc. degree they should be made to go through the normal course of training required for teachers, and that is, passing through the Training College. I know that in the U.S.A. if one desires to become a teacher one has to go through a special school wherein one gets the B.A. degree or BSc. degree in Education, which is entirely different from a general B.A. or BSc. degree obtainable in a University College. The profession of Education is a technical and special one, and merely having a B.A. or BSc. degree does not qualify a person to become a teacher. So it is felt that anyone with a degree who aspires to become a teacher should be paid in accordance with the grade in which he is presently fit, either Class 1 or II, and then having gone through the prescribed course of training at the Teachers' Training College made to fit into the revised scale now proposed for graduates. I believe that is really not asking too much by the teachers at the present time, taking into consideration the teaching profession as a whole and the interest of the pupils whom they will have to teach.

There is another point with reference to Un-certificated Assistants. These

Un-certificated Assistant teachers are really today suffering very seriously. It is true that it should not be the policy of Government to encourage teachers without certificates and the profession as a whole has recognised it as a cardinal principle, but it is felt that Un-certificated Assistant teachers who have served for a long number of years, who may be over 40 years of age and who may have given satisfactory service, should be placed in the category of the Class III certificated teachers. Many of these people today, their salary scale being so low, are getting, I believe, even less than the Government is paying unskilled labourers or almost the same. I think the teaching profession, even though these people are not certified, demands that teachers who have had a good service over a long number of years should be treated in a much better way.

There is one other point which, I think, needs serious consideration by Members of this Council, and that is with reference to the recommendation of the Committee that unqualified persons be appointed in the remote districts, such as the interior, etc. I feel that in those areas it is all the more necessary to have qualified teachers and trained teachers. It is felt and I believe it is a cardinal principle of education that the more backward a pupil is the more trained the teacher would have to be. If we take for instance, the Amerindians the people in the remote areas of the interior who have had very little use for education. I do not think it would be fair to send unqualified teachers to teach them, but rather teachers of a higher grade.

I listened carefully to the Hon. the Financial Secretary and Treasurer, yesterday, in his statement relating to Head Teachers and other aspects of education in the Report which was submitted to this Council. He made the point, Sir, that Head Teachers would not stand to lose financially through the proposed system of graded schools, but I do not think the Teaching Profession is very much worried, or wholly worried only about the teachers at the top at present. They are looking also at the assistants who may aspire to Head Teacher scholarships in future, so that even if the present Head Teachers do not stand to lose the position of the future Head Teachers would be in jeopardy. For instance, if a 1st class Trained Assistant Teacher is appointed to a grade III school he would go to a maximum of \$164 per month under the new scale, whereas, under the old system the long-grade system he would have gone to a maximum of \$200. In other words, such a teacher stands to lose the sum of \$36 per month under the grade system which is to be reintroduced, and all Assistant Teachers would find themselves in a precarious position in future.

What I should like to ask the Financial Secretary and Treasurer is this: If the system which was in operation from 1944 - 49 was operating successfully, why is it necessary to make a change? I have before me a statement of awards made to primary schools between 1944 and 1948, and it shows that in 1944 when the system of payment by average attendance was in vogue there were two "excellent" schools as against one in 1948, under the sys-

tem of long-grade payment. There were 43 "very good" schools in 1944 as against 67 in 1948; and there were 174 "good" schools in 1944 as against 67 in 1948. In the "fair" category, there were 176 schools in 1944 as against 105 in 1948; while in the "poor" category, there were four in 1944 as against eight in 1948. In the "unsatisfactory" grade, there were three in 1944 and none in 1948. Those awards were made on the basis of organisation, discipline, instruction and record; and this statement clearly shows that the "good" and the "very good" schools have risen in number between 1944 and 1948.

Yesterday, the Hon. Member for Eastern Berbice and the Hon. Member for Eastern Demerara spoke fully against the evils and the disadvantages of the grade system which it is proposed to reintroduce, and I do not think it should be regarded by this Council as being fully acceptable to all concerned. Now that we are considering the Estimates with the revised rates of salaries for teachers under the new scales, I do not know what procedure this Council should adopt with reference to this Head. I feel that consideration of this Head should be postponed for the time being until further consideration is given to the question of teachers' salaries by this Council or by a Special Committee. I have great pleasure, Sir in moving the following Motion at this time:

"That in view of the dissatisfaction expressed by the B.G.T.A. which represents two thirds of the teachers in active service with the Majority Report of the Committee, and also in view of the disagreement with the payment by average of the Director of Education, that the whole question be recommitted to a representative Committee including members of the B.G.T.A. and that an interim relief of one month's salary be paid to teachers with the necessary adjustments when the scales are finalised."

Only yesterday I asked that the Standing Rules and Orders be suspended so that a certain Motion could be taken, but it was not done. I know that Members have been given the opportunity in the past to move actions before the Order of the Day was taken. Yesterday we began consideration of the draft Estimates and we have not had any opportunity to discuss the Report of the Salaries and Wages Committee relating to teachers. No opportunity was given to me to present this Motion and I do not think this Council should take it upon itself to oppose this Motion at this stage; I am quite prepared to give notice of it.

I can give notice of this notion but I want to have it considered before the items under this Head are approved by this Council. This Council has not given an opportunity to discuss this Report relating to teachers fully during the Finance Committee period, and I should like to hear Hon. Members on this point.

Queens College: March 3, 1950

Dr. Jagan: I beg to agree heartily with the sentiments expressed by the Hon. Member who has just taken his seat. Looking at the Estimates I notice that under this Head the expenditure is estimated at \$96,629 for this year, while the revenue is only \$20,000. I believe the school population is about 400. It will therefore be seen that we are subsidising this institution to the extent of approximately \$190 per pupil per year. There are thousands of other students in this Colony; students to whom I was referring some time ago, who cannot have the benefit of Science subjects with the exception of those attending St. Stanislaus College and one or two other high schools. I think the Hon. Member is to be commended for making such a suggestion, because more and more we see the necessity for having students properly trained, especially, in these days, in Science subjects and, if we can make way for additional students in the upper grades at Queen's College, then we should certainly do so and abolish the preparatory form right away.

That brings me to another point. I know that several students from other high schools were some time ago getting instructions in Science subjects at Queen's College, but the complaint was that the fees charged were exorbitant. Perhaps the Masters at Queen's College could not be blamed because probably they had to put in a hard day's work and had the additional duties of setting and marking papers. So if they have to undertake additional duties in teaching students from outside they feel they should be adequately compensated. I can assure you that adequate compensation was indeed a very high figure for the students from outside. I appeal to you, Sir, to see if, when the new College comes into operation, something can be done to permit Masters from outside who may have had Science training to use the facilities of Queen's College and the Bishops' High School if the Masters there cannot be utilised to give training in Science subjects to outside students. There are certified teachers outside who are willing to undertake the tuition of Science subjects to students of other high schools. Since the taxpayers have to provide the money to provide the laboratory at the Bishops' High School and at Queen's College, I feel the other students who are not subsidised to the extent of \$190 each a year should get the benefit of the facilities of the laboratory at these institutions. I hope Government will give this matter full consideration.

This is indeed an age of Science; more and more we find that and, as the Hon. Colonial Secretary mentioned a few moments ago, in giving scholarships not only we must get the best qualified candidates but the Universities demand that they should have the proper training in Science, etc. If we are to give these scholarships, then we should give the advantage not only

to those students who are already heavily subsidised but also to those students, who are in a less fortunate position, students who may be very poor. I hope the time is not far distant when this preparatory form will be abolished and facilities given for the teaching of Science subjects to outside students who may be receiving training in the other high schools which are at the present time being run without the benefit of Science education being given.

I notice that the new Queen's College is really a large and imposing structure, and I am really wondering whether such a large building will not be able to provide accommodation for more than 500 students. It may be able to train more students in that College by a system of rotation. I know as a fact that in the U.S.A. there are high schools which do this.

I remember that when I first came into this Council I heard the Hon. Member for Essequibo River saying that he did not see the necessity for this Department. Now I am also amazed to hear the Hon. Member for Eastern Demerara repeating the argument and saying that the work of the Department is being duplicated by other departments.

I am amazed because I share that view myself. This reminds me of a joke I read a few days ago about a man being willing to accept at a smaller salary a certain post which the Board of Directors wanted to abolish, and he admitted that his willingness to accept the smaller salary was due to the fact that the men below him were the people who were really doing the work. I cannot help saying also that in this Colony a lot of people are having a nice time. Sometimes I wonder why I myself was not having a nice time and why, instead of having such a hard time in this Legislature, I did not get a nice job like the Commissioner of the Interior riding around and having an easy time. I certainly feel that this expenditure should not be incurred as there is, very definitely, overlapping of the work of this Department.

The Hon. Member for Eastern Demerara has also referred to the question of development. On that point I would like to say that up to now I am really not convinced that there is enough room in this Colony for an Economic Adviser and also a Financial Secretary and Treasurer. I do not see where the functioning of the one begins and that of the other ends. I support the suggestion of the Hon. Member for Eastern Demerara that since the Commissioner of the Interior is holding another post in another Colony at present, we should take this opportunity to see that this Head is abolished and, probably, transfer the duties of the Department back to the Department of Local Government to which they rightly belong. I hope Government would be in a position to tell us what is the considered opinion of the Executive Council in this matter? It seems to me that in many cases whether we fill posts or not, things go on the same way. I have seen that happen in the Department of Agriculture and in this case I have no doubt that the same thing would apply. I hope the time is not far distant when we would cease the expenditure of this money.

Estimates - Labour Department: March 3, 1950

Dr. Jagan: I observe that the expenditure on this Department is rising, and I am wondering whether we are getting any benefits for the amount of money being spent. I remember that some time last year, after the consideration of the estimates of this Department, a Motion was tabled in this Council, but, like so many other Motions, it has not yet seen the light of day. I do not know what the Hon. Member for Essequibo River (Mr. Lee) is doing about it. In the meanwhile I notice that the Commissioner of Labour has been praised very highly by the Venn Commission. Be that as it may, I still feel that all is not well with this Department. The Commissioner of Labour holds it as a cardinal principle that there are too many unions in this Colony, and that the sooner we get unity among the unions and the number of unions is reduced, the better it would be for the people of this Colony. With that view, I do not think any person, or anyone in this Council, is in disagreement, but how that is to be achieved is a horse of a different colour, and that is where we find ourselves at least I find myself in total disagreement with the views held by the officers of the Department, and particularly those of the Commissioner of Labour.

As I have already indicated in this Council, attempts have been made to unify the unions, but to no avail. If it is held by the Department that there are already too many unions in this Colony, and that no other unions must be accepted or recognised for official or bargaining purposes, then the Department should come into the open and say that no more unions will be registered in the future. I believe that the Commissioner of Labour has already indicated that he would not like to do so because, if he did so, he would be acting contrary to the I.L.O. Convention to which Great Britain is a party, and to which this Colony is also a party. The principle laid down by the I.L.O. is that workers have the right to organise, and consequently they have the right to have their unions registered. If that right is upheld by Government and the Labour Department what guarantee is there by the Department that, after unions are formed and registered, they are given the right of collective bargaining for their workers? We must play the game straight. The Department must either be against the right of workers to organise or for it. It must not say that it upholds the right of individual workers to organise, and have the right of collective bargaining, and to register their unions when they are formed, and on the other hand refrain from seeing that they are recognised by the employers when the time comes for recognition. The Department must act consistently, because if its policy is not carried through consistently I feel that it is going to lead to difficulties.

I have made a suggestion which I do not say is an admirable one, or that

it should be accepted, but I do know that it is working in Canada, and has been working for a long time in the United States. Perhaps it may be argued that what is good enough for North America may not be good enough for Great Britain. This is a Colony where conditions are not the same as in Great Britain and the Commissioner of Labour must take local conditions into consideration in order to arrive at a solution of the problems as they arise here. But no attempt whatever is being made to arrive at any solution. The Department simply follows the outmoded policies which lead to trouble, and will continue to lead to trouble. If workers are encouraged to organise and after their unions are registered they are told that the employers will only recognise the unions which they desire to recognise, than the right to organise is not guaranteed at all.

I submit for the consideration of this Council that something will have to be done very soon if we are to prevent a recurrence of the trouble we had only a year ago, as a result of which Government had to spend a great deal of money. In my constituency people are always pestering me about union matters, and I wish to be relieved of this responsibility. They are pestering me because the organisations of their choice cannot gain recognition. I want to know how long is this state of affairs to continue whether Government or the Labour Department is going to concede to the employers the right to say that they recognise a particular union regardless of the views of their employees. If the Department holds such a view, and Government supports it, then I suggest that this Council should definitely object to it, because such a view would only support the establishment of company unions. If employers say that they will only recognise certain unions, probably for their own ulterior motives and this Government upholds that view they would only be inviting trouble, and I hope the time will come very shortly when Members of this Council will urge very strongly upon Government the necessity to find a realistic solution to this problem, because, as far as I can see, the Commissioner of Labour has not arrived at any realistic solution to this very serious and urgent problem.

With reference to the quotations read a few minutes ago from the Report of the Venn Commission I have this to add: Mr. Bisseli, as those who know him will confirm, is a very facile speaker and a very good salesman. I am sure he put up a very good case in defending himself before the Venn Commission. There are other views on this matter. Some of his officers, and particularly one who has left the Colony, can say something entirely different from what has been quoted in the Venn Report. I would like to know from Government whether this Council will have an opportunity to debate the Motion of the Hon. Member for Essequeibo River (Mr. Lee) and to have a full discussion on the Venn Commission's Report. I consider it very important as there are quite a lot of matters tied up with it not only the question of trade unions but the whole economy of the sugar industry.

Estimates Medical — X-Ray Department: March 8, 1950

Dr. Jagan: There is provision under this Head for the post of Radiologist and I hope that Government is considering the question of a future holder of the post because, as we are all aware, the present Radiologist is an officer on contract. Apparently the contract is for a period of three years and I believe that under the terms thereof this officer is permitted to get half of the fees from his Department. This in itself is creating quite a great deal of confusion and worry because other specialist officers are complaining that they are not getting the same benefit. It may be that we could not find another radiologist and therefore had to include this provision in the terms of the contract, but it is felt that there is no necessity for the radiologist to get half the fees charged to his Department. I know myself that many dentists and private medical practitioners send patients to the hospital to be X-rayed if they want to get a reading of the pictures by a specialist officer, but there is no reason why half of the fees charged for the pictures should go to this officer. I hope Government would give due consideration to this matter when his contract expires and, in keeping with what the last speaker has said, I hope provision would be made to send abroad one of our practising physicians to take a specialised course in radiology so that by the time the present radiologist retires we would have a trained officer on hand to take his place. I hope Government would not wait until the contract expires and say they cannot get another such officer and therefore they would have to renew the contract on the present terms.

Estimates – Medical: March 8, 1950

Dr. Jagan: Under this Head I desire to express the hope that every effort will be made to utilise some of the buildings at Atkinson Field to provide temporary accommodation at the Best Hospital. The Hon. Member for Georgetown Central made reference a few minutes ago to the new ward which is to be built there and we all know that it is going to provide accommodation for 100 beds. He also pointed out that there are officially 300 cases now awaiting accommodation at the hospital but there is a much larger number who, perhaps, have not yet been examined.

There is one other point I would like to touch upon and it is with reference to the Superintendent in charge of the Mahaica Hospital. I do not know if this officer has returned to his post because I know that he has been acting as Prison Surgeon for some time now. A few minutes ago I spoke about the value of research work to our community, mentioning the question of malaria and the wonderful work which Dr. Giglioli has done in that respect. I will now make reference to the research work done by the Medical Superintendent of the Mahaica Hospital and which has been acknowledged not only in this Colony but, I believe, in international circles. His research work and the treatment resulting from it have been included in textbooks on tropical medicine dealing with this particular question of leprosy. I have been informed that if this research work is continued we can hope within a period of five or ten years for the complete or almost complete elimination of leprosy from this Colony. Since this officer has been honoured by His Majesty the King in acknowledgement of the great work he has undertaken, I think every effort should be made to place him in such a position as would enable him to continue his research work which would tend towards the elimination of leprosy from this Colony. If such a thing is achieved, it would undoubtedly be a great boon to this Colony as a whole.

Medical (cont.): March 8, 1950

Dr. Jagan: As I listened to the Hon. Member for Demerara-Essequibo (Dr. Singh), I wondered whether my mode of behaviour could be traced to this fact that I was not a member of the Boy Scout Movement. I can see under this Head, despite the criticisms made recently, that Government is now giving serious consideration to the establishment of a first class Medical Service for British Guiana. There, are still, however, several positions which should be filled and that very, quickly. I am glad to notice, that after nearly six months we are to have an Ophthalmologist, who will be coming to us very shortly. I am sure the patients who have been awaiting such an individual will be very grateful when this individual comes to British Guiana. On the Estimates provision is made for three Health Officers. I think the time has come when British Guiana should look after the preventive aspect of medicine more so than it has been doing for a very long period of time. We all appreciate this good work, the research work if I may put it that way, which has been done by Dr. Giglioli and which has borne fruit. It has reduced the incidence of malaria in this country and to a great extent has improved the health standard of the people of the Colony. There can be no doubt that this in the long run, will help not only individual families but also help this Colony in increasing the total production, as a whole.

We need to have more officers who will engage in research to see if we can combat the evil of the deadly diseases which are with us and which are so debilitating to our population. I may make special reference to *filariasis*, which indeed is creating a great deal of hardship and inconvenience to a large section of our population. I hope that the time will not be far distant when we will have the services of the three Health Officers who will not only be responsible for looking after the sanitary conditions and public health facilities in the various districts but will also undertake some bit of research to see that the areas of the colony are improved as a whole. We have in our Estimates also the post of Medical Officer, Ear, Nose and Throat. We have been having for the past months the services of a part-time individual. I am sure that it is within Government's knowledge that part-time officers usually cost more money, and that is perhaps one reason why many private practitioners are not accepted on a part-time basis. If that is so, then I feel that Government should be consistent and should not engage the services of a part-time official at great expense on the taxpayers of the Colony. I believe that for such services for only a few afternoons a week we have to pay as much as, I speak subject to correction, \$400 per month. Government will be wise to give due consideration to the permanent appointment of this individual who is now acting in this post or who is now doing part-time service, in this post.

Sir, I intended to speak very broadly on this Head, but since, the Hon. Member for Demerara Essequibo (Dr. Singh) has spoken so fully and since it does appear to me that after the criticisms which were levelled by various individuals Government is making every effort to improve this Department, I feel that I should not say anything, more at this time but wait and hope that by the end of this year we will have, a first class Medical Service in this Colony, because the population rightly deserves the services of a first class Medical Service.

Miscellaneous: March 8, 1950

Dr. Jagan: A few minutes ago I made reference to the printing of Hansard and so on. Not very long ago we were requested, in the Finance Committee, to increase the amount which was voted for Government printing by contract, and from the Estimates here we see that there has been an increase of \$14,000 from \$36,000 in 1949 to \$50,000 in 1950. I remember reading a circular which was sent to me to the effect that every effort would be made by the printing contractors to bring up-to-date within a very short time the work which has been lying in wait for such a long time. It was only at a very recent meeting of this Council that I was handed the Report of the Public Works Department for 1948, and therein I read last night of the floods we experienced in 1948. I could not even remember those floods because we experienced much more serious ones this year. We increased the printing vote from \$36,000 to \$50,000 because we felt that the work the printing firm had undertaken for Government was too much and because the cost of printing had risen, but now we find that many of the things stipulated in the contract the printing of Departmental Reports, the printing of the Minutes of this Council and those of the Finance Committee are not being done by the contractors, but are being cyclo-styled at Government's expense.

I would like to know why the printing vote should be increased when at the same time Government is utilising the services of its employees and also its own stationery to do some of the printing stipulated in the contract. We voted the increase with the understanding that all these things would have been done and that the work would have been brought up to date, but I am sorry to say that this has not yet been done. If this state of affairs continues for a long period I shall ask that a complete revision be made of the printing Estimates and that Government should consider seriously whether the printing should not be done by various printing concerns on a contract basis, instead of being done by a single firm as at present.

With reference to item 20 Tourist Bureau and advertisement of the Colony in Canada and elsewhere, \$10,000 I am going to move the deletion of this item. The Hon. Member for Essequibo River asked some questions in this Council not very long ago and we saw some very revealing figures in the answers given. I have not got those figures with me at this moment but I do know that for the year 1949 and also for the year 1948 only a very small number of people tourists and others came to this Colony as passengers on the "Lady boats". I feel sure that we are not spending this \$10,000 a year to any great advantage, so far as the attraction of tourists is concerned.

The small numbers reveal that the tourists we are encouraging to come to this Colony might have come whether we spent this \$10,000 or not, and

it is my considered opinion that if we delete this sum from the Estimates we would find that we have not seriously affected the tourist trade because, up to the present time, the numbers are very small. I feel that much of the work that is done locally to inform tourists who come here of sight-seeing tours can be done by the Bureau of Public Information, and I hope Members will support me when I move that this item be deleted, and that part of the work which is done in this Colony be undertaken by the Bureau of Public Information.

There is one other item 42 Grant to West Indies Rifle Clubs Association, \$5,000. I feel that this expenditure of \$5,000 is indeed a waste of the taxpayers' money. We can do very much more with \$5,000 than to send a B.G. section of a West Indies rifle team to Bisley. I hope Members will also support me when I move the deletion of this item.

One other item which should be given serious consideration by this Council is item 48 Atkinson Field, Maintenance and Operation, \$150,000. This, I believe, is only a tentative estimate, and I hope this Council will be given an opportunity to examine the workings of Atkinson Field in a very short time. We are hearing all kinds of rumours. Some individuals say that, after all, it may turn out that this Colony did not make a good bargain and that the buildings are not worth as much as they were supposed to be worth.

While on this point, I may mention that many items which could have been used by Government Departments were sold even before officers of the various Departments had an opportunity to visit Atkinson Field and examine them. I make special reference to dental items which are sadly needed at the Hospital today. The full-time Dental Surgeon who has been engaged is handicapped because he has not got proper facilities, instruments and equipment and I know as a fact that at Atkinson Field there was a fully equipped dental surgery, but, unfortunately, the equipment was sold even before the Dental Surgeon and, I believe, the Director of Medical Services had an opportunity to visit Atkinson Field and make their choice.

I remember hearing the Hon. Member for Georgetown Central (Mr. Fernandes) say in this Council that it was proposed to purchase the buildings and equipment at the Base. He mentioned the matter in Finance Committee and asked that a list of all the items purchased by Government should be presented to the Council. If that had been done before the remaining items were exposed for sale to the public I am sure Government would have had an opportunity to benefit by the utilisation of many of those articles. It is sad to say that Government will have to spend large sums of money, especially in these days of rising prices, to obtain many articles which were sold there very cheaply.

The expenditure of \$150,000 merely for the purpose of having a few planes running to and from this Colony, is indeed a great deal of money to be spent by this Colony, and this Council will have to review the whole policy as regards air transportation, and decide whether or not we should extend the service of B.G. Airways to include the island of Trinidad, so as

to obviate this huge expenditure of \$150,000.

I mean that consideration should be given to the question of building an airstrip somewhere in the vicinity of Georgetown so that we can utilise it for the purpose of landing passengers from Trinidad and the neighbouring West Indian islands.

I observe that item 37 Liaison Officer, Colonial Office has been increased from \$900 in 1949 to \$1,400, an increase of \$500, and that in the Explanatory Note it is stated that tentative provision has also been made for the appointment of an Assistant Liaison Officer. I do not think this Colony should continue to contribute to such an office in Great Britain. I think we might limit the expenditure under this vote to what was contributed in 1948.

Then there is item 46 Expenses of External Conferences, \$5,000. I think Government should give very serious consideration to this question of conferences. I know that many officers are spending most of their time, or a large portion of their time, going to these conferences - I have in mind the Director of Agriculture who recently came to British Guiana and has already gone to two conferences. He has work to do on many Committees. The Agricultural Advisory Committee has been trying to get his Department to enunciate a policy but, possibly because of these conferences, to which not only the Director of Agriculture but many other officers to this Government have to be sent, much of his time is spent on routine matters. Some attempt should be made not only to cut down this expenditure but also to save the valuable time of Heads and Deputy Heads of Government Departments.

I think the last two speakers have misunderstood me. I was not moving the deletion of the item because I realised that the Colony is already committed to the payment of 17 per cent of the salary allowances, etc. What I objected to was the tentative provision which has been made for the appointment of an Assistant Liaison Officer.

I did not say we should do it. I said we may have to go into the possibility.

I notice under this Head, item 14 which read "*Contribution to Society of Comparative Legislation, \$26*". The amount is very small, but I would like to know whether the Society's Bulletin, if there is one, is forwarded to this Colony; and if so whether that is available to Members. There is another item Annual Grant to Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture, \$6,000. It has been brought to my attention, and Government should give it some consideration, that the students who are proposed to this College are not told what their grades are when they have sat an examination. They are only told they have either passed or failed. I think the custom in most colleges is to tell the student what grade he obtained in particular subjects, if he has got credit, etc. The graduates from this College have told me that there is no distinction whatever as to the various grades one candidate has got against another at the examination, and when there is consideration for

promotion a student is usually at a loss to know whether he has an advantage for selection as against another student. Students who have failed have complained that they are not told how many marks they obtained in the subjects in which they have failed. I think this Government would do well to find out if it is not possible for the Instructors at that College to make it a part of their *modus operandi* to tell the students after they have taken an examination what grade or marks they have obtained in the various subjects. This will at the same time allow students who have failed to know how badly they have failed, and those who have passed to know how well they have done. The students from the West Indies have complained that in many cases where promotions were being made they were by passed in preference to others. And since they are not told at the time when they obtained their diplomas what grade they made in acquiring them they are not in a position to protest. It seems to me that is indeed fair criticism, and I hope the time will come when the College of Tropical Agriculture will consider this matter very seriously and let every student know what standard he has attained in obtaining his diploma.

There are certain diplomas in respect of which the student may pass with a very high degree of proficiency. Some may pass in the first or second grade as in the Cambridge Examinations. The students would certainly like to know what grade they reached in qualifying, because they feel, especially the West Indian students, that in cases of promotion they are being by passed and when they protest it can always be thrown at them that such and such an individual did better than they whereas they, had all graduated at the same time at the same institution.

With reference to item 56 "*Subsidy to British Guiana United Broadcasting Company Ltd., \$9,000*"-

I should like to support what the Hon. Member has said because many pensioners are finding it difficult to meet the cost of living which is constantly increasing. Only recently we increased the salaries of public officers and the wages of unskilled labourers; therefore, I think it is the duty of Government to see that these pensioners who have given valuable service in the past get better consideration. I am thinking particularly of those people who are getting very small pensions with which to keep body and soul together.

I should like to refer also to item 9 Gratuities to Non-pensionable Officers and Employees and their dependants under Resolution No. XXV dated 21.8.40 and to relatives of deceased Public Officers, Ordinance 17 of 1920, Cap. 206. The Hon. Member for Eastern Demerara has referred to the Motion he moved some time ago, but I would like to refer to one of which I gave notice a few days ago and to hope that it would not be long delayed. It refers to daily workers and their gratuity which is calculated on a basis of seven years' service at 225 working days a year. We know as a fact that many of these workers who are permanently employed by Government have not been able to work 225 days in a year, through no fault of their

own. Consequently, they have lost their right to a gratuity and I hope Government would give this matter very urgent consideration so that they would become entitled to gratuities which are, after all, very small. The estimates for gratuities this year total \$16,865 and I am sure that if the Motion of which I gave notice is accepted this total would not be greatly increased.

I observe that the expenditure in the Police Department has raised from a little over half a million dollars in 1940 to one and a half million dollars in 1950. This is indeed a very steep rise. I do not know what the reason is really whether more crime is being committed in the Colony, in consequence of which there is need, for greater supervision and so on. It is, however, alarming to note that the cost of the Police Department has increased in 10 years from half a million dollars to one and a half million dollars. I do not know whether an attempt should be made to tighten up on the expenditure in this Department. I notice one small item, 33, Purchase of 1 typewriter, \$154 for the CID office. I wonder whether the typewriter will be used for the transcription of shorthand notes which are taken at public meetings at night. I wonder whether this note taking is really necessary, and if it is necessary to have trained policemen going around in the evenings taking Shorthand notes at public meetings. Is this note-taking in the public interest and to the benefit of the taxpayers of the Colony? Personally I do not think it is necessary, and I think it should be stopped.

One other point has just occurred to me with reference to the Police Canteen where black-marketing is being practised. An ex-policeman brought to me two receipts which showed that an article was bought at the Canteen at one price one morning, and the same evening a higher price was charged for the same article. I hope this practice will be discontinued especially as it is a Government concern, in order that some stability might be created in the minds of policemen if they are to continue to purchase from the Canteen.

Subvention for Maintenance of Kitty Roads: November 2, 1950

Dr. Jagan: The object of my second Motion is very clear. The Motion states:

“WHEREAS the town of New Amsterdam with a population of 9,567, according to the 1946 Census, is granted an annual subvention by Government of \$12,000 for maintenance of roads and streets;

AND WHEREAS the Mayor and Town Council, Georgetown, is granted an annual contribution of \$50,000 towards maintenance of roads and streets;

AND WHEREAS Kitty Village with a population of 8,927, according to the 1946 Census, has to maintain a large number of roads and streets, many of which are in a bad state of disrepair;

AND WHEREAS the revenue of Kitty Village is not adequate to maintain roads, etc., in a proper condition.

BE IT RESOLVED that this Council recommends the Government the granting of an annual subvention of \$10,000 to the Kitty Village Authority towards the maintenance of roads and streets.”

I move this Motion because the Kitty Village Council has been experiencing a great deal of difficulty in meeting the expenditure for the proper maintenance of their roads. They may have appealed to Government officially and, I believe unofficially for a grant towards maintenance of their roads and streets. I quite appreciate the fact that there is great danger inherent in this Motion, because it may be argued that the moment we vote in this Council a subvention to the Kitty Village Council we will have all the villages crying out for similar treatment, but I would like to point out that Kitty Village stands out on its own because it is different in many respects from the other villages. It is not really a village in the sense that it has no backlands, and should really be a municipal area. In my constituency there are villages like Plaisance, Beterverwagting and Buxton which has backlands, but Kitty has no backlands and because of that it is deprived of revenue which is obtained from the backlands of other villages, for the proper maintenance of roads and so on.

In their estimates for this year the Kitty Village Council voted the sum of \$10,000 for the maintenance of their roads and streets, and the vote has already been exceeded. When one examines the condition of the roads in the village one finds that there is need for greater expenditure in order to

maintain them in proper condition. I am told by the Chairman of the Village Council that Kitty and Subryanville have a total of 23 roads, whereas most of other villages have either one or two roads connected in the backlands with the residential areas. They may be one or two cross streets which are used by vehicular traffic. Consequently, Kitty village stands more in relation to Georgetown and New Amsterdam than that to other villages. I therefore feel that as subventions are voted by this Council to the Georgetown and New Amsterdam Municipalities towards the maintenance of their roads and streets, similar action should be taken with reference to the Kitty Village Council.

In the preamble to the Motion I mentioned that a 1946 Census records the population of New Amsterdam as 9,567 and the population of Kitty Village has 8,927, so that New Amsterdam has a little over 500 more people than Kitty, but we have to have regard to the fact that since the Census was taken many people have migrated from Georgetown to Kitty Village on account of serious house shortage in the City on which you, Sir, have commented on more than one occasion. In consequence many dwellings are being constructed in Subryanville and other sections of Kitty Village. If population figures were available for the present times I have no doubt that it would be found that Kitty and New Amsterdam would be in the same relationship so far as population is concerned. If Government have found it necessary to grant the Municipality of New Amsterdam the subvention of \$12,000 towards the maintenance of the roads, I submit that the same consideration should be given to the Kitty Local Authority because there are similarly placed.

There are roads in Kitty village which are constantly being used by vehicular traffic which really does not concern Kitty village as such. Vlissengen Road being in the condition it is we find that many of the P.W.D trucks travelling up the East Coast make a detour through Kitty village via Barr street. This practice has tended to destroy many of the roads in Kitty village which were previously in very good condition. Again, since the advent of the large motor buses there has been further deterioration of the roads in Kitty village. Of course it maybe said that those large buses are providing a service for the people of Kitty village, but on the other hand it can also be argued that Kitty formerly had a bus service of its own which was run by residents in the village and that when the new Company applied for a franchise in the City of Georgetown Kitty village was included in its route and the former bus owners had to give up their business. The result of this increased traffic is that Barr street, Sandy Babb Street and the main street which runs through the centre of the village have been completely destroyed, and it takes a great deal of money to maintain those streets in proper repair. I therefore feel that if this Council voted a sum of \$10,000 to the Kitty Village Council towards the maintenance of their roads it would be relieving a serious situation which should not be allowed to deteriorate any further. Kitty in its very close proximity to the City of

Georgetown. There is one group who hold that Kitty should be incorporated with Georgetown, while others feel that Kitty should be made a municipality of its own. Whatever that maybe, the fact that Kitty is so much related to the other municipality places it in a position where it should be similarly treated. If New Amsterdam can be given a subvention of \$12,000 per annum and Georgetown \$50,000 per annum for the maintenance of roads and streets, then I feel this Council would be doing the right thing to vote a sum of \$10,000 for the maintenance in Kitty.

I have listened to the criticisms which have been levelled against the adoption of this Motion. To deal first with the remarks of the Hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Farnum, I would say that when he referred to self-help I do not think he was very serious, because in a matter such as maintenance of a large number of roads and streets it is not a question of self-help alone. Residents of the village are not going to give a free afternoon's labour to build the roads. I do not know whether the Hon. Member initiated such a scheme during his regime on the Kitty Village Council, but I do know that a few days ago in Finance Committee he championed the cause of the straw makers and mat makers in social welfare work for a \$700 vote, part of which to be used for advertising those products. However we did not find the Hon. Member championing the cause of self-help on that occasion. We know about self-help but it certainly has its limitations, and we cannot talk about building roads by self help.

I know that he also raised the question of taxation, and that the view held by other Hon. Members is that Kitty is a very rich area, and that we should begin to raise taxes and rates, but I want to suggest that though it may appear on the surface that many individuals of high income can afford to pay large rentals, that is not the general position of the people at Kitty. The suggestion has been put forward, I believe by the Town Planning Authority, that every house at Kitty should be provided with a septic tank. We know that it is a very progressive health measure, but the Village Council realises that, because of the poor economic status of many of the residents in the village, that recommendation cannot be accepted very readily. The people are so poor that they cannot afford to construct septic tanks, so that when the Hon. Member talks about increased valuation and raising the percentage of rates I think he refers to himself and others who are in a similar fortunate position. I submit that the bulk of the people at Kitty (I do not refer to the few emigres from the City of Georgetown) are living a hand-to-mouth existence, and help is very desperately needed.

Reference was made by the Hon. the Financial Secretary to Vlissengen Road. It is true that the argument he put forward is very good that once we maintain Vlissengen road in good condition everything would be o.k. and traffic should continue along that road, but I want to remind him that when a man gets accustomed to the bottle and to drinking rum it is hardly likely that he would give it up when the necessity arises. In this case people seem to enjoy going through Kitty and enjoying the sights.

I do not know if they go for that purpose. Maybe that is one of the reasons, but many persons have got into the habit of going through Kitty. I myself do it at some times. I go through Subryanville merely to look at the new houses which are going up. It is part of the afternoons drive, sightseeing. Even if Vlissengen Road is improved we would still have this detour through the village.

On the question of the deterioration of the streets of Kitty proper I remember hearing it said that the buses have done a great deal of damage. That is true, but it is also true that the buses are providing a service to the people of Kitty. What must be borne in mind is that the people of Kitty were well served and well satisfied with the bus service they had before, which did not create any great havoc on the roads. I was living at Kitty when the change over took place, and I had occasion to drive through Kitty every day. I could see the great difference when the new buses began to operate on the streets at Kitty. It is true, as the Financial Secretary pointed out, that the circumstances of the damage done in the case of the road at Lodge Village are not the same as in the case of the Kitty roads, but I would point out to him that that might merely be appearance, because as soon as the main roads on which the buses travel show signs of deterioration the Village Council repair them, and do not wait for them to deteriorate completely and become impassable, as was possibly done in the case of the Lodge Village road. Alexander Street, Barr Street and Sandy Babb Streets were repaired as soon as they showed signs of going bad and funds for the maintenance of other streets were diverted to the making-up of those three streets in which the buses run.

If Hon. Members feel that they cannot accept the Motion as it stands I would be pleased if they would suggest an amendment. I do not know if I can do so at this stage. Anyway, if Government would give an assurance that it would either grant a subvention, possibly at the figure suggested in the Motion, or agree to maintain the roads, especially Alexander Street which is tantamount to the main road of the village, I would withdraw my Motion. We know that in the villages of Plaisance and Buxton Government maintains those roads leading to the railway station, and if Government would agree to maintain Alexander Street and a few cross streets in proper condition it would be a service which would be appreciated by the Village Council who would thus be able to utilise whatever funds they have at their disposal for the maintenance of other streets which are in a very disreputable condition. Some of the streets are so bad (I have in mind Thomas Street, Pike Street and a few others) that on many occasions, people bypass them, especially during rainy weather. I do not know whether the Hon. the Financial Secretary will give an assurance that the matter will be given future consideration, in which case I would withdraw the Motion.

It seems to me that most Members feel that something should be done.

I accept the assurance that Government will give the matter consideration, and with the consent of my Seconder I beg to withdraw the Motion.

Gambling Prevention (Amendment) Bill: March 23, 1950

Dr. Jagan: The Hon. the Attorney General has referred to the Tax Bill, notice of which has been given. In that Bill it is proposed to reduce the tax on sweepstakes from 11/2 per cent, to 8 1/3 per cent. In view of that proposed concession I do not see why it is necessary to vary the percentage to be given to charity as proposed in this Bill. I feel that either one or the other should prevail. I would have preferred to have the two Bills discussed together, so that there might be some coordinated action. I am opposed to this new clause because I do not see why it is necessary to vary the percentage for charity from 15 to 10 per cent, when ample provision was made in the original Clause, that where the proceeds exceed \$40,000 the percentage would be reduced from 15 to 10 per cent. I am entirely opposed to the new Clause.

I am sorry the Hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Roth, is not here. On the last occasion he proposed and in fact, I know, he has been proposing the question of a national lottery for a number of years. I am surprised that I do not see a Motion by him in this Council. Since the Hon. Member for Western Essequibo suggested that he intended to move such a resolution, that is why I did not do so myself for this meeting. I feel the time is ripe when that should be done. The Hon. Financial Secretary in his statement said that apparently what was said had not sunk in, referring to the Hon. Member for Eastern Demerara (Mr. Debidin) and myself. But I can assure him that I am beginning to lose faith in the prognostications made in this Council. Now he is telling us this measure is done to increase the amount given to Charity. We heard the same argument two years ago when the tax was put on sweepstakes, cycle sports and films. That was done two years ago...when Government felt it was going to benefit the Colony to increase Revenue. Now we are hearing an entirely different argument, that the tax is not put on as a deterrent and the percentage is too high, etc. I am beginning to wonder whether I should really believe what is being said here and whether we should not follow what we feel should be done in cases like these. I am definitely in agreement, as I have said before, that this percentage should not be varied, especially since attempts are now being made to reduce the percentage of taxation on sweepstakes to the figure which was before 1948.

Motor Vehicles and Road Traffic (Amendment) Bill (cont.): August 31, 1950

Dr. Jagan: First of all we must agree on the principle whether we want an appeal to go to the Governor in Council or continue to go to a Magistrate, and if it should go to a Magistrate, whether there should be a further appeal to the Full Court. The Hon. The Attorney-General has suggested that in view of the fact that certain appeals now go to the Governor in Council, they should make it uniform. The Hon. Member for Georgetown Central (Mr. Fernandes) has indicated that he would prefer to see the law changed so that all appeals should go before the Magistrate, and I agree with him because in matters of this sort I prefer the American principle of division of power - legislative, executive, judicial and so on. If an executive branch makes a decision it should be the final authority on a question of appeal. I therefore agree that the decision of the Prescribed Authority should not be subject to an appeal to an executive body but should go to a judicial authority which is the Magistrate's Court. I believe it is agreed that the decision of the Magistrate should not be final but should be subject to an appeal to the Full Court. The Hon. Members for Eastern Demerara (Mr. Debidin) and Georgetown Central (Mr. Fernandes) have the same thing in mind. I am appealing to the Hon. Member for Eastern Demerara to withdraw his amendment in favour of that of the Hon. Member for Georgetown Central, of which I am in favour.

Undervaluation and Consequences: September 1, 1950

Dr. Jagan: Perhaps it will not be the desire of the Council to postpone this debate, and consequently I am going to say what I feel about this matter now. As I look at the Resolution, Sir, it seems to me that because a conference is to be held on a matter is rather urgent and, therefore, this Council is asked to give its sanction to the resisting, with all the resources at its command of any proposals to grant any further concession either in the form of changes in the existing Preferences or in the binding or reduction of duties in such a way as to impair the value of existing Preferences, or to prevent the creating of new Preferences, and further to recover the freedom of action to impose such duties and arrange such Preferences as may be considered necessary to safeguard the position of Commonwealth producers in Commonwealth markets. One has to safeguard against pressure, but may I ask, Sir, whose pressure, pressure directed by whom and against whom and for whose interest? I remember when the issue of Devaluation came upon the scene we were merely told, I believe, that it was a statement by the Governor that Devaluation had happened and it was going to cost the Colony so much. We had no opportunity to debate the issue of Devaluation. But on this occasion we are being asked in this Council to give its sanction to a thing which, I do not think, this Council has any power to intervene in.

This discussion, which is to take place in a couple of weeks hence, is between the Metropolitan Governments, and consequently the Colonies have very little to say in this matter except, as the Hon. the Financial Secretary said, to send, possibly, advisers. He has also intimated that we have not have to decide to send any adviser to this Conference or to the conferences already held. If that is so, I would first of all like to question the propriety of bringing this matter to this Council at the present time, whether it is placed before this Council in the right and proper manner? Do we have the power as a Council to debate such a Motion, as it is going to be discussed by His Majesty's Government? I would like to know whether this Council has the right to give its opinion on an issue in respect of which it will not be a party. Obviously pressure is being put, possibly on the United Kingdom, to reduce the tariff rates, and no doubt this pressure is coming from the U.S.A. When I was speaking on Devaluation in this Council, I remember the same Hon. Member, who has moved this Motion today, saying that my speeches at that time were irrelevant, but it seems to me now that what I was saying then is now bearing fruit and that is, the question of Devaluation was forced upon the British Government and further that pressure is being put on the Government by way of removing all trade barriers. In this case they are Preference tariffs.

If the United Kingdom has the power to resist at the Conference, do we in this Council have the Constitutional right to intervene at this particular moment? Are we being used, merely to show that we are helping His Majesty's Governments Advisers or Officers who will be deliberating at this Conference by strengthening their hands to the effect that they are able to say that the Colonies, possibly the West Indies and British Guiana, have already agreed to such a Resolution and, therefore, they cannot make any concession at all? I wonder if that is really the objective for bringing this Motion into this Council at the present time. No doubt pressure is being put, but we in this Council have to analyse the matter afresh. What may be good enough for Great Britain, it does not necessarily follow, is good enough for the Colonies and for British Guiana. I say that advisedly. At one time Great Britain was the great champion of Free Trade, because at that time she was the chief industrial nation of the world and the chief maritime country of the world and free trade suited her. But today we find no one Power has raised to that position, and consequently we now find that even the U.S.A. with its protective trade barriers is advocating the abolition of these barriers. I feel we must be very careful to look at all the issues to determine whether any action taken will be in the interest of the Colony, or in the interest of the Metropolitan Government.

The Hon. Member who moved the Motion states in his preamble:

"Whereas it is proposed to hold a General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (generally known as GATT) meeting in the United Kingdom commencing on the 28th September, 1950; and whereas no benefits have been received to compensate for the elimination and reduction of Empire Preferences already conceded; and whereas such Preferences form a vital part of a Commonwealth economy and economic policy;"

There can be no doubt about it, we have had, possibly, certain advantages by Preferences and, as one Member pointed out, a clear example is the case of sugar. But there is the other side of the story too. Because of Preferences in many cases we find that most of our products are from the United Kingdom. It can be said that our economy is somewhat integrated. It is so directed that we are to produce the raw materials and buy the manufactured goods from the United Kingdom at a low preferential tariff.

What has to be considered is that with devaluation the people in the Colonies are suffering, because goods for which they were accustomed to pay one American dollar (then \$1.20 in B.G. currency) are now costing them \$1.70 in B.G. currency, and with duty and bill of entry tax added, those goods are costing very much more in this Colony. It is true that many purchases have been diverted to the U.K. and Europe, but it is a well known fact that prices in Europe and the U.K. do not generally compare favourably with prices in the dollar areas. Therefore we have to ask ourselves this question: If devaluation which, in my opinion, has been forced upon the

British Government, has created hardship on the people of the Colony, would it be a good thing for this Colony to lower its tariff barriers against goods coming from the dollar areas so that we may get goods from those areas at reduced prices? I know that in Surinam they have one tariff for goods imported into that country, and I want to feel that at this time it might be advantageous to the people of this Colony to have our tariff rates levelled so that we might pay the same rates of duty whether we buy from, the U.S.A., Canada, the U.K. or Europe. Of course, if we did that we would be doing a disservice to the industrial recovery of Great Britain; therefore we have to consider the whole aspect of the situation.

But we have to follow economic trends. As a result of the dollar shortage in the world, the U.S.A. is faced with the problem of not being able to sell its manufactured goods. The result is that there are six million people unemployed in the U.S.A. today. If the American capitalists cannot sell their goods in the Colonies or in the Commonwealth areas because of the dollar shortage then the next best thing would be for them to set up factories in the Commonwealth areas. That is one avenue of removing the bottleneck, but another avenue is being exploited by putting high pressure to have the tariff barriers reduced in the Colonies. In this Colony the British preferential rate of duty is 16 2/3%, while the rate on American goods is 33 1/3%. If those rates were levelled to a common figure of 16 2/3%, or 20%, or even 33 1/3%, it would mean that competitively the British goods would be put out of the market.

That is not a true statement of fact. I know that in my line I can still buy from the U.S.A. despite the devaluation, and get goods landed here cheaper than I can get similar goods from the U.K.

With your permission, Sir, I would like to read a quotation from this book *"Britain's Crisis of Empire."*

The author is R. Palme Dutt and the quotation is from an article headed *"America Conquers Britain,"* by Ladwell Denny, which was written in 1930. On page 43 of the book the article states:

"We were Britain's colony once. She will be our colony before she is done; not in name, but in fact. Machines gave Britain power over the world. Now better machines are giving America power over the world and Britain."

"Of course, American world supremacy is rather horrible to think about. But American supremacy can hardly be worse than British and others gone before."

What chance has Britain against America? Or what chance has the world?"

On page 44 there is a quotation by the writer of the article from a speech made by Virgil Jordan, President of the National Industrial Conference Board of the U.S.A. to the Investment Bankers' Association of America on December 10, 1940. I quote:

“Whatever the outcome of the war, America has embarked on a career of imperialism in world affairs and in every other aspect of her life. Even though by our aid England should emerge from this struggle without defeat, she will be so impoverished and crippled in prestige that it is improbable she will be able to resume or maintain the dominant position in world affairs which she has occupied so long. At best, England will become a junior partner in a new Anglo-Saxon imperialism, in which the economic resources and the military and naval strength of the United States will be the centre of gravity. The sceptre passes to the United States.”

Those are the very people who are now putting pressure on us to remove these tariff barriers so that they can come in and, as you said, if dollars are available, sell their goods very easily to the Colonies. My point is that we in the Colonies have to be very careful. As long as Great Britain pursues her imperialist policies, which are today directed by America, we have to think of ourselves, and by thinking of ourselves I mean that probably in the long run it might be better if we could do, as the people have done in Surinam, that is to put all our tariffs on the same level. The Hon. Financial Secretary suggests that I am supporting American imperialism, but I am faced with no choice, because British or American imperialism is the same to me. As a colonial I fail to see that one is better than the other, and that is why I say that as long as Great Britain continues to follow the path arranged by American imperialism we will have to think of ourselves. I say that seriously, because we know today as a fact that Great Britain is pursuing a lot of adventurous schemes which she can ill afford, merely at the bidding of the U.S.A.

The Financial Secretary referred to the Bank deficit in dollar payments. I have the figures right here. The deficit in the balance of payments from 1946 to 1949 was £1,130 million. During that same period on military overseas expenditure £806 million was spent by Great Britain. America is calling the tune and Great Britain is dancing to the extent of nearly 7/10ths of her total expenditure on overseas military requirements. If this is really a British Commonwealth of Nations why do we have to police the world? We had war in Malaya.

Whenever I speak the question of relevancy is raised, because I seem to touch on certain points which some Hon. Members do not like to hear. I prefaced my remarks by asking whether the Council was ready, in order to discuss a matter like this in the first place, because it is so complicated and so wide. It has very little reference to the Colony as such, because the Metropolitan Government makes the decisions, which are binding on the Colonies. Now that I speak I am told that the matter is not relevant. I want to feel that we should accept the facts as they are, and if it is inevitable that the U.S.A. will be the supreme power in the world then we must face up to that fact and try to make the best bargain possible for British Guiana. If I were the individual directing policy I would agree with the Hon. Member

who has moved this Motion, that there should be no reduction in tariff barriers, and that every effort should be made to preserve them, but since we in the Colonies do not direct policy (and we have seen it in the recent rice debate, and we will see it in many more things to come) I feel that one imperialist policy is as bad as the other, and I think it would be a good thing for this Colony if the tariff barriers were removed and we were allowed to buy wherever we can, if we have the dollars, of course. If we do not have the dollars we would probably go to Japan and Germany where we are told prices are even cheaper. But if we have the dollars we should buy from the dollar areas if the prices are cheaper.

To a point of correction I have no friends there. (Laughter).

Drainage and Irrigation, a Colonial Question (Motion)

Dr. Jagan: I rise to support this Motion, feeling that unless we begin to think very seriously of this question of drainage and irrigation this Colony will perpetually be obtaining small revenue and struggling every year to balance our budget, without attempting in any way to tackle the very serious problem of the very low standard of living of the people of the Colony. We have in this Colony two very valuable assets- human power and land. It is a curious thing that although we have a very small population and so much land the people have not enough land to till and properly cultivate. When we are faced with statistics and we compare British Guiana with the West Indies, we find places like Barbados and Jamaica very densely populated. The figures per square mile are very high while in British Guiana there are about 10 persons per square mile. But those figures give a very false picture because, although we have vast areas of land in this Colony and our population is small, I submit that in this Colony there is definitely land hunger. Unless we can make sufficient and properly irrigated and drained land available, conditions in this Colony will remain backward. I did hear of the large sums of money which are involved, and did hear the chuckles as if to say "*Where is all that money to come from, and what a tremendous problem it is?*" One Hon. Member quoted some time ago the saying "*where there is no vision the people perish*".

I think we will have to begin to think in terms of 50 or 100 years from now. If we are to tackle these problems we have to face up to them. We have been pursuing a policy of drift, if I may call it so, for nearly 150 years, and that policy has not got us very far. Where the money is to come from? That is the big question. All along we have been depending for our revenues on customs duties and, to a lesser extent on income tax. As prices rise in the exporting countries, the United Kingdom, Canada and the United States, the revenue of this Colony has increased to the great annoyance of the working class people in this Colony. Must we continue to think in those terms? I would much prefer that we should depend for our revenue on the production of the people of this Colony. I would much prefer to think that we have to spend additional sums of money on drainage and irrigation which would ultimately benefit the Colony, because we would be producing so much more and the revenue of the Colony would increase to a comparative degree.

On the Essequibo Coast sugar estates have been abandoned possible because of drainage problems. In Demerara and Berbice we still have some sugar estates, but in many cases a great many persons cannot get adequate work to do on those estates, and also not enough land which they can cul-

tivate in their spare time. The sugar producers have given us some very illuminating figures. They show that on all the estates of the Colony today there are about 12,000 families of whom they are only about 7,000 who can be considered essential workers while the others are part-time and nonessential workers. There is no real plan up to now to remove that excess population of nonessential workers comprising nearly 500 families. I am speaking of estates alone and not of the villages surrounding those estates, where the problem is just as acute. There has been no plan to devise ways and means to remove those people to areas where they can produce crops and thereby increase the national income of this country. I have examined the figures of land which are available to those people who work as labourers on sugar estates, for the cultivation of rice and ground provisions. I find that not more than $\frac{3}{4}$ of an acre of land can be given to a family for rice cultivation, and not more than $\frac{1}{4}$ of an acre for the cultivation of ground provision. I submit that much small parcels of land cannot be considered adequate for a family who are not employed on a sugar estate or have no other means of livelihood. An acre of land in these days cannot provide even the very minimum subsistence standard. Most Agricultural economists are today agreeing that for a family to live fairly decently they must have at their disposal 8 or 10 acres of land.

In the villages the problem is just as acute. In my constituency there has been an attempt to induce the people to go in for cane-farming. Many of them are willing to do so, realising the benefits to be derived, because at the present time cane is yielding the highest price. Some of the people have gone to the extent of adopting the advice of the Department of Agriculture to flood fallow their lands, realising from practical example that it helps the fertility of their soil and increases the yield, but because they have only two or three acres at their disposal, and because in those two or three acres they have permanent fruit trees - in some cases coconuts, pears, mangoes, etc. - they are very reluctant to convert those lands into permanent cane cultivation and lose income they are deriving at the present time from their fruit trees. Therefore the problem is not so much that they do not want to flood their lands, but they cannot get more land. There are shortages in the supply of all local produce except sugar and rice. We have a shortage of citrus fruits in this Colony. I came from one of the islands a little while ago where I was fortunate to see a peasant selling citrus fruits in the streets utilise one of the oranges to wash his hands. No doubt it is because the soil there is so fertile and a lot of land is available to those people that they can go in for extensive and intensive cultivation.

I was referring to the Dominican Republic. We have in this Colony the problem of recurring oil shortages every now and then, not having enough fats to make soaps, etc., and there is no real excuse in a country like this for a shortage of coconuts, because I am sure if every farmer had available lands he could readily put two or three acres under permanent coconut cultivation. Sir, it seems to me that the quicker we get down to this particu-

lar problem of drainage and irrigation in this Colony the quicker we will be walking on the road to the solution of our economic ills in this Colony. I have one suggestion to make, and that is to see where this money is to come from in respect of this huge expenditure, the amount of which was given to us a moment ago so far as this master plan of irrigation and drainage is concerned. Only today we read in the papers that increased grants are being voted by Parliament to augment the sums already given for Colonial Development and Welfare, and I want that this Council to seek from His Majesty's Government by passing a Resolution for immediate aid, not for the minor things which they have been doing in this Colony with reference to Colonial Development and Welfare but this major problem of drainage and irrigation. I have before me some figures of the amount which was actually spent by Colonial Development and Welfare during the period since it has been in all the Colonies. For the first five years, that means, £25 million was to be spent. But in 1945 that sum was increased from £5 million to £12 million and provided for a sum of £5 million to be spent per annum, and up to 1949 an additional sum of £48 million was available, making a total of £73 million from 1940 to 1949. That is what was voted on. As you know, the 1940 Act by His Majesty's Government under Colonial Development and Welfare for the various Colonies, etc.

But the figures, which I have at hand, show that up to the end of 1949 only the sum of £25 million was spent out of that sum of £73 million, leaving a total of £47 ½ million if my subtraction is correct. From these figures it does appear that His Majesty's Government for some reason or other has not been spending all the money which it was prepared to spend under Colonial Development and Welfare. £47 ½ million which has been allocated up to 1949 and which has not been spent comes up to a formidable sum, approximately \$237 million (British Guiana currency). I feel this Council would do well to consider this matter seriously and appeal to His Majesty's Government, if some provision cannot be found whereby out of this tremendous saving which has been made this colossal problem of drainage and irrigation in British Guiana can be tackled by His Majesty's Government. I know that a Commission is to come here to enquire into our Constitution. A similar Commission came to us in 1927 and after looking into our financial situation, changed our Constitution. To some it is felt that a backward Constitution had been given to us in 1928. But even though that had been done in 1928, I submit our ills have not been cured, and I am suggesting in all seriousness that this Council view this matter very seriously and appeal to His Majesty's Government and, if necessary point out to this Commission which is soon coming out here, that the drainage arid irrigation problem is our principal problem, and unless we can solve it first it is no use talking about increasing the population of British Guiana or encouraging the surplus population of the West Indies to come to British Guiana. There is a vital and urgent necessity for doing that. In Barbados, Jamaica and the other small Islands there is the urgent problem of over-

population and overcrowding, and one way to solve that problem is to make lands available in British Guiana so that we can give enough land to the people of British Guiana and also to the surplus population of the British West Indies and other West Indian territories. In that way, Sir, we will be having the population which we need -more people, more development, more people working, more goods produced and, therefore, taxation and more revenue. That is what is going to solve our problems.

There is one other avenue, Sir, from which we may be able to get help, and that is the U.S.A. We have been hearing a great deal about the Marshall Aid, but so far we have not been fortunate in getting any in these parts. But again I feel that if the United States Government is sincere in its aims for developing backward areas of the world, then it must do so looking at the situation from all points of view. I do not think it should only be looking to the Far East where billions upon, billions of dollars are being spent. I think the problem that British Guiana has is as vital as that in the Far East, and if by some means this Government or His Majesty's Government can make a strong case to the U.S.A. to give us a few million dollars to solve the serious problem of drainage and irrigation in this Colony, I feel that the United States Government would probably be doing something now as an experiment which it would not have to do in the future. I do hope, Sir, that the matter is receiving the attention of Government but I want to appeal that we will be only scratching the surface if we do not undertake this particular problem in this Colony seriously, despite the tremendous amount which is involved and despite the fact it has been said to us that we may not be able to pay maintenance charges and sinking fund charges. We should look at this problem boldly and try to find one solution very shortly.

Sir, with respect to the first part of this resolution, I feel like the Hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Morris, that at the present time we can give encouragement to the farming community by paying these charges which are levied upon them, however small they, may be. Farming is a hazardous occupation in British Guiana. No farmer wants his son to become a farmer, or very few do if he can get another job. That is not an attitude which should be condoned in our country, and the only way to correct it is to give these people encouragement. A man may pay his village rates, but he finds later on that his crops are destroyed either by floods or drought, or, as we have just heard with the question of rice; too early invasion of the rains which have destroyed a great percentage of the rice crop. These are all hazards which the farmer has to face, and the Government will do well to encourage these people at all cost, especially in view of the fact that of the money which is being spent at the present time by Government is bearing the major part. I feel Government can go a little further and spend the balance. Sir, I support this Motion as it stands.

Amendment of Regulations Governing Employment of Watchmen: May 31, 1950

Dr. Jagan: I would like to support this Motion and in doing so I must say that I am not afraid of the argument put forward against it. We have been told that if the Motion is passed it would create a good deal of hardship because many persons would find themselves unemployed. That is the sort of argument one hears all the time. We are not setting up a statutory minimum wage because the moment we do so a number of people would be laid off and they would suffer. As the Hon. Member pointed out, there are many young persons today who are looking for jobs as watchmen. That state of affairs is not to be blamed on the people themselves but on the state of the country. If the people cannot find jobs then they have to look for unproductive employment such as watching places.

I agree with the Hon. Mover of the Motion that the definition of the word "*watchman*" should be extended because the Regulation particularly states that the men must be protected in two aspects; first of all, as regards the number of hours they must work per week, and then the rate of pay they should get. I find that the Government at the present time is setting up Committees to examine working conditions relating to certain industries and trades, but one finds that Government sticks to a certain number of hours which must not be exceeded. I speak with particular reference to the laundries where certain hours have been fixed for work but no mention made of the wages that should be paid. If the Regulations state that an employee must work 10 hours per day, then the rate of pay for that period should also be set out.

(**Mr. Lee:** To a point of correction: I see that the rates of wages of the laundry workers have been fixed.)

Dr. Jagan: I have seen the Regulations but have not seen any rates.

(**The Colonial Secretary:** There are two sets of Regulations and perhaps the Hon. Member has only seen one set.)

Dr. Jagan: I am glad I have been corrected. If there are two sets of Regulations I do not see why it should be provided that one set of people should employ watchmen for a certain number of hours only, whereas clubs and private persons could employ them for an unlimited number of hours and for whatever pay they choose. The Hon. Member for Eastern Demerara has said that we should not curtail the privileges of private individuals who want to employ people as watchmen, but at the same time the

rights of the persons so employed should be protected. The Hon. Member for Georgetown Central has stated that we should define the term "*watchmen*", but I can see no objection to this Ordinance being made to apply to all categories of watchmen. If a person employed as a watchman is paid less than the statutory rate he should be able to go to a Magistrate and get him to determine whether he is a watchmen or just a person who is looking after a garden, washing motor cars and so on. At the present time some of these people are being exploited. They are glad to stay on the premises of their employers because of the terrible housing situation and while we endeavour to protect the liberty of the subject we should see that these people are not exploited any longer.

I notice that the Hon. Nominated member, Mr. Farnum, referred to the question of extending all these Regulations to the rural areas. He feels that if the Ordinance is applied to the rural areas it would create a certain number of anomalies. I would say, however, that because the Ordinance is not being applied to the rural areas one finds that a great deal of injustice is being meted out to these people by employers in commercial houses. I know that at McDoom village – just a stone's throw from the City – some of these people are being employed as watchmen for sawmills but are not paid the prescribed rates of wages although they work the prescribed number of hours. It seems to me therefore, that this Ordinance should be made to apply to the rural areas also. If that is not done Government should fix a rate of wages for watchmen in the rural areas as well as for those in Georgetown and New Amsterdam, because those in the rural areas especially need protection. I am going to move an amendment providing for extension of the Regulations to the entire Colony.

Rent Restriction Ordinance

Dr. Jagan: I, too, would like to support this Bill which is seeking to amend the Rent Restriction Ordinance. This particular matter of sharing accommodation has been a difficult one for a long time, and many tenants have been experiencing great hardships. I feel sure that with the passage of this Bill, despite the fact, as one Hon. Member said, the Rent Assessor will be given extraordinary powers, these hardships will be alleviated. The Hon. Member for Georgetown South (Mr. Carter) made certain pertinent statements with reference to the rights of tenants. Tenants did not even know their own rights but, perhaps, there are many tenants who, even knowing their own rights, are afraid to take possession of those rights because in many cases they prefer to pay additional rent than to be ejected and thrown out on the streets. I see from the 1947 Rent Restriction (Amendment) Ordinance, section 4 (f) provides for a statement of the standard rent to be supplied. In case tenants desire the standard rent to be given they only have to apply to the landlord and, if the landlord does not comply within 14 days or if he provides any false statement, he is guilty of an offence and is liable to a fine of \$50. But I believe it should go, as the Hon. Member suggested, a bit further. Where landlords knowing the standard rent but because of the shortage of housing deliberately charge an additional amount and the tenants are willing to pay because they are afraid of eviction, I believe that matter should be given very serious consideration. It is no use providing only for a penalty in the case where a landlord refuses to give the standard rent. There are many cases in which the standard rent is already fixed, but the landlord continues to charge an additional amount on the standard rent. Perhaps the time may come when the Rent Restriction Ordinance ought to be extended, so that every house within the provisions of this Ordinance can be placed before the Rent Assessor who will thereby fix the standard rent for all dwelling houses in the city.

Another provision which should be considered is the posting-up of the standard rent by the landlord in some conspicuous place, whether that is desired by the tenant or not and especially in these cases where accommodation is shared, so that the tenants would be aware of what decisions had been made by the Rent Assessor and thereby be in a position to know what is the standard rent, even though they may fail to apply either to the landlord or to the Assessment Court.

There is another matter on which the Hon. Member for Western Essequibo (Mr. Wight) touched, and that is the question of the right of possession of premises. At the present time, there is no doubt about it, despite the rights of the landlords there is gross violation of the very principle, as

set out in this Ordinance, to give protection in certain cases to tenants. Landlords desirous of increasing the rent use various pretexts to get the tenants out of the buildings they occupy. One pretext, which is used at the present time, is that of asking either for the premises to be repaired or for extensions to be made. When the tenants vacate many of them do not want to go back; even though they may have prior claim against the landlord they do not want to go to the additional bother and trouble to bring a suit against the landlord, even if they had been ejected unlawfully. These points should be gone into very carefully. There is also the additional point, as pointed out by the Hon. Member for Western Essequibo, where persons coming from rural areas or even persons within the City limits may purchase a property and thereby turn out the tenants who may have been living there for a long period of years. Something should be done in that respect. Clause 8 of the 1947 Amendment Ordinance certainly has too many provisions under which the landlord can claim the right of possession. I feel that these should be restricted, especially at this time when there is such a serious shortage of housing. If there *was* adequate accommodation, I am sure, many of these cases would not really be necessary, but in view of the fact that there is such a scarcity of dwelling-houses at the present time. I feel that the right of possession should be strictly limited and limited only to a few cases where bona fide cases occur wherein landlords may require the premises for their own use, but even those cases should be strictly reviewed.

There is one other point which is not covered by the Rent Restriction Ordinance and which is not sought to be corrected by this new amendment, and that is in respect of rent restriction in the rural areas of this Colony. I have had to take up this matter with the Hon. Colonial Secretary with reference to tenants in my constituency and I have had complaints from persons outside my constituency claiming that because the Rent Restriction Ordinance does not apply to the rural areas they have to experience great hardship; in many cases the rent is arbitrarily increased. In one recent case it was increased from \$3.00 to \$12.00 per annum for a building lot. I have already given notice of a Motion that the Rent Restriction Ordinance should be made applicable to the whole Colony. I hope that matter will receive the serious consideration of Government and that the Rent Restriction Ordinance will soon be amended so as to be applicable to the whole Colony.

Building Construction in Burnt Area: June 13, 1950

Dr. Jagan: I have listened with great interest to this whole debate and particularly to the Hon. Member for East Demerara and the Hon. Member for Central Georgetown. We have been hearing quite a great deal about the Fire Chief, the Town and Country Planning and the Central Housing and Planning Authority, and so on, but up to this day this Council has not seen the Fire Report which was finished and gone into such a long time ago; therefore, we do not know the details. As regards the Central Housing and Planning Authority, we are told that the Town Planner is a dreamer and that what he intends for British Guiana is something for the next 50 or 100 years. But, here we are asking that the matter be referred from the Town Council to the Central Housing and Planning Authority, and whether that is legal or not I do not know. If this matter is *ultra vires* as the Hon. Mover of the Motion suggests, then it seems to me that the Central Planning Authority should have acted as a result of their power over this particular area. I do not know anything about their plans and, consequently, I do not know that we should be asked to veto this measure at this time. The Hon. Mover of the Motion has referred to the question of fire hazards but, as other speakers have already pointed out, there is a fire hazard anywhere you turn in this City of Georgetown.

I will mention another aspect of the question and that is, to compel every landlord to take out compulsory insurance so that every individual would be protected to some extent in case there is a fire. Can we afford to say that people in Georgetown must put up buildings of a certain type? The Hon. Member for Georgetown Central has made a particularly good point. I know that in the United States of America there are buildings made of ferroconcrete, but I also know that every now and then there are large fires there with loss of life in many cases. If the Hon. Mover of the Motion had suggested that it was in the best interest of the people of Georgetown and of this Colony that concrete buildings should go up, and had gone further and suggested that Government should erect the buildings, perhaps I would have agreed with him. I would like to inform him, however, that Government has already spent \$200,000 of the taxpayers money for the development of the burnt out area. If Government chooses to spend another \$1,000,000 or \$2,000,000 to build concrete buildings and rent them to the individuals who want to set up business, when the proposal comes here we would have a general debate on it. In the meanwhile we must give serious consideration to the question. These individuals must be forced to build concrete, fire resisting buildings because, as one Hon. Member has pointed out it might not be within their means to do so. What is good

enough for Great Britain is not good enough for British Guiana in this respect, and I feel that this Motion is really out of place in this Council. If the Hon. Member does not withdraw the Motion, I think the Council would do well to vote it out. I hope Hon. Members would do so.

Rice Marketing Bill: August 11, 1950

Dr. Jagan: I have listened with very great interest to the debate as it has gone so far and I must say that I have been particularly convinced by the arguments which have been adduced by the last speaker. First of all I would like to say that in bringing forward this Bill, Government has done so without consulting the bodies concerned: the Rice Marketing Board and the Rice Producers Association. I remember when the Rice Marketing Board was being created the Financial Secretary (at that time the Colonial Treasurer) mentioned in his opening remarks that the Central Rice Committee, the producers and the Rice Producers Association had been taken into full confidence, and after long consultations and deliberations the Rice Marketing Bill was framed and brought before the Council. I would like to quote the Colonial Treasurer's words at the time from Hansard Report of January 31, 1946 at column 2099:

"In saying that I do not rely entirely on the expressed views of the Central Rice Committee; As Members know, or may know, that Committee is a body set up by Government under the Defence Regulations and comprised of 24 members, at least 20 of whom are representatives of rice producers of all categories in the various rice producing districts of the Colony. The specific function of that body is to advise the Governor on matters connected with the industry, and in particular on matters connected with the operations of the Rice Marketing Board, and that is the body with whom we have been dealing more particularly in connection with the drafting of this Bill."

Now, Sir, it seems to me strange that Government at that time took into complete confidence the Central Rice Marketing Committee which it created, and now it would not give the same due consideration to the Rice Marketing Board and the Rice Producers' Association which are organisations created by Statute. Is it that Government has created a Frankenstein monster, or is it that the Rice Committee which was there before was so much controlled by Government that they could have met it freely and put forward their deliberations, and since Government did not have that control now they have created a new Bill and brought it forward under the name of the Rice Marketing Board (Amendment) Bill? Perhaps the Rice Producers' Association which was created by Statue is too democratic and, maybe, Government does not like democracy any more. Now that this organisation has been fully established and properly represented, we find that Government no longer chooses to give it due consideration and, therefore, brings before this Council a Bill ready made and intended to be passed

without any serious opposition. I say that because I feel that the Clauses in this Bill, with the exception of Clause 7, are merely meant to be a smoke screen in order to push through Clause 7.

I want to speak particularly on Clause 7 because other Members of this Council have spoken very fully on the other amendments which, perhaps, do not matter. The fact of the matter is that instead of the Board being made a democratic body aiming at a true cooperative organisation, as the last speaker has said it is being sought to make it more undemocratic. Reverting to clause 7, I would like, first of all, to read a few statements which I have taken from the Report of the West Indian Royal Commission. The last speaker referred to peasant agriculture as against estate or plantation agriculture, and anyone reading this Report and Government, no doubt has seriously read and studied it would come to the conclusion that the members of the Commission, and under the heading "*Agriculture and British Guiana - there should be a furtherance of the peasant type of agriculture.*" I should like to read this statement so that Members may see why there has been this change of emphasis within the last few years for peasant instead of the plantation type of agriculture in this Colony. I see the Financial Secretary shaking his head but, no doubt, he will have a good opportunity to express himself when, he replies. On pages 426-7 of the Report of the West India Royal Commission and under the heading "*Agricultural Position and Outlook*", the following is stated:

"15. The present system is not adapted to effect unassisted a turnover from export to food crops (Chapter XVI Paragraph 1). Planter and peasant alike concentrate on production for export when they can. Too little rotation is practised. There is, in general, no balanced farming system capable of maintaining soil fertility at a high level and of ensuring proper interplay of crops and stock (Chapter IV paragraph 2). Especially on peasant holdings the soil tends to be exhausted and rendered liable to irreparable damage by erosion. This is particularly true of the careless cultivation of bananas on steep land (Chapter IV paragraph 25). Really efficient agriculture is almost entirely confined to estate cultivation of sugar, where careful and thorough methods have enabled yields to be maintained and enhanced even without rotation or resting of the land. The cultivation of food crops does not stand high in the estimation of the West Indian farmer, and yields are low. Conditions of land tenure militate against good husbandry by peasants. Rents are high in relation to yields, tenure is uncertain, and is sometimes on the basis of share-cropping, (Chapter IV, paragraphs 19-20). For an improvement it will be necessary to decide by investigation new and balanced systems of farming to advance agricultural knowledge widely among all classes on the land and to provide better economic inducement (such as marketing facilities, security of tenure and equitable rents) for the small holders and peasants. (Chapter XVI, paragraphs 13-16)."

"16. The main reliance for food production must be on peasant agricul-

ture, although the possibility should be explored of developing mixed farming in estate cultivation hitherto concentrating on export crops alone (Chapter XVI, paragraph 5)...”

Then, on page 291, the Report says:

“15. Another point at which general policy should aim is the increase of the best types of existing holdings in preference to the development on a large scale of any form of holding hitherto unknown in the territory....”

Here is another excerpt from paragraph 16 on page 291:

“...The measure of the success of peasant holdings, which are essentially family farms, will be an index to social conditions among the peasantry generally, and in this connection it is noteworthy that many experienced observers are convinced that peasant agriculture will be greatly influenced by the extent to which the legitimate family becomes the established social unit...”

Again, this supports the claim made by the Hon. Member who has just taken his seat. On the following page 292 the Report goes on to say:-

“17. Although efficiency on sugar estates has greatly increased since the war, the policy, which has been followed for the last 150 years, of growing sugar cane only and growing it continuously on the same land, still remains. Social needs, in particular the growth of population, make it essential to consider at once the question whether cane growing cannot, with profit to the community, be changed so as to make the land more productive while not lessening the whole output of sugar....”

Then, it goes on to say:

“18. The future development of other estates must, we consider, also be in the direction of mixed farming with permanent tree crops as the most important component of the system, which would thus correspond to the System now followed when fruit is grown in quantity on mixed farms in England...”

These are a few excerpts from the Report of the West India Royal Commission supporting the view that there should be an intensification of the policy of assisting peasants in the Colonies of British Guiana and the West Indies so that the family, as a social unit, would become more prosperous and beneficial to the Colony as a whole. Lately we find that the emphasis has been changed and when I say lately, I mean within the last few years. Not too long ago we had another Commission in the persons of Sir Geoffrey Evans and others, and we have had a Report from that Commission. This Report has gone in the other direction, since the Commissioners have swung from the peasant type of agriculture to the plantation type. The

reason is that it is now being felt that the peasants are not as efficient in production as the plantations and, by all means, efficiency is the god to which we must now give all praise. Consequently, we now have before us a Bill with the main clauses aiming to introduce into this Colony a huge rice development corporation running under a plantation system. As stated by the last speaker, however, we do insist that we must have a share in the advancement of the industry, whether it is done on a small or a large scale,

During the course of this debate, no doubt, a lot of things have been said and, as the Financial Secretary and Treasurer has pointed out, misrepresentations have been made. Perhaps that is true but if nothing else, it does show that for the first time in this Colony people are becoming awake and are beginning to realise that what is happening, despite pronouncements to the contrary, is not altogether in their very best interest, and they are beginning to sit up and take note. The Rice Producers Association has done an excellent job in going about the country districts and informing the people. If they have misrepresented the facts, then we have the newspapers to blame in certain respects, because one newspaper the *Daily Chronicle* has been putting forward the same views. On the other hand, we have another newspaper - the *Daily Argosy* which has been putting forward, perhaps, the Government's point of view or perhaps more so, His Imperial Majesty's point of view. I notice that whereas the *Daily Chronicle* has ceased its editorials on the Bill. I don't know for what reason the *Daily Argosy*, on the other hand, has been very militant in its crusade not against misrepresentations, but in attacking certain Hon. Members of this Council. Referring to the Hon. Member for Eastern Demerara, the *Daily Argosy* and I quote from the editorial of the issue of Sunday, August 8 1950; says:-

"For those who like to base their attitudes of mind and decisions on rhetoric, the Hon. D. P. Debidin's three-hour discourse on the Rice Marketing (Amendment) Bill last Thursday, was exactly their 'cup of tea'. But for those who prefer fact and reason, however, all but a few minutes of the three hours was wasted..."

Then, referring to the Hon. Member for Eastern Berbice in its editorial of Thursday, August 3, 1950 the same newspaper says:

"During its meandering course, he revealed that he was either parroting the dishonest propaganda being disseminated throughout the countryside by the Rice Producers' Association, or else had neither studied his subject at first hand nor even read about it in the newspapers; or indeed understood the matter any better than any ignorant farmer in the remote parts of his constituency!"

Now Sir, the Hon. Financial Secretary and Treasurer spoke about misrepresentation of facts, but I want to say that when this Editor - this Official-loving Editor who is the protagonist and champion of imperialism dares to attack two Hon. Members of this Council who represent, possibly, the

largest areas of rice in this Colony, I should like to state a few of the things which he says is "parroting" and are not true. I now want to point out to Hon. Members of this Council why there has been a change of emphasis from the peasant type to this plantation type of agriculture which this Bill seems to push upon this Council, and which is supported by this Editor. We have been hearing for a long time, Sir and, in fact, I do not know if at any time in the history of British Guiana this has not been said that the Colony must be developed and that, the British Government is doing everything possible to hasten that development. Now we are being told that the British Government is spending millions of pounds of their taxpayers' money for the benefit of British Guiana, and that if the people here are ungrateful and do not want it, they will suffer. That is the view which is being expressed, primarily, by this newspaper and chief supporter if I may say so of the Government at the present time.

The Financial Secretary and Treasurer in moving the Motion for the second reading of the Bill, gives us the remarkable figures of \$6,000,000 from the Colonial Development Corporation and another \$2,000,000 from the E.C.A. or Marshall Aid. We were told that these were very large sums and that they would contribute greatly to the development of this Colony, and so on. The same views are expressed in the *Daily Argosy* editorial of July 27, 1950, and this is what it says:

"Since early in the war, British money has been set aside; first in millions of pounds sterling, then in tens of millions and now in hundreds of millions for the development and welfare of the Colonies."

The impression is definitely given. Sir, that the British Government is throwing away money setting aside hundreds of thousands of pounds of the British taxpayers' money for the benefit of the Colonies. If that were true, then, perhaps, we must sympathise with the peasant type of agriculture in this Colony and not allow the plantation type to develop. As a matter of fact, Sir, you yourself said not so long ago I think it was at the opening of the second session of the present Legislative Council that:

"The primary objective of His Majesty's Government's declared economic policy towards all its dependent overseas territories and it is reflected in the establishment of the Colonial Development Corporation is the development of those territories, for the benefit of the people inhabiting them. Let there be no mistake about that. To characterise that policy as imperialistic and capitalistic exploitation, as has been done in certain irresponsible quarters, is not only wholly untrue but mischievous."

I feel sure you sincerely believe what you said there, Sir, but I want to assure Hon. Members of this Council that that does not seem to be the view which is held by His Majesty's Government. The Financial Secretary and

Treasurer, in moving the second reading of the Bill, stated:

“It is said Governments do not as a rule put forward Bills or schemes intentionally to harm an industry and to harm the people engaged in it, and I would like to add that Public Officers like myself do not go to all this trouble in order to do something harmful...”

Those are sentiments of the kind that have been expressed in the past, and yet day by day people are querying whether they are true or false. With respect to the C.D.C., Sir I would like to concentrate my remarks on this aspect of the Bill because I feel it is the most important. I should like to quote from the PAC bulletin of March 13, 1949, which states:

“Lord Trefgarne, Chairman of the ½ billion dollar state-sponsored Colonial Development Corporation (C.D.C.) said to a group of Liverpool businessmen that

(Answers to Questions) -It is a cyclo-styled bulletin issued by the Political Affairs Committee, at 30, Queen Street, Kitty.

This is what Lord Trefgarne said:

“The United Kingdom has an annual dollar deficit of 500 million pounds that is the background against which the productivity of the colonial territories must be viewed. If the Colonies could raise their overall productivity during the next ten years by 200 million pounds per annum, that indeed would be a mercy twice blessed... The reason why we look to the Colonies is that their products, food and raw materials are more acceptable to the United States than manufactured goods. The total value of imports of manufactured goods into the United States in 1947 from all sources amounted to some 250 million pounds. The total imports of food and raw materials were more than four times as great.... Thanks to tin, rubber and cocoa, the colonial territories overall is playing a good part in the dollar sterling balance.... Obviously, therefore, it is sound policy to aim at greatly increased dollar exports of colonial products.”

Those are the words of Lord Trefgarne. Mr. Strachey, former Minister of Food, on page 85 of *“Britain’s Crisis of Empire”*, says this:

“By hook or by crook the development of primary production of all sorts in the colonial territories and dependent areas in the Commonwealth and throughout the world is a life and death matter for the economy of this country.”

Of course, he is speaking about Great Britain when he says *“this country”*. And now, this is what Sir Stafford Cripps, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, had to say, on the same page:

"The whole future of the sterling group and its ability to survive depend, in my view, upon a quick and extensive development of our African resources".

Of course, when he speaks of African resources, we know very well that they include British Guiana and the West Indies. Here is another statement, Sir, which is credited to Sir Stafford Cripps, when he was opening the African Governors' Conference, on November 12, 1947:

"You will, I understand, be considering the question of the development of manufactures and industries in the colonies. Though I take the view that such development is highly desirable, so long as it is not pushed too far or too quickly, yet it must be obvious that with the present world shortage of capital goods it is not possible to contemplate much in the way of industrial development in the colonies...."

Now Sir, the last speaker referred to the necessity for exploring every avenue of development in this Colony, and I should like to know what about plywood, veneers, glass, cement, and wood pulp. Have these Schemes gone overboard? We have spent thousands of dollars of the taxpayers' money to investigate them, and yet we find that they are not good enough for the C.D.C. On the other hand, as the Hon. Member has rightly put it they are coming to "sponge" and to "rush" the existing industries of timber and rice and the fear is that they would completely destroy the basic industries in this Colony. There are many other points which I can put forward to show that what is intended is not really to help the Colonies at all, but I think I have shown that sufficiently well already.

The Rice Marketing Board was set up in order to give certain advantages to the producers. Apart from the fact that, the middlemen have been eliminated, Government provided money through the Cooperative Credit Banks so as to displace the usurious money lenders, and so on. Nevertheless, there are other things being done at present that are not satisfactory at all. The aim should be to make the Rice Marketing Board and the proposed new organisation a truly Cooperative organisation. We are spending thousands of dollars annually to keep the Cooperative Department going in this Colony, and I wonder if it has done any work. I am told that producer Cooperatives are really a very important aspect of that movement, and I wonder whether the Department has actually done anything towards introducing producer cooperatives into the rice industry.

One Hon. Member is reminding me of the Abary Land Settlement and the Cooperative Scheme, but when I was last in that area the farmers were not satisfied at all.

I am going to come to the question of the Bush Lot scheme and the machinery in a moment. I hope I have been able to convince Hon. Members that what is intended at the present time is to allow the proposed Corporation to come here and, in the name of efficiency to set themselves up in the

production of rice and be outside of the severe restrictions which are imposed by the Rice Marketing Board.

I have shown already that these millions of dollars are being invested for the sole aim of balancing Britain's economy. The figures which I have, Sir, show: these are merely a few - that in 1938 Great Britain was receiving from her overseas investments the sum of £175 millions in interest, profits and dividends, but that sum has been reduced to £50 millions in 1948. It is clearly anticipated in all these schemes, whether they are C.D. and W. or C.D.C. to bring up the level of production in the Colonies with the goods which are produced and sold if possible to hard currency areas to net the very scarce dollars which are needed to balance Great Britain's payments. Now I come to the clause itself. Why should this Corporation which will be set up be exempted from the provisions of the Rice Marketing Board Ordinance, if it is felt that the restrictions are too severe, that these people may be able to produce rice very efficiently and economically, and that the Rice Marketing Board running, perhaps, in the way it is being run now will not be producing satisfactory results. In other words, if it is felt and the fear has been expressed that, this huge corporation will be producing rice most economically but the Board, constituted, as it is, will throw away more by selling the rice possibly not at the best advantage, then the gain which may have been made in producing this rice will have been lost. If that is the fear then why does not the Government so change the Rice Marketing Ordinance so as to provide conditions which will give this Corporation a voice in the Rice Marketing Board and the Rice Producers' Association and the Executive Committee? Surely the Corporation whether it is made by the C.D. & W and the local Government will be able to get its members into the Rice Producers' Association. Surely it will be able to get its Directors or what not into the Rice Marketing Board and on the Executive Committee, and surely if that Corporation has expert knowledge and skill in marketing that skill and knowledge will eventually benefit not only the Corporation itself but also the members of the Rice Producers' Association, the Rice Marketing Board and the Executive Committee. Then there can be no objection by the other rice growers of the Colony to it, because they will then see and will then feel that this Corporation is going into the Rice Marketing Board or the Executive Committee to use its skill and knowledge to help the growers and producers of the Colony. But when we find that Government intends to leave the Corporation out from the severe and strict provisions of the Rice Marketing Board, there can be no justification for the people not to be afraid. They must be afraid and, I feel, they have all right to be afraid because they have already known, despite the pronouncement to the contrary, what has been done in the past was not in the Interest of the people. The Hon. Member for Eastern Demerara (Mr. Debidin) has given the figures, how much this Colony has already lost by way of lowered prices for the sale of rice to the West Indies.

The people of the U.S.A. were very small rice producers before the war,

but knowing world conditions the Government of the U.S.A. fostered the rice industry in the U.S.A. with the result that the rice industry in the U.S.A. became the second largest in the world. The rice farmers of the U.S.A. today can sit back knowing that if the price of rice falls they have nice houses, a couple of motor cars and storage facilities for anything and money in the bank, and they can feel confident of the future that if there is a slump in rice they can very well change their cultivation to something else. But what do we find in this Colony? Government says it has nothing to do with the contracts. I hope Hon. Members have been convinced by the statement made by the Hon. Member for Eastern Demerara that the Government had a big say in it and having had that say in it the people have lost terribly in this Colony. There is all this talk about development and \$8 millions, but had the people got the world's price for rice they would have been able to bring about development in this Colony without the assistance of foreign capital. We hear so much about foreign capital coming to this Colony. Hon. Members are always pointing to that one fact. The Hon. Member for Georgetown North (Dr. Nicholson) said yesterday that capital from outside is not coming into the Colony. The Hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Smellie, said when he spoke that we need capital in this Colony and he also referred to the fact that where there is no vision, the people perish. That is quite true, and I say it quite sincerely that there has been no vision on the part of the Government of this Colony in the interest of the producers and growers of rice in this Colony, and if we allow ourselves to be influenced to allow this Clause 7 to go through and this great monopoly to come and establish itself in this Colony, then the people would have no vision, the peasants would be destroyed and the Colony would perish.

As I said before, the people of this Colony would perish, but possibly to the advantage and gain of Great Britain. On page 21 of the Report by Frederick Benham on the National Income of British Guiana it is stated that out of this Colony the net income paid abroad is \$3,502,000 less an income amounting to \$82,000 which is received from abroad residents' dividends and interest on shares, and less another amount of \$1,070,000. In other words, this gentleman states that there is a perpetual drain out of this Colony of nearly \$3½ million out of which we get back a sum of \$82,000 as interest, etc. from the money invested abroad. What guarantee is there that the profits which will be earned by this Corporation will be spent in this Colony and not be drained out as at the present time? The Hon. the Financial Secretary himself stated in reply, when I queried his Budget Statement as to what will happen to the C.D.C. in respect of the concession given to the timber industry, what will happen to the profits they are earning, that we have no control over the profits because the C.D.C. is working in other territories and maybe it may be necessary to balance its losses in one place by the profits made in another. Is it that our profits will be perpetually drained out of the Colony? Yet we hear the talk about development and capital coming into the Colony. If the Government uses its foresight it would

see to it that this money is not drained, out of the Colony but is invested in this Colony instead of being sent abroad to be invested. Instead of that we are always crying for capital to come in here.

Let us be sure about it that when capital does come here Government exacts its share of the profits. Perhaps Hon. Members would like to know about our good friends the Steel Brothers. Mention was made that we must not bring in the Steel Brothers in this as they have nothing to do with it but lest Hon. Members be misinformed, it is right for them to know that the Steel Brothers are managing agents of the C.D.C. in this Colony. Lord Trefgarne in this Council Chamber said that the C.D.C. will invite private capitalists to become shareholders in the Fund set up. Bookers can become members of the C.D.C, and so can the Steel Brothers. I have a publication here called "*New Times*". I would like to read a passage from it with reference to the activities of the Steel Brothers in Burma, if I am permitted, so as to point out to Members that despite the facts to the contrary here is something to be worried about.

It is published by a Soviet newspaper "*Trud*"; Moscow (Laughter). If I can get facts in America or the Soviet Union I would try to get it. I get my information wherever I can. On page 3 of that publication this is what it says if you permit me, Sir, to read it.

This was published February 9, 1949. It states:

"The London firm of Steel Brothers & Co., which has branches all over Asia, controls Burma's rice trade, which is the country's main source of revenue, Rice is the staple food of the; majority of the agricultural population. Burma is the largest rice exporting country in the world; its paddy fields are one-third as fertile as those of India. "

Then another paragraph states:

"Thanks to the monstrous commercial exploitation of the peasants of Burma and the toilers of India, Steel Brothers & Co. has become one of Britain's biggest profit-earning firms. It had a hand in the frenzied rice speculation of 1943 that resulted in the terrible famine in Bengal, from which several million people died."

"It has become a rule with the big capitalist companies in Burma to recoup their initial investments in a few years, or even a few months. The firm of Steel Brothers & Co., for example, in six years paid dividends amounting to 235% of its capital, in addition to 212 per cent, issued in capital shares, or a total of 447 per cent..."

The Steel Brothers' set up in British Guiana is a registered company and is also, as I said the managing agents of the C.D.C. This is what I culled from the Deeds Registry in respect of their Articles of Association "*The remuneration of a managing director or manager appointed from time to time shall*

be fixed by the directors, but the total remuneration of all such directors shall not exceed £20,000 per annum". Steel Brothers & Co. was registered in this Colony on August 27th 1949. The point has been well made that if these people who have been exacting profits in other spheres are going to come here, maybe not on their own but in the guise of the C.D.C., and as Hon. Members have pointed out already, not only in the proportion of six to four will the funds be invested, but possibly more funds may be required in the future. In that case we do not know where that money will be forthcoming from; possibly the C.D.C. may go to Steel Brothers or Bookers.

Knowing that Steel Brothers & Co. has been the largest concern in timber and rice in Burma and accepting the fact that it is the managing agent of the C.D.C. for the timber industry in this Colony, can we not take it for granted that Steel Brothers & Co. will also be so appointed for the rice industry? Perhaps we may not, but I would like to ask the Hon. Financial Secretary if in his opinion someone else will be appointed.

Whether that company will be appointed managing agent or not may be immaterial, as Lord Trefgarne has said that private money will be put into the funds which are made available to be invested in Colonial territories.

Six million is to come from the C.D.C. but who knows how much of that six million is the C.D.C.'s, or Bookers', or anybody else's?

The point I was trying to make when the Hon. Member interrupted was that in this concern is where the end is hidden, as the Hon. Member for Eastern Berbice used the phrase "*Where the bricks rub, blankets are there*". Lord Trefgarne told us in this Council Chamber that the funds will be used. We know that His Majesty's Treasury has set forth the sum of £110 million, but that does not prevent the Colonial Development Corporation from going somewhere else and saying "*Lend me some money, or invest in my corporation and put more capital into that Corporation.*" That is the impression which has been given, and I assure you that Hon. Members will bear me out. It was said here that private companies will be able to put money into the global allocation.

-Let us take what the Hon. Financial Secretary has said to be true. Admitting that I am wrong for the moment, it bears out my argument that the C.D.C. has gone into the gold business with Bookers and timber with Steel Brothers. Now it is going into the rice industry and God knows whether it will be Bookers or Steel Brothers. We are only hoping that it will be for the benefit of the people of this Colony. As far as I am concerned, I feel justified in saying that this will mean the ruin of the peasant agriculture of the Colony. I may be said that I am wrong, but I want to quote certain facts to show and to prove to Hon. Members that at all times in this Colony despite the facts, as have said before, Government always says it is trying to protect the interest of the people, but the contrary is being done. I am reading now from the Minutes of the Legislative Council of the 28th July, 1950, of a Motion which I tabled here:

"Whereas the Report of the Committee (Legislative Council Paper No. 2 of 1944) appointed to enquire into certain questions in connection with piece work in sugar estates reported on page 4 that 'the reason why available work is not fully taken up is because resident workers find it more profitable to work on their own rice fields and farms, and some nonresidents have left working in the fields on the estates for more profitable occupations'."

That was a committee which was appointed under the chairmanship of Mr. P. W. King and had reported in its conclusions that the people were working only two or three days a week on sugar estates because they were finding it more profitable to work outside at the Base, at Mackenzie and on their own rice fields and farms. As the result of that, Sir, these are the figures culled from the Labour Department and presented to the Venn Commission: *"In 1943 there was allotted to the people 11,439 acres of rice lands."*

That has a different bearing altogether. I am only using certain facts to prove a point, and that point is this: There has been a deliberate policy, as the Hon. Member for Eastern Demerara has said, to stifle the people of this Colony, and it has been proven on many occasions. I am proving by reference to sugar estates because the sugar estates are not getting enough labour, as the people are finding it more profitable to work elsewhere.

The sugar estates gave 11,430 acres of rice lands to the people in 1943 and that was reduced to 9,381 acres in 1947. 13,053 persons got rice lands in 1943 and 10,263 persons in 1947. As regards provisions the acreage allotted was 3,445 in 1943 and that was reduced to 2,546 acres in 1947, whereas 9,262 persons got lands in 1943 and 6,016 persons in 1947.

Why the Government has introduced the Rice Security of Tenure Ordinance? One Hon. Member mentions it is to protect the farmers. Then why did Government not seek to bring in at the same time the sugar estates in this security of tenure of land so far as rice is concerned? No; Government did not do it, with the result that the sugar estates in order to get cheap labour, to keep a surplus of labour around, used a deliberate policy.

I am not asking that because I do not know if Government would ever get to decide that; but what I want to show is that in the same way how in the past the policy has been made to help the sugar industry of this Colony, even though assurances are being given, the people are afraid that this Corporation will swallow them up and destroy them. I agree with their fears. I would like to read from the Report of the West India Royal Commission which says at page 306:

"Practically the entire coastal area of British Guiana, where the great majority of the population lives and work, depends upon an elaborate system of seawalls, drainage, irrigation and navigation canals. The front lands are at or below sea-level, and flow drainage has frequently to be supplemented by pumping."

“Since the British Guiana system does not involve one great out fall like the Fens of Eastern England, the problem of silting at the various small out falls, with comparatively small discharge and low silt removing power, is an extremely serious one. Grouping of the drain trenches to feed a smaller number of large outlets with a higher rate of discharge would help to meet this problem.”

“The sugar estates depend for their prosperity on adequate drainage and, since sugar remains the most profitable crop, practically all well-drained land is found to be in sugar. Inability to maintain the drainage system inevitably means, as on the Essequibo Coast the abandonment of sugar. The areas devoted to rice and to pasture are badly drained and abound in large swamp areas, where almost amphibious cattle, sheep and pigs eke out an annual existence.”

That is the policy. Here is another part statement at page 54 of the same Report:

“The work of Agricultural Departments throughout the British West Indies has suffered in the past from a tendency to help estates rather than peasants. No doubt the explanation is to be found in the fact that problems can be studied, and new methods tested, with far greater ease on large agricultural units. Nevertheless, both investigation and instruction should be spread over all types of agricultural activity, and the importance of giving similar treatment in this respect to estates and peasant cultivators should be every where realised.”

After what has been going on for 150 years the people of the Colony are rightly suspicious and afraid that there is a conspiracy to defraud them of their rights. We are now to get Marshall Aid and no doubt we will be appealing for a Point Four Programme for the development of the Colonies, and God knows what else. The Financial Secretary and you, Sir, have manoeuvred the situation and introduced a new amendment to the Bill.

I do want to point out that much emphasis is now being placed on the fact that this Legislative Council will determine this and that, but I want to say that this Council, constituted as it is, has no time or very little time to devote to matters of this kind. Many of the Members are professional or businessmen and are busy enough keeping their own affairs in order. Until we get a change of Constitution which will put power in the hands of the people to put Members around this table and pay them to work full time for the Government we will be mere rubber stamps doing things for Government. We were asked the other day to vote some money and we voted it. Now we are being told different stories. This Council will agree that it would have the right of review, but will present Members of the Council be there to see what is being done? That is another point. I do hope that Members of this Council will see the danger in this organisation being set up as an octopus or monster in this Colony. I have no, objection to companies coming in. Let them come by all means but why should they be outside the

control of the Rice Marketing Board? What is sauce for the goose should be sauce for the gander.

At one time we are told that this Colony is not under any international obligation, and at another time that we are still under that obligation. Your Excellency said from the Chair that a communication had been received that we are no longer under any international agreement or obligation, but the Financial Secretary in his statement said that we were. I have so many papers before me that I cannot find my copy of his speech.

When our rice was to be sold in Jamaica the Financial Secretary said that was our natural market. I do not know whether he was referring to the West Indian area, and he felt that it was not right to sell our rice to Venezuela when we could sell it to Jamaica. Why was it natural?

The Hon. Member will hear about that when we are discussing Federation. I am a keen advocate of Federation but not the kind of Federation that is being proposed. While on the one hand Your Excellency has said that we are no longer under any international obligation we are still being told by the Financial Secretary that Venezuela is not our natural market, but Jamaica is. I do not know whether the Rice Producers Association is wrong, but it has circulated a memorandum to all Members of this Council in which it is stated that the Chairman of the Rice Marketing Board was directed by you, Sir, to sell rice to Jamaica.

I am hoping that the Hon. Financial Secretary will correct those mis-statements he refers to, because I intend to read the whole thing out.

It states on page 24:

"In the meantime another meeting of the Board was hurriedly summoned by the Chairman on the 6th June when he informed members that the Governor had sent for him and informed him that he had acted ultra vires in referring the matter of the contract with Jamaica to the Rice Producers Association, and further, that the Governor had instructed him to confirm the sale of 1,000 tons at \$16.00 by cable, to the Jamaica Government which he had done."

It may be a wrong statement, and please forgive me if I quote statements which are not correct, but I am searching for facts and figures, and if they are wrong, you are at liberty to correct them. The point is that in this case there was a surplus of rice. We are told that we were no longer under any international agreement yet we sold rice to Jamaica when we should have sold to Venezuela.

I am surprised to hear the Chairman of the Rice Marketing Board make a statement like that here, because surely we cannot take one man's opinion in Venezuela that the rice produced in British Guiana, especially our super rice, is not good enough for the Venezuelans, when we are told that many others would like to get our rice shipped across the border of British Guiana. In fact discussions were held some time ago and a Committee was appointed to investigate the possibilities of establishing inland freight,

possibly shipping rice to Venezuela and bringing beef by air from the interior.

We are not dealing with these matters fast enough, and the taxpayers are being made to suffer. In the last year our subsidy to the B.G. Airways has been almost doubled. It was increased from \$45,000 to nearly \$90,000 and if we had this backward and forward freight to the interior it is possible that Georgetown people would have been getting beef, the rice producers would have been getting more for their paddy and rice, and Government would have been paying the B.G. Airways a lower subsidy.

I do not know why Members keep interrupting me. I do not see the point.

I have already made the point and I believe all Members of this Council are agreed, that, indirectly, Government has blundered on the question of the export of rice, and has caused the Colony's Development Plan and everything else to be thrown overboard. I was referring to the fact that in the near future it may be possible for this Colony, being no longer bound by international agreement, to secure the best markets for our rice, whether we sold to Brazil, Venezuela or the West Indies. But I am casting my eyes a little beyond to the period when there is likely to be a scarcity of grain.

Yes, Sir. I think the Government has done everything possible to help the sugar industry, but with the rice industry it is a different matter altogether. When the question comes up of a surplus in the world markets, and when the central mills are producing the best qualities of rice, whether in grade or colour, it is possible and very probable that they will undersell the Rice Marketing Board in all the markets. That is the fear. That is how it is being argued. If this Corporation is set up there would first of all be no objection to its buying paddy wherever it cares. If it chooses to buy paddy at a price, which is higher than the other millers?

I would wish the Financial Secretary to draft the Agreement now.

It is like giving a blank cheque to Government. We want to see the conditions under which the corporation will work.

Will Government then say why those things have not been prepared and put before this Council at this time?

There are so many interruptions. The Hon. Financial Secretary keeps interrupting and I do not know how many times he is going to be allowed to reply to the debate on the Bill, I have a few more points to develop which I will not be able to cover this afternoon.

U.S. Base Employees' Rates of Pay: August 16, 1950

Dr. Jagan: I gave notice of the following questions:

1. Will Government state whether any action has been taken with reference to the Petition tabled by me on November 17, 1949, in the Legislative Council on behalf of former Base employees?

2. Is Government aware, that the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in the case of Vermilya Brown vs. Connell that the Bermuda Base, and consequently Bases in other British territories were subject to the provisions of the Fair Labour Standards Act of 1938, setting out minimum hourly rates of pay, overtime, etc.? Is it true that a Petition was sent to the Honourable Colonial Secretary in 1949 by former Base employees seeking Government's help in procuring from the American authorities higher rates of pay, and settlement of back pay, allegedly the difference between their then prevailing rates of pay and the rates provided for in the Labour Standards Act of 1938?

3. Will Government state whether there is a Clause in the document, signed by the American and British Guiana Governments on the transfer of the Base to the B.G. Government to the effect that all labour and staff from the Americans would be paid the prevailing rates as at date of being taken over? If so, will Government state why rates have been reduced and working conditions changed?

Rice Marketing Bill: August 17, 1950

Dr. Jagan: Sir, I must first of all express appreciation not only of my own but, I suppose, of Hon. Members, for the opportunity which had been given in presenting to this Council a statement by you and subsequently yesterday afternoon a conference with Members, as you said, Sir, to try to come to some compromise agreement, especially since you felt there were so many misconceptions about this whole issue. I remember the Hon. the Financial Secretary, in making his opening remarks, was very complimentary to me. He said: *"I can rely on the Hon. Member for Central Demerara to bring to bear his usual intellectual and logical grasp of all subjects that come before him."* I do not know if I am really deserving of that compliment. I need not point out what I also feel about the Hon. Member's skill and intellect, as many Members have already spoken about that, but I would like to say that the Hon. Member's skill and intellect are somewhat dulled by his apologies or his defence on behalf of Government. I only wish that skill and intelligence were on my side, and I do hope that some time in the near future we shall have the opportunity to have him on our side. Coming back to the point, since these various advances have been made I do hope, speaking now on this Bill, that I would really merit this praise which has been showered on me and that I will be able to bring to bear logic to show that the Government's case is illogical.

In the first place I want again refer to Clause 7 because, as it was originally presented, it seems to have been very obscure, but by the various amendments - if I may call them so - which have been introduced an attempt has been made to make the issue more clear. But still, as the Hon. Member for Eastern Demerara (Mr. Debidin) pointed out yesterday, the main issue remains and that is, that this company or Corporation will operate outside the provisions of the Rice Marketing Board. I do hope you will pardon me if I make comments with reference to the meeting yesterday and what you or the Hon. the Financial Secretary said, not with the idea of disclosing anything. If I do make any statement which you feel should not be said, kindly notify me.

Rice Marketing Bill: August 17, 1950

Dr. Jagan: Sir, it has come to my knowledge that the C.D.C., which is interested in this rice deal, first of all would like the decks clear and to have a reasonable measure of freedom, if they are come into this deal, to market their own rice. Before I proceed to the point of the agreement which is supposed to be tendered later on to this Council, I want to have clarified certain fears which are running through my mind. If the C.D.C wants to be free from the restricted provisions of the Rice Marketing Board and wants this measure of freedom to market its own rice, then it seems to me that two things are assumed. One is, that the Rice Marketing Board as presently constituted is not capable of marketing rice or giving the best so far as securing markets, whether in the West Indies or any part of the world is concerned First of all, I would like to challenge such, an assumption, because I do not feel it is correct. Let us assume that it is correct for the moment, then again I do not see why those so-called skilled officials who may be operating the C.D.C. cannot come in with the Rice Marketing Board and give their skill and knowledge on behalf of themselves and on behalf of the rice producers of this Colony as a whole. Therefore, Sir, it seems to me a little contradictory in terms on the one hand to say that the C.D.C. will want to be free from the restricted provisions of the Rice Marketing Board, and on the other hand to say that an agreement will be subsequently put to this Council which will protect the rice farmers and peasants of this Colony.

Let us assume for a moment that in this agreement that will be drafted everything is made to secure the position of the small man in this Colony. It may be that because of certain restrictions which are now placed on the Rice Marketing Board this new Corporation will also have to abide by certain of those restrictions. By that I mean the following: at the present time we are selling rice locally, a large quantity for local consumption, and as we all know that rice is being sold at a lower price than the export markets. Another point which has to be considered is the fact that we have at the expiration of the first contract which will be at the end of next year, another contract pending for another three years during which time we have to meet certain obligations. Let us assume for the moment that in this new agreement to be drafted this Corporation will also have to abide by the restrictions which are now placed on the Board; that is, they will have to meet their share of rice which is consumed locally and, perhaps, also meet up the necessary and required quantity of rice which has to be exported to the West Indies under contract. I say that, because the fear has been expressed that the large corporation will be milling rice very efficiently and, possibly, it will lower the cost of production and the small mills will be

unable to purchase paddy at a higher price; consequently if they are purchasing paddy too the time may come when the Rice Marketing Board may find itself not being able to fulfil its contractual relations with the West Indies. It may be assumed, that in the Agreement which will be drafted there will be a Clause which will state that the company or Corporation will have to meet any deficit which will have to be met in case there is not enough rice within the grasp of the Rice Marketing Board.

Here are the contradictions. On the one hand we are told the C.D.C. does not want to be bound by the restrictions of the Rice Marketing Board, and we must remember that the Rice Marketing Board is primarily a selling organisation. But here it is being expressed that in an Agreement which will be made the terms will be so favourable to the small man that the company will have to abide by the restrictions which, if it was on the Board, it would have to meet. Sir, if this Agreement, which is supposed to be tabled later on in this Council, would be so favourable to the small man in this Colony and would place restrictions on the Corporation, then if it goes on the Board it would be under the same restrictions and would suffer in no other way. Those are the two points which, I feel, are very contradictory in themselves and, consequently, I cannot see any necessity for allowing this thing to go a stage further and for us to go through all the bother as, perhaps, a very skilled individual may have to be brought and a long time wasted before this agreement will be drawn up and to what avail? If it is drawn up it will have to be brought to this Council again and, possibly, another long debate may ensue, when in truth and in fact all this can be avoided. The C.D.C. or corporation can form itself and come within the provisions of the Rice Marketing Board and be subjected to the very same restrictions which it would be subject to if the agreement is made in favour of the small man and the producers of this Colony. Therefore the argument does not seem to be right. There is something contradictory in it and the C.D.C. insisting that it must be left out makes individuals suspicious and feel it is no good going through this long winded procedure, though it is said the agreement will come before this Council for ratification.

In the course of the debate mention has been made of the central mills and machinery which, possibly, we will be able to get from the U.S.A. under the terms of the E.C.A. I would like to find out whether the Colony cannot get that equipment without the formation of this company. Is it possible that the Colony because of its needs, possibly because of the fact that the Colonial Office may not want to recommend it, cannot get the machinery without the cooperation of this corporation? In my last speech I gave some facts and figures to show that all that has been said about development must not be assumed and taken for granted. I have pointed out, and other Members have pointed out also, the very commercial nature of the C.D.C. We have been also told by the Hon. Financial Secretary that we are going to get Marshall Aid, possibly if the company is formed. I am not too sure about that. He also said Marshall Aid is being given to us free and

gratis, as there will be no strings attached. I have already gone to the trouble to show that the C.D.C. and the C.D. & W. and all the so-called Development Plans have as their primary objective the balancing of Great Britain's annual deficits.

This is the E.C. Agreement which was handed to Members of this Council when the Marshall Aid was promulgated. We had to accept it and we had no say about it. I would like to read a couple of relevant sections to show that even with this generous gift which, the Hon. Financial Secretary has intimated, has no strings attached, there are certain strings attached. Article 5 of the Agreement says:

"The Government of the United Kingdom will facilitate the transfer to the United States of America, for stockpiling or other purposes, of materials originating in the United Kingdom which are required by the United States of America as a result of deficiencies or potential deficiencies in its own resources, upon such reasonable terms of sale, exchange, barter or otherwise, and in such quantities, and for such period of time, as may be agreed to between the Governments of the United States of America and the United Kingdom after due regard for the reasonable requirements of the United Kingdom for domestic use and commercial export of such materials..."

In the second paragraph the Article goes on to say:

"Recognising the principle of equity in respect to the drain upon the natural resources of the United States of America and of the participating countries, the Government of the United Kingdom will, when so requested by the Government of the United States of America, negotiate where applicable (a) a future schedule of minimum availabilities to the United States of America for future purchase and delivery of a fair share of materials originating in the United Kingdom which are required by the United States, of America as a result of deficiencies or potential deficiencies in its own resources at world market prices so as to protect the access of United States industry to an equitable share of such materials either in percentages of production or in absolute quantities from the United Kingdom, (b) arrangements providing suitable protection for the right of access for any citizen of the United States of America or any corporation, partnership, or other association created under the laws of the United States of America, or of any State or Territory thereof and substantially beneficially owned by citizens of the United States of America, in the development of such materials on terms of treatment equivalent to those afforded to the nationals of the United Kingdom, and, (c) an agreed schedule of increased production of such materials where practicable in the United Kingdom and for delivery of an agreed percentage of such increased production to be transferred to the United States of America on a long-term basis in consideration of assistance furnished by the United States of America under this Agreement."

Paragraph 3 reads:

“The Government of the United Kingdom, when so requested by the Government of the United States of America, will cooperate, wherever appropriate, to further the objectives of paragraphs 1 and 2 of this Article in respect of materials originating outside the United Kingdom.”

Sir, the Marshall Aid may appear to have no strings attached, but for the Colonies it does have many strings attached in that it falls in with the C.D.C. policy of colonial exploitation. What is said here is merely saying that the U.S.A. is deficient in raw materials such as cocoa, tin, bauxite and rubber, and they must be produced by the Colonies. In 1938 the exports of tin and rubber in Malaya amounted to more than the total exports of the United Kingdom in dollars to the U.S.A. The policy is to keep the Colonies producing the raw materials. Of course it is an age old imperialist policy, but now we find the U.S.A. helping along that policy. I do not know how far it is going to get us, but I do hope we will be able to have a clear cut policy because we are being told certain things; which, on the surface, may appear to be true.

It is not only the world market prices. The main point is that the Colonies are made to produce certain things. The policy is that we must produce things which the U.S.A. and the U.K. are deficient in.

Rice and sugar are two of the things that are spoken about, but what about gold, timber and bauxite?

They go to the dollar areas. That is the point the Hon. Financial Secretary asked whether I was suggesting that the Colonies were not being paid for the things they produce. Surely they are being paid, but the point is that Great Britain owes the Colonies. He knows that the Sterling Bloc owed the Colonies £600 million up to the end of 1948, and has only paid a few millions.

Sir, I wish you would ask the Financial Secretary not to interrupt. The point I was trying to make is that I do not agree with the policy which the Hon. Member for Western Berbice (Mr. Peters) described as the wage policy, but I prefer to call it the plantation policy. In spite of this generosity and the suggestion of huge capital coming into the Colony, I am afraid to leave the C.D.C. or any other corporation outside the provisions of the Rice Marketing Board. I hope that in his reply the Financial Secretary will tell us whether we will get this free gift without any strings attached; whether we form a company or not.

With reference to the machinery which was purchased some time ago by the Rice Marketing Board I remember that the Chairman of the Board made the statement in this Council that in time to come the rice farmers would give him great credit for having that foresight. I have no doubt that they will do so, because any infant can see the benefits to be derived from the use of machinery. I do not think we are as blind as people were many years ago who, even in England, destroyed machinery because they felt that it would put them out of jobs. What I want to point out is that the

Board has spent a lot of money on machinery, and some of the farmers have taken up some of that machinery because they have seen what is happening around the Mahaicony Abary Scheme, but one high official in the Government told me that it was sad to see the loss suffered by some of those people who had invested their savings, in purchasing machinery, realising that in that lay the future expansion of their cultivation. They had lost everything or nearly everything as a result of the recent floods. Many of them are faced with the prospect of not being able to meet their annual payment.

The Hon. Member for Eastern Demerara (Mr. Debidin) referred to Cane Grove some time ago and remarked that machinery had become a burden to the people on that settlement. It is a sad thing to have to come to this Council and say that machinery is becoming a burden on the people, but that is so because there has been no forthright policy. With their oxen farmers and their families have been able to plough two or three acres of land, but with the advent of machinery they have had even to borrow money for ploughing and other expenses, and when the floods came they lost even what they had not had before. We do not want it to be said that machinery is a burden on the farmers therefore; Government should give serious consideration to the problem of drainage and irrigation, in this Colony. The Hon. Member who is the Chairman of the Rice Marketing Board has told us in Council that the Board will have no difficulty in selling the tractors and other machinery which has been bought. I hope that is correct. What amazes me is the fact that even after those individuals in the United States who are in the hit-and-run business went up there and disappeared the other day, an expert of the Rice Marketing Board was sent to examine the machinery and Reported that it was satisfactory.

The expert in question is a member of the Board. He may not be termed an expert but his opinions have been cited in these matters. I do not know if Your Excellency will permit me to read from the balance sheet or the Auditors' Report to the Rice Marketing Board with reference to the hire purchase agreements. This is what is said in one paragraph.

I propose to read from the Report of Messrs. Fitzpatrick Graham & Co.

I do not know if it is a public document but the taxpayers are paying for the service of Messrs. Fitzpatrick Graham & Co., and I feel that any communication made by them to the Board is a public document. After all the Board is being run for the benefit of the people of the Colony, and if the Auditors submit a Report to the Board I do not see why it should be withheld from the public, even if it is not printed in the main Report.

Anyway, in view of the fact that so much criticism has been levelled I do not think I should read it.

Am I supposed to read it?

Before I leave the question of machinery I wish to say that I do not see the necessity for the inclusion of Clause 5 in the Bill, because in the Report of the Rice Marketing Board for the period 1st October 1948, to 30th Sep-

tember 1949, it is stated:

“58: The total value of stocks of equipment held by the Board at 31st December 1949, together with the outstanding balances due in respect of equipment sold to producers under hire purchase agreements, amounted to approximately \$791,000, and the Board has now decided to discontinue the scheme after current stocks are distributed.”

If that is going to be the future policy of the Board I do not see the necessity for incorporating this Clause in the bill. I am sure that government has given its blessing to what has been done, and that what has been done has been done in the best interests of the rice producers of the colony.

With reference to the executive committee, the Chairman of the Rice Marketing Board in his opening remarks mentioned the fact that vis-a-vis the Board the executive committee is really reduced to the position of having to refer everything back to the Board and consequently the expense of the Board are mounting. That may be quite true, and I have no reason to doubt, because the Hon. Member cited figures that were very illuminating. Expenses have been going up, and I have in my hand a copy of the agenda of the Board for a meeting on the 30th May, 1950, which I would like to read in order to show this Council that a good deal of what is been done by the Board and increasing its expenses might very well be done by the executive committee. The agenda reads:

1. Confirmation of Minutes.
2. Release of rice for Jamaica.
3. Claim for compensation – Miss Ouckama.
4. Letters from Mrs. D. Mahadeo:
 - (i) Increasing rental of New Amsterdam premises.
 - (ii) Requesting Board to repair palings at New Amsterdam premises.
5. Purchase of jute bags.
6. Staff leave- D. Griffith, W.E. Cameron, Mrs. D'Ornellas, and J.L. Gordon.
7. Importation of equipment for blending.
8. Letter from Hon. C.A. McDoom re angle dozer.
9. Travelling and subsistence for members attending meetings of Building Committee.
10. Lighting plant for Springlands house.
11. Application by Assistant Clerk in charge,

Springlands, for use of the lower flat of
Springlands house.

12. Petition by District Supervisors.
13. Financial Statement – Rice Producers' Association
14. Grading of Staff.
15. Correspondence.
16. Any Other Business.

It seems that interruptions are the order of the day. The point I was trying to make is that the reason why the expenses of the Board are mounting up and that is one the reasons advanced why the executive committee should be given more power is that the board has to deal with quite a number of trivial matters. I have just read an agenda of 16 items, and I am told that the items are usually so numerous that they cannot be dealt with at one meeting. Trivial matters which are well within the scope of the Executive Committee are discussed by the Board, with the result that expenses mount up. I have cited this instance to show Members who consider Clause 7 objectionable that they should throw out the other Clauses, because we have been told that certain Clauses are to be withdrawn, and that other clauses, such as that giving the Executive Committee more power, are not necessary. If at some subsequent time it is found necessary to make such minor amendments as giving the Assistant Manager the same power as the Manager with regard to seizure of paddy or rice, such amendments can be made in the Ordinance. In winding up I would like to quote a passage from the speech of the Colonial Treasurer on the 31st January, 1946. In introducing the Rice Marketing Bill, in which he apparently referred to a speech made by him in 1943. In column 2095 of the Hansard Report of January 31, 1946, he is reported to have said:

"I concluded my remarks in the Council by stating that I gave an undertaking that as soon as the war is over I would do my best to have the present Board converted into a Cooperative organisation of a democratic character in the management and control of which those engaged in the rice industry would take an important share."

Yes. It goes on to state.

"It is therefore, a matter of great personal satisfaction to me that I am able to introduce this Bill with that with that objective in Council and to move the second reading today."

I do not know whether the Financial Secretary's objection in asking me to read the concluding passage is to suggest that the present Board is a truly Cooperative organisation. If so I would like to send him over to the Cooperative Department to get some of the lectures they are giving now. We all know that the Rice Marketing Board is not a Cooperative. Eight members of the Board are nominated by the Governor and of the eight members who the Rice Producers' Association is supposed to put in we have been told that three of them were rejected by Government who nominated three others in their places. If that is what is meant by a Cooperative I hope that some amendment will be made in view. I want to speak particularly on the question of the Board being made a Cooperative organisation because I feel that the time is very ripe that that should be done. We are told that it would be very big undertaking to make the Board a truly Cooperative organisation with the rice growers themselves. I do not like the term "rice producers" because it is all-embracing. I would like to see the Board made a truly Cooperative organisation of the rice growers of the colony.

In answer to that, Sir, I would like to state that the only body which really can speak in the name of the rice growers of this Colony is the Rice Producers' Association. Nobody can come along and say "*I have organized the growers into a Cooperative organisation and here is the Plan,*" because Government would surely and rightly ask his authority to speak in the name of the rice growers. But by Statute the Rice Producers' Association has been made a representative organisation of the rice growers of this Colony, and I have here a copy of a resolution forwarded to Government by the Rice Producers' Association requesting Government to make the Rice Marketing Board a Cooperative organisation. The association has consulted Mr. Cheeseman who has been in the Colony for some time and has now gone. If it was Government's intention to make the Rice Marketing Board a Cooperative organisation it surely would have consulted Mr. Cheeseman on the subject.

As far as the problem in this country is a very big one, and unless we plan in a big way we are not going to solve it. When I was a boy my father was a rice planter. He had about four acres of land, one of which was about a mile from our home, another two miles away, another acre about three miles away and another bed about five miles away from our home. I remember that as a boy I had to go behind the cows, running barefooted to the rice fields to carry out the rice work. Why hasn't Government thought about doing something to help people like my father? The people had to waste time and energy in having to cultivate an acre here and an acre in another place. What has Government given in the way of an incentive to the people? Sir, in this big Colony with so much land the people are still land hungry and do not have adequate and proper facilities to cultivate the land of this Colony. I have cited figures to show a deliberate policy on the part of the sugar producers to reduce acreage of cultivation by the People,

because they have found the workers are not working sufficient days on the sugar estates. If we are really interested in the farmers and we want to see the industry developed and that is the claim of this Bill let us bring in the Corporation but see that the people's interests are not endangered. Why not give the people facilities? Give them land in one particular spot so that they can have organised use of the land themselves.

We are talking about a big Corporation. My friend, the Hon. Member for Eastern Demerara (Mr. Debidin), pointed out that during the floods the Mahaicony Abary Scheme cut the dam and flooded the people of the area. That is a policy again which is aimed at helping the rice farmers and the people of this country. As I see it, Sir, the Colony can be developed and the people who are in the existing rice industry can do the development, provided they are given the facilities. By that I mean proper irrigation and drainage and also better and organised use of the land. You mentioned the other day, Sir, that there was one Producers' Cooperative organisation with a marvellous achievement. But I want to state that if there was any sincere interest in the peasants and rice growers of this Colony, and if it was felt that Producers' Cooperatives would help them forward then Government should have advocated an adequate policy. Why has Government not set up machinery stations in certain outlying places and made the machinery available to the people as they are doing at the Mahaicony Abary Scheme renting the machinery out to the peasants at half the rate per hour that the Scheme is doing? If the rate per hour for the ploughs is \$3.00, let Government come out and say *"In order to help the people we are going to charge \$1.50 per-hour; we are going to subsidise them to that extent."* The Government in England does things like that; when the people could not go into the coal mines the Government gave them extra pay and rations. If the object of this Government is to encourage Producers and Cooperatives, let us not leave it to the whims of the people, because we know the people are accustomed to the old and antiquated mode of production and may not want to give it up. I submit that the way forward is not the plantation type of agriculture. I hold no brief for the individual type of agriculture. Let it not be understood so. On the other hand I say the way forward is to give them the facilities. A Producers' Cooperative organisation can only be viable if Government gives the incentive. But so far I do not see that any incentive has been given. Instead we are now being asked to believe in the Government when for so many years we have not seen the fruits of the good intentions of Government. Perhaps the problem has been so big that the Government was not able to grapple with it all. Perhaps on account of the "bigness" of the problem no positive policy could have been framed. But, Sir, if that is the sin not of commission, then it is definitely a sin of omission because in not advocating certain policies the people are left to suffer. I do hope Hon. Members will take this opportunity to throw out this new clause which has been brought forward as an amendment.

Sir, in my private discussions with the Hon. Financial Secretary, he inti-

mated to me that if I were satisfied that the Government was sincere in its motives especially with reference to the new Clause, then would I take the initiative both in this Council and out of this Council. I hope I am not saying anything I should not say. I want to say that I will take the initiative and will do so because I am not convinced that the Government is doing the right thing in allowing the C.D.C. to be exempted from the provisions of the Rice Marketing Ordinance. Even if it takes all my energy, I am going to oppose this measure, despite the fact that it may or may not pass in this Council, because I feel it is not right, it is unfair -it is unjust. I have pointed it out already that the Council or the people of this Colony cannot hope for anything good from such a company, when it has already aroused distrust in that it does not want to work within the provisions of the Rice Marketing Ordinance. As I have said before, even if they are out of it, according to the contemplated terms of agreement they would be limited to the same severe restrictions, and so, I cannot see any reason whatever for them to be left out.

Sir, a memorandum has, a few moments ago, been given to Hon. Members. I have not had time to peruse it, but I know what is written there. That is, the recommendation of the Rice Producers' Association, I hope I am correct, is to amend the Rice Marketing Ordinance so that this new company, which will be formed, will have the right to nominate eight members which Government is now nominating. Sir, if this Corporation in which Government will have funds and the C.D.C. will have funds, has the right to nominate eight members to the Board, the same right which Government now has and the Rice Producers' Association which is protecting the interests of the peasants and other interests, then I do not see why there should still be any suspicion on the part of the C.D.C. or any other concern. I am not wholly in agreement with it, but nevertheless I hope, Sir, that Government will find this a real way out of this impasse and will accept it readily, because the C.D.C. will then be able with its expert skill and knowledge to find markets to go into the Rice Marketing Board and be limited to the same restrictions in so far as local consumption is concerned and as our West Indian contracts are concerned, and be able to get benefits for itself and the others. I do hope that when the Hon. Financial Secretary speaks we will hear that he is in agreement with the proposal as put up by the Rice Producers' Association, and then the C.D.C. will be free without the waste of so much time to negotiate new contracts and settle down to business now and not as the Hon. Member says, probably in two or three years to come.

Figures can tell a lot of truth but sometimes they can tell a lot of lies. It is true I confess to it that the expenditure of the Association has gone up tremendously, but why aren't members honest enough to say what are the changed functions of the Association? Merely to compare figures is not enough. I have here Estimates for 1950.

I did not impute dishonesty on the Hon. Member's part, and I am sorry he misunderstood me, because I know that on several occasions he has told

me privately that he did not like the word "may" in the provision that the Board "may make grants from its funds to the Rice Producers' Association to defray its administrative expenses" and that he preferred the word "shall." He has also said so in Council. Nevertheless the impression has been created that the Association has been spending too much, and that the expenditure has been rising. It is being implied, therefore, that the Association is squandering the money.

I merely wanted to correct the impression which has been created in the minds of the public, that the Rice Producers' Association has been spending a lot of money. Early in 1949 when the new Rice Producers' Association was properly constituted by elections, it found itself in this position of requiring funds to carry on its activities properly. An estimate of the funds required was prepared and submitted to the Board, certain members of which felt that the amount was too high and did not want to take the responsibility for payment of the money. Consequently they felt that Government should give the Board some directive on the matter. I have here a copy of a letter which was written by Mr. Heape when he was Colonial Secretary, and with your permission, Sir. I will read it.

To the Secretary of the Rice Producers' Association, it is dated 25th March 1949 and reads as follows:

"Sir, I am directed to refer to my letter No. 108-34-4 of the 22nd March and to our conversation on the telephone yesterday, and to inform you that I have seen the Manager of the Rice Marketing Board and that you may expect to receive a letter from the Board on the question of your Estimates in the near future.

*Sgd. W. L. Heape
Colonial Secretary."*

Then there was a letter by Mr. Mahadeo, Asst. Manager of the Rice Marketing Board, to the General Secretary of the Rice Producers' Association, suggesting that there was no need for the money. What I want to clear up is that this wrangling has been going on, and as you say, the Colonial Secretary has the right to approve of the Estimates of the Association.

I am not objecting to Estimates being submitted to the Colonial Secretary, because he has the right to require Estimates to be submitted before he sanctions payment. On the question of the Association's expenditure I have here the Estimates for 1950 which amount to \$19,403.80. I will refer to the major Heads in order to show how the money is being expended. There is one item: General Secretary, \$6,300. Another large item is Subsistence and Travelling \$2,760. The reason for this is that the Ordinance provides that the Association shall meet from time to time, and provision is made in the Estimates for eight meetings during the year, each of which will cost approximately \$320. It may be that certain members of the Board may consider that expensive, and I personally may take the same view, but when I look around I find that Government is very generous in giving its officers

\$7.20 per day as subsistence allowance when they go on trips, and Members of this Council also get subsistence allowances. Therefore, although this item may seem to be large, Government's example is there for the Association to follow. If a correction is made at the top corruption will cease at the bottom. Another item on the estimate is \$1,000 in connection with the trip to Dutch Guiana. Perhaps it will be argued that it was not necessary, but I have argued in this Council that many of the trips which are being made today at Government's expense are also unnecessary,

The sum of \$4,602 has been set aside for the Districts Supervisory Organisation. That may be considered a very large sum but, Sir, it must be remembered at the same time that this Association has undertaken to take over some of the responsibilities of the Board. But, rightly or wrongly, a decision has been taken by the Board to abolish this supervisory organisation which is costing the Board \$18,000 a year. The Hon. the Financial Secretary mentioned that. The point is, the decision of the Board was to remove the Districts Supervisory Organisation and the Rice Producers' Association was to take on the job at a great saving to the Board.

I find myself appointed to one committee only and some are appointed to six or seven.

I will come to the point. I do not feel personally that the Association has been too extravagant. If they have done so, then they have taken a leaf out of Government's book, and I hope in the future some concern will be given to the spending of money by the Rice Producers' Association, because in a way I feel that it is the people's money. The rice growers will eventually have to pay whatever it is. If less is spent the more would be going to the rice growers. I feel that if it is felt that the Government nominees are embarrassed in the Rice Marketing Board, what can be done, Sir, is, instead of saying as the new Clause proposes "*the Board may with the approval of the Governor,*" let it be "*with the approval of the Legislative Council*". I hope, Sir in that case that Government would consider the Estimates; the Hon. the Financial Secretary would then approve or disapprove of it and the approved figure and details then be brought to the Legislative Council. I am sure that in Finance Committee it will get approval. I therefore beg to move an amendment to the Clause, saying "*that the Board may with the approval of the Legislative Council.*"

I hope I did not let anything out of the bag, but that is common knowledge because we know that the large mills can operate more efficiently. It has been pointed out to us that such a mill working at full capacity can operate at almost negligible cost. I hope that statement is true, because that has been given to us by the officials of the central mills at the Mahaicony Abary Scheme, and I therefore submit that with the operation of the central mill and the command of free world markets which will give the best prices, the Company will be in a superior position to the small millers of the Colony to get paddy within its province. Of course it may be argued there is nothing wrong about that because the small farmers will benefit. I want to point

out I am not against the operation of central mills, because if I do so then I certainly would be against efficiency and what I feel is in the best interests of the Colony. As my friend said he is not in favour of the kind of rice which we have to eat at the present time; the point is, since 1939 Mr. Parker came to this Colony and suggested what should be done so far as the small mills are concerned. He also advocated the setting up of central mills in the Colony. Apparently the Government is not prepared to accept a positive policy so far as that matter is concerned, and instead of that a policy of drifting is advocated.

That brings me to a point which was mentioned some while ago on a committee which was set up dealing with copra. Because we have in operation today two modern mills which can make deodorised oil from copra and because there is a shortage of copra meal which affects the pig industry and the cattle industry, it was suggested by a very responsible official that attempts should be made to convert all coconuts into copra. I agree with that view too, Sir, but then again it is not right merely to say that we must convert all coconuts into copra and at the same time allow the Central Board of Health to issue permits for the operation of small mills. At the same time I am not saying that Government should buy out the small mills. But what is the use of strangulating the small mills by passing legislation to convert all coconuts into copra and thus deprive the small crude oil maker of his supply of coconuts, when it is not being said as a policy that something will be done for those people, that they will be given compensation, or that it is a definite policy that Government will not issue any more licenses, etc., in respect of the operation of those mills? But we cannot have such a policy to convert all coconuts into copra and to stop issuing licenses to small mills without either buying out those people who have small mills or giving them compensation. But if we allow that to go on as it is at the present time, then we will have the pig industry suffering and the cattle industry suffering. I brought that up to show what will happen also with reference to the rice industry, because if these central mills are set up and the Government does not set about a definite policy with respect to the small mills of the Colony, then it means the small millers must be afraid of strangulation because they know they will not be able to offer to the farmers the same price which the Company with its modern machinery can offer. The only thing which will secure them paddy for their mills will be to tie the farmers down by contracts to supply them with paddy for the operation of their mills.

Therefore, Sir, I feel that possibly the best thing that can be done by the C.D.C. will be the setting up of modern central mills all over this Colony, and the first thing Government should do is to make a positive policy as to what is to be done with these small mills. I hope, Sir that will be taken into serious consideration. But we are not going to have that; we are going to have instead the Company embarking on the cultivation of rice on its own. The Hon. the Financial Secretary said some time ago in his statement that it

would be very good to see the technicians at work in the fields and in the mill at the Mahaicony Abary Scheme, but I want to inform him that while it might be very good to see the machinery and the men at work in those places, it is a sad thing to know the state in which those people are living at the present time. We visited that mill too, we saw the machinery and the men in the mill; we went into the field and saw the men and the machinery there at work. But where we were not admitted or we did not see was the place where the people are living. I hope we are going to try and avoid these things like the disintegration of family life, those people having been taken away from their villages, their own type of economy, and the housing of the people in logies that sickens one to think that is the kind of life those people are committed to. I hope the Government of this Colony would see to it that such things are not permitted in the future.

As regards the ways and means in which this capital Governments capital and the C.D.C's capital can be invested in this Colony for the benefit of all concerned, I have mentioned the establishment of central mills and of tractor or machine stations. There is no reason why the Rice Marketing Board cannot operate as a truly Cooperative organisation, buying all the paddy and giving it out to the mills, (whether they be central or otherwise), to be milled into rice on behalf of the Board. Certain Members feel that is a big task, but I do not think so. It is very simple and can be done readily. The Company can invest this money in machinery which can be rented out to the farmers on easy terms and also, as an incentive to those people who are attempting to set up a producers' Cooperative, in loans to them at a smaller or lower rate of interest. But, Sir despite all that has been said and written about this Clause, as one of my friends pointed out to me yesterday, we do not want to happen in British Guiana what is happening on the continent of Africa today. We do not want two types of laws to be made: one set of Laws for one set of people and another set of laws for another set of people. If there is to be a Rice Marketing Board, a single seller organisation in the Colony, then I submit that whatever Agreement, notwithstanding the Company, should come within the orbit of it. Not only it should come but it should be made to come within its orbit. I hope Government would in its wisdom not pursue this Clause, as even, though it may be passed the people of this Colony have their minds made up about it already. Last Wednesday when you Sir, informed this Council that the Council was to be adjourned as you wanted to have a private discussion with the members of the Council, an ordinary peasant from the gallery called me and said "*don't let Government buy you over*". The people were seeing what was happening. They know in their common sense way of reasoning that no matter what is done they are to be restricted by the Rice Marketing Board. That fact stands out and *no* amount of argument will wipe that out. That is why I am appealing to the Government, because the passage of this Clause will not make everything right so far as the people are concerned. There is going to be opposition outside of this Council. In

view of what I have said I intend to move as an amendment to this clause as redrafted.

“Deletion of the words following the word ‘industry’ in the fifth line of subparagraph (1) to the end of the Clause; and the substitution of the following:

“In accordance with this view and at a time when such a Company is formed, the Governor shall amend the Rice Marketing Board Ordinance to provide for:

(a) the appointment to the Rice Marketing Board of 8 members selected by the Company and 8 members selected by the Rice Producers’ Association, the Chairman to be selected alternatively by the Company and the Association for successive periods of six months; and to make other necessary amendments to the Rice Marketing Board Ordinance to confirm with proposals under (a).”

I have moved this because it is my firm conviction.

I have moved this amendment because I feel convinced that the Company would not stand to lose in any way by having to operate under the provisions of the Rice Marketing Board. I have said so on several occasions; therefore I need not repeat what I have said. It follows that if the Company came under the Board, the proceeds of the sale of any surplus rice by the Board after its contractual obligations have been met and local consumption requirements have been supplied would be shared by the Company and the people of the Colony.

Why have I stressed the importance of having a rotating Chairman for six months? It is because the Rice Producers’ Association suggested that eight members should be appointed by the Association and eight by the Company to the Rice Marketing Board, and they were willing to concede that the Chairman, with his casting vote, should be one of the representatives of the Company. I recall that in his reply to the debate on the second reading the Hon. the Financial Secretary remarked that such a proposal would give the Company a monopoly which was not wanted.

I think my word *“monopoly”* means the same thing, but I am glad for the exact words by the Financial Secretary. In view of that I feel it is equitable that there should be a rotating Chairmanship for six months. I know that this may be something new in the history of British Guiana, but we have examples of it in the United Nations Assembly where there is a rotating Chairman every month.

It may be true that it is not in the rice industry but nevertheless this is a matter of democracy. Whether it is a small Company, a large Corporation, or individual peasants, they should all have a say in the disposal of the rice, and I hope Hon. Members will support the amendment I have moved, because I feel it would meet the needs of everyone concerned. It is a compromise, and I feel sure it would meet the situation.

Prisons

Dr. Jagan: Under this Head I notice that the revenue for 1948 was \$5,113 and for last year it was only \$2,644. This year it is estimated to be 33,500. I am at a loss really to understand why, especially when more attempts are being made to get the Prison population to do more of that type of work which will provide them with the training to place them in a position to earn a decent livelihood outside. I am wondering why really the revenue is estimated at \$3,500, which is really a decrease on the 1948 figure, whereas it should increase taking into consideration the attempts made to train these people to do such things as basket making, mat making, etc. We have seen many of those articles displayed. I remember seeing them at the League of Coloured People's Fair. What I cannot understand is the reason for this loss of revenue.

So far as expenditure is concerned, I notice also that from 1940, when the expenditure was \$64,605, to 1950 it has increased to \$215,286. This is indeed a very large increase, and I do not know what is really responsible for it. I do not think that in this case the whole of it is to be accounted to the fact that salaries have been increased, or even that prices have increased. Possibly the Prison population may be increasing. Those are things with which I am concerned, and I should like to get more information with respect to the Prison population, whether we have a greater incidence of crime.

What I said in reference to revenue has some relation to this item to which the Hon. Member refers. I notice that the 1948 expenditure was only \$264 and that, I believe, yielded a revenue of \$5,113, whereas this year we are going to spend \$650 and have only estimated for a revenue of \$3,500. Something is definitely wrong.

Social Assistance

Dr. Jagan: I notice that at item 12 the amount (\$165,000) set out *“for the support of the Poor including Maintenance of Orphans, Funeral Expenses and unemployed Food Centre”* represents a reduction of \$40,890 on last year’s Estimates, and the explanation given is that there is decrease in numbers due to better supervision, full-time officers, reviewing of cases and better travelling facilities. I think that bears cut what is listed at item 1 (d). We now have 22 Public Assistance Officers with the result that the salaries relating to this item have been increased by \$10,000 while subsistence and travelling allowances have been increased by \$3,000. I am wondering whether this is really a good policy to increase the staff at the top and then reduce the amount spent on the poor people in the Colony under the pretext that there is better supervision and so on. Only a few days ago an individual came to me and stated that she had ten children and had been getting assistance under this Head but she was removed from the list. Perhaps it was found out by these Officers that the husband of this particular person was a tinsmith and as such should be able to support his wife and 10 children, but the point that was not given serious consideration was how much work he was getting. It was not ascertained whether he was getting regular employment and if so, how much and for how long.

I am particularly alarmed about cases like this and I would much prefer to see more money given to the poor people in this Colony who really need it people who have large families instead of being thrown away by the appointment of staff officers and so on not only in this Department but in the others mentioned in these Estimates. I think the time has come when we must see to it that as few Officers as possible are appointed by Government. I am not suggesting that money should be thrown away on these poor people, but the fact is that many of them apply for poor relief simply because of the fact that their husbands cannot get regular employment. The Employment Exchange where people enrol for employment is crowded with applications at present and the list is rapidly increasing. Only today or yesterday we heard from Hon. Members here that it is intended to reduce the number of employees at the Demerara Bauxite Company, and there is also the suggestion that many Guianese employed in Aruba will soon find themselves among the unemployed. There can be no doubt about it that the unemployment figures are rapidly increasing in this Colony, and I certainly do not think there should be any decrease in the amount allocated last year for outdoor assistance to the poor. On the contrary, there should be an increase because many persons who need assistance in this respect do not get it at present.

I must take this opportunity to congratulate you personally, Sir, for allowing the people the advantage of not having to pay Pound Fees, especially when the areas, especially those on the East Coast Demerara, were in a very flooded condition. Arising out of this, there is one point which I would like to refer to, and that is the increase of Pound Fees which have been levied by the Municipality of Georgetown. I know that during the recent floods the animals of many persons were impounded by the Municipality of Georgetown. The rates now levied are \$4.00 per head and really create a very considerable hardship on individuals, particularly in the surrounding areas of Campbellville, Bel Air and Kitty. I feel Sir that some attempt should be made to reduce the sum charged a poor man who has to earn maybe his livelihood by means of a donkey or a cow which is impounded. It is really difficult for him to have to pay such a high fee as \$4.00 per head.

There are instances which have been, brought to my attention where it is alleged that officers of the Municipality, who are in charge of that section of the City adjacent to those areas, have gone into the area and driven the cattle, particularly donkeys, from Bel Air and Campbellville and brought them into the City, especially into the Thomas Lands section, so as to be impounded and because of that a great hardship has been created on the people of that area. I hope, Sir that some attempt will be made to reduce those rates which were recently levied so as to remove the hardship presently incurred. I must again commend you, Sir, for the generous way in which you responded in declaring the pounds closed during the very serious flooded conditions.

Constabulary Amendment Bill: 1951

Dr. Jagan: On the surface of it this Bill seems innocent, but as one studies it very carefully between the lines one senses what is the intention, what is the purpose behind the introduction of this Bill. Is the purpose the setting up of a Police State in the Colony of British Guiana? If that is so, well I can see that possibly the only solution to employment problem is the recruiting of the people into the Police Force, into the Army as Hitler and Mussolini did, and let us prepare for a conflict. Sir, it is true that a Reserve Police Force may not entail the expenditure of money until such Force is used, but we do know as a fact that these people will have to be trained, because if they are not trained properly they would not be able to carry out the duties of police officers in the best possible way. The Volunteer Force' is not used every day in the Colony. It is there for emergency purposes. Nevertheless it does cost the Colony several thousand dollars each year to maintain and train the Volunteer Force which we have in British Guiana. So when you say that it will cost nothing, I do not wholly agree with that, because money will have to be expended in the training of those individuals after they have been selected, and additional sums will have to be spent when they are employed for whatever duties they may have to perform. If we examine our estimates we would find that for the past 10 years the expenditure on the Police Force has been mounting rapidly. I do not have the figures before me, but during the last consideration of the Budget I quoted those figures which showed there was an alarming increase. The same thing can be said of the Prisons. The official figures which I got from the Chief Officer of the Prisons Department show that it is costing Government about \$400, to keep one individual in prison today.

Sir, I am suggesting for the consideration of this Council that what we have to do to prevent crime is not to have more means of detecting crime but to provide the wherewithal so that these people will not be encouraged to go stealing at every opportunity. I think, Sir, that if we accept this Bill as it stands, we are treading in the wrong direction. We have to look to other measures. The Hon. Member for Eastern Demerara (Mr. Debidin) pointed out one, and so did the Hon. Member for Essequibo River (Mr. Lee). What should be done is to find ways and means through the Labour Department and possibly other methods by which we can settle these disputes long before the situation arises whereby a great internal disturbance is on hand and the Forces have to be brought into play, when in those critical periods we do not know what may happen, the people are armed, shots go off and people are killed. What is the reason for all these disturbances or so called disturbances we have in British Guiana? There was no necessity before in

the history of this country for such a Force and, I am sure, in the long history of this country there have been similar periods as these and yet we have not had the necessity to ask for the formation of a Reserve Force in the Police Department. Today it is true that we are faced with strikes, with lockouts, with disturbances on the whole industrial front. That is being experienced not only in this Colony. We have that, Sir, in England. We have that in the U.S.A., in fact throughout the whole world today. My view is, the way to prevent these disturbances is to look at the situation objectively and not to say since there are disturbances let us bring force, hit the people on the head and put them back to work. Sir, I have had association with Trade Unions of the working people and I know as a fact that in many cases these disturbances reach boiling point merely because the employers refuse or use delaying tactics to meet the employees to discuss matters of wages.

In the sawmill industry I know that the Sawmill Workers' Union has a wage agreement with the employers. That agreement was signed in September, 1949, and was, supposed to expire after six months when negotiations could take place with regard to wages. The Sawmill Workers' Union has been trying to enter into negotiations with the employers since July this year. The employers resorted to delaying tactics over a period of four months, during which time sawmill workers submitted a memorandum to their employers setting out their claims. After a long delay the matter went before the Commissioner of Labour only last week, but when we got there we found that the employers merely said that they were waiting on the report of the Committee which is now considering the question of a cost of living allowance to Government employees. I can say that even the Government officers present at the conference were somewhat dissatisfied, the feeling being that the employers had given no consideration to their employees' claim for increased wages. They went to the meeting with no counter proposals, hut merely hoping to delay the issue for a little longer period.

It seems to me that the older my friend gets the more he appears to be annoyed at anything I say, whether in this Council or out of this Council. Perhaps, if the Hon. Member would use another earphone and listen carefully to what I have to say.

I will proceed to the point I am arguing but I must ask the Hon. Member not to interrupt again.

I was about to say that in many cases these labour disputes which do occur, and which tend to cause civil disobedience in this Colony, are encouraged by employers, and we cannot use the taxpayers' money to employ a Volunteer Police Force merely for the protection of employers.

I do not feel so. Law and order, yes. That seems to be a catch word.

That seems to be where the money is going. I will give another example. Recently, at Manaka, the C.D.C. grant in Essequibo, because of similar delaying tactics certain employees were victimised and dismissed. Why is it

the role of the Police to escort and to tell those people to leave the settlement? I would like to know if that is in the interest of law and order. I also would like to know whether, on the occasion of the last big strike on sugar estates, it was the duty of the Police Force to tell the workers that they were picketing in the wrong place, when even the Attorney-General could not tell me what was the real definition of the term "place"? We find that whenever there is picketing on sugar estates the Police Department takes it upon itself, in the name of law and order, to intimidate the workers and to use a threat of force. I say that the Police do so to protect the employers, and we find that everywhere and at every opportunity. I would like to know who pays for the services of the Police on such occasions. Every time there is a little disturbance we see the Police there in large numbers, no doubt because it is all provided for in the Estimates, and huge sums of money are being spent. The Police are there to protect law and order, and I do hope that the Special Reserve Police Force will be properly trained.

I am objecting to the formation of this Special Reserve Police Force because I do, not see that it is necessary. We have a Volunteer Force in this Colony, and if there is any threatened disturbance or internal strife I feel sure that the Volunteer Force could be utilised. If Government feels that that Force is not adequate at the present time it can be enlarged, and we also know that the British Navy can always steam into the Demerara river for the protection of law and order in this Colony. I do not think it is necessary at this time to waste any money in the creation of a Special Reserve Police Force when there are many services in which money could be more usefully spent, such as hospitalisation, education, and things of that sort. It is true that many things are being done but people are still lying on the floors in the hospitals. People are still eating inadequate food, and it is from the workers that taxes are being collected. I am asking Hon. Members to oppose this Bill because the sinister aim of this measure is to setup a police state in our Colony, and we do not want any such thing to happen here.

Well, Sir, that is my belief, and I do not feel that I can stand here or sit in this Council and allow the taxpayers' money to be wasted. God knows we are wasting a lot of it already, but I think the time has come when we must put an end to it.

Motion – Export Price of Rice

Dr. Jagan: I wish to support this Motion, because it is long overdue. Some revision should have taken place on this issue of price long ago. The Hon. Mover of this motion has adduced certain arguments. There is no doubt that some of the arguments and figures he has given may be controversial, but nevertheless looking at the issue objectively it does appear that the people of this Colony have really missed a golden opportunity - to use a slang term "*We have missed the bus*". When prices were very high we in British Guiana were possibly selling rice at the world's lowest price. It is an amazing fact that a low price producing country like the U.S.A. was then selling rice at the highest world price. We all know that price for price, I should say even at the present time but more so before devaluation, the U.S.A. was selling at a lower price than any other country in the world. But yet we find that so far as rice is concerned the U.S.A. was the highest rice producing country in the world. The American farmer was not a large producer of rice before the war, but noticing the trend of events the Department of Agriculture in the U.S.A. stimulated the production of rice, knowing the world situation in respect of grain, and today we find the U.S.A., perhaps, the second largest producer of rice in the world. The American farmer has taken advantage of the position. Today he is provided with facilities for the mechanisation of his rice fields. He has adequate storage facilities, money in the bank, and motor cars and jeeps to move around. He is secure; he knows that if there is a slump tomorrow in the world market for rice he can revert to a cash crop and thereby secure his position.

But what do we find in British Guiana? We find that when there was an opportunity to get the best prices we did not get them. Although the Secretary of State advised, as we have heard, that no long term contracts should be entered into, we find that the Board in its wisdom entered into a long term contract to the detriment of the people of this Colony. I do not refer only to the rice producers but to the people of the Colony generally, because the same argument is adduced with regard to the sugar industry. We are always hearing of the position of sugar in the economy of this country, and it cannot be denied that the higher the price of sugar the more money goes into circulation in this Colony. In the case of rice we did not take advantage of that opportunity, consequently not only has the rice farmer suffered but the people and the Government of the Colony have suffered in many ways. The latest price for sugar is \$146.40. (£30. 10s.) per ton. An acre of cane produces between 3 and 4 tons of sugar, so that the yield from an acre of cane is indeed very high. It is true that it is not all profit, but it goes towards wages, and Government gets a large amount of revenue from that

production per acre.

But what is the position as regards rice? The Hon. mover of the Motion gave us the production figures. If we estimate 20 bags of paddy to the acre at \$3.25 per bag the yield is equivalent to \$65 per acre as compared with between \$400 and \$500 per acre in the case of sugar. We see at once that something is definitely wrong. If that continues we will find ourselves depending and concentrating upon the production of sugar, because if the price of rice is not remunerative the farmer will cease to plant rice. The Hon. member made the point that the rice farmer is only getting a profit of \$5 per acre per annum. That figure was not accepted, but perhaps he did not make it clear that the only reason why the farmer can live by cultivating rice is because he utilises his own labour and that of his wife and children in his rice field. That is the only way he is able to live, and it is true to say that his profit is very small. By securing a fair price from the West Indian Colonies for our rice the rice farmers would be able to increase their cultivation, thereby enhancing the revenue of the Colony.

In view of the fact that a new contract will be entered into with the West Indies next year I feel that the opportunity should not be lost to demand minimum world prices for our rice. It is true that some of the West Indian islands are now contemplating the cultivation of rice, but let us look at the cost of production in those islands. In Trinidad it is estimated that if rice is cultivated there the price would be between 12 and 18 cents per lb., but it may be said in Trinidad that even at that high price it would be profitable to cultivate rice so as to help to relieve the unemployment situation in that island. The same may be said of Jamaica where they are spending money to drain their swamp lands, in order to cultivate rice and relieve their unemployment problem. We have to keep in mind at all times the idea of federation which is looming on the horizon, and we have to keep in mind the advice of experts such as Prof. Lewis of the F.A.O. who came to this Colony some time ago and investigated land settlement and agricultural problems, that we have to think in terms of a regional approach to agriculture; that it is no use thinking of growing rice in Trinidad at 12 to 18 cents per lb. when other things can be grown more profitably there, while rice can be grown more profitably and cheaper in British Guiana. By that I mean cheaper in the sense that we could supply them with rice at a cheaper price than they could produce it themselves. Trinidad has great possibilities for citrus cultivation and in Jamaica I saw a modern mill for the canning of citrus juices, the making of oil and concentrates. I was told by the manager of the factory that they did not have enough oranges and grapefruit to keep the mill going at full capacity. That is the problem all over.

We definitely have to economise as regards the cost of production. In this Colony we are trying to do so by the erection of central mills. When this regional approach for agricultural problems is accepted I feel that we would be on the high road to success and providing a higher standard of living for the farmer of this country and the West Indies. But so long as we

continue to sell our rice at a very low price to the West Indies, and as long as the Governments in the West Indies persist in solving their unemployment problems by growing the same crops at higher prices than those at which we can supply them, so long will these Colonies remain undeveloped and so long will the standard of living be low. I hope that the question of Federation will receive the early attention of this Council, and I also hope that when the new rice contract is negotiated next year the Governments of the West Indian Colonies will be urged to consider this aspect very seriously. If they are foolhardy enough not to agree to an increase of the price then we would have to think of ourselves. If we find that there would be a surplus of grain in the future, as we feared when the original contract was entered into, then we must think of so diversifying our agricultural economy in this country that we may not be faced with a slump in the future.

I do not want to go into the whole question of agricultural policy at the present time, but I want to urge Members of this Council to take an objective view of the whole situation. We cannot adopt a dog-in-the-manger policy any longer. I had to criticise very adversely some time ago the policy of the sugar estates in taking from the people lands which were under rice and ground provisions. In 1943 a Committee which was set up by Government under the chairmanship of Mr. P. W. King, to investigate conditions on sugar estates, found that people were only working two or three days per week on sugar estates, because they found it more profitable to work on their farms and rice fields. I have figures to show that between 1943 and 1947 the sugar estates took from the people nearly 2,000 acres of rice lands and approximately 1,000 acres of land under ground provisions, even though they did not need those lands.

That does not deny my statement. I do not say whether it is 10 or 20% but I say that lands which were under rice cultivation and were not needed for cane cultivation were taken away from the people. That is the point. If we are faced with this policy of taking away from the people lands which can be properly utilised for rice cultivation, and on the other hand the rice growers cannot get a good price for their rice, it seems that they are squeezed between the two points of not having sufficient properly drained and irrigated land and the lack of a remunerative price for their rice. In the circumstances we cannot look forward to any development of the rice industry of this Colony.

I do hope that Members will support the Motion, and if an immediate review of the contract is possible we should not wait until the end of next year. The present crop is already reaped and as the Board has fulfilled its obligations for this term the contract can be reviewed at the beginning of next year.

Venn Commission Report

Dr. Jagan: I beg to support the Motion of the Hon. Member. I feel that first of all an opportunity should be given to Members to discuss the report of the Commission as a whole, taking into consideration its broad implications, and then go into Committee, as the Hon. Member suggests, to deal with Your Excellency's Message and the various recommendations one by one.

I have read the report of the Venn Commission page by page and noted its contents very carefully. I think it was Dr. Eric Williams who said some time ago that it was a great irony that such a sweet thing like sugar should be associated with so much bitterness in the Caribbean area. Dr. Neumark, in his admirable paper which he presented to the West Indian Conference, remarked that the pity of the sugar industry is that its prosperity depended at one time on slavery and now it is based on a wartime economy. Let us hope that sooner or later we will have a sugar industry which can stand on its own legs without indirect support either from the Government in Great Britain or the local Government, and which will not in any way thwart the natural development of this country of British Guiana.

The report of the Venn Commission is admirable, but perhaps we should qualify the word "*admirable*", because, in my view, it is admirable only within its limitations. When one examines the report very carefully one finds that the recommendations deal with three Heads. Certain minor reforms are recommended, such as women being made "headmen" of female gangs, headmen being allowed to rise to higher posts, and women not to be required to work in water. In my opinion those are minor reforms with which nobody will disagree, and I am sure the sugar producers will implement them as quickly as possible.

The second set of recommendations deal with certain concessions to be made to the sugar industry. In the first paragraph of Your Excellency's Message you set out those concessions thus:

"(a) that the Government should assume entire responsibility, financial and otherwise, for education, for hospitals and medical attention on sugar estates and for the housing of sugar workers, excepting nuclear employees;"

Added to that there is a recommendation by the Commission that the industry should be relieved of all taxation except income tax, and that H.M. Government should provide a special subsidy of \$20 per ton for sugar produced in British Guiana,

Yes, \$20 per ton. The third category includes what I consider two major recommendations affecting the workers. One is the setting up of a Wages Board, and the other is, the introduction of a contributory pension scheme for the workers. From the message one gathers that the sugar producers are prepared to implement certain of the recommendations, especially those in the first two categories I have just mentioned, but as regards the third category it seems to me that no action is proposed to be taken. In the words of the Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Government has decided that the establishment of a Wages Board would be backward step. What I fail to see in the report of the Commission is any recommendation of major reform. Are we content to have strife in the sugar industry? It is known that we want to produce more sugar. We are at present producing something in the vicinity of 160, 000 tons of sugar per annum, and we have been told by Your Excellency that our share of the West Indian quota is 225,000 tons. So we are far away from that goal. Does this report provide the basis for the settlement of disputes and the avoidance of strikes, so that we can produce more sugar so as to meet our quota and indeed to ask for a larger quota? I say that it falls short in that respect. It has fallen short because it suggests no means of reorganisation of the industry. In other words the sugar industry is to continue as it is with the profits being drained away from the Colony year after year, and leaving the situation in a vacuum, thereby causing a great deal of political strife to enter the industry.

The West Indian Conference, from which my friend, the Hon. Member for Eastern Berbice (Dr. Gonsalves) and I have just returned, had a great deal to do with agriculture, and with your permission, Sir, I would like to read certain relevant extracts from the report of the Conference in order to show what we are faced with as regards sugar and other agricultural commodities in this area. Let me deal with the special subsidy of \$20 per ton of sugar. The Commission makes the point that British Guiana is a high cost producing area and consequently it should be singled out for a special subsidy which H.M. Government has not seen fit to grant. On the other hand we find in the main paper at the Conference on "The Importance of Agriculture in the Caribbean Economy" Dr. Neumark stated that at the present time we have many agricultural crops (sugar for instance) being grown in several of the West Indian territories. In some of those territories it is not economical to grow them; nevertheless they were being produced, in some cases on marginal lines. In the words of the Venn Commission sugar is being produced in British Guiana at a high cost of production. Dr. Neumark went on to state that the unsatisfactory features of Caribbean agricultural economy mainly hinge around the dependence upon sugar which has a big problem of seasonal employment and a preponderance of casual workers. He suggests in his paper that what is necessary in the Caribbean area is overall planning on an inter-Caribbean territorial basis and inter-territorial specialisation. By that he means that we must confine within certain areas of the Caribbean certain crops which can be grown economically, and re-

strict others which cannot be so grown.

That brings me, therefore, to the main point whether it is in the interest of our country, politically and economically, to think of expanding our sugar industry and then to go hat-in hand begging H.M. Government for increased quotas. When I say that I have in mind Mr. P. W. King's report which was written in 1944, and in which he stated that residents on the sugar estates were working two or three days per week on sugar estates because they found it more profitable to work on their rice farms. Are we to concentrate on sugar when we know that it is a high -cost producing crop, and when possibly it would pay the people of the Colony much better to grow other crops - to so diversify our agriculture that we should not find ourselves in difficulty later on when the price of sugar drops? We must always keep in mind that this war fever will not always be with us, and we cannot always hope to get special treatment from H.M. Government. At the Conference it was said that that was one of the weaknesses of the Caribbean - that we have to depend upon imperial protection.

The paper by Prof. Arthur Lewis, whom we all recognise as a brilliant authority in his particular field, was very illuminating in this respect, and with your permission, Sir, I should like to quote certain very relevant passages from it on page 12 of his study which is entitled "Issues in Land Settlement Policy." In paragraph 58 of his paper he states:

" . . . New forms of organisation must be tried, and must be tried urgently. In Puerto Rico the government has shown itself alive to this fact, and is greatly to be praised for taking the initiative in experimenting with the Proportional Profit Farm. In the British territories, on the other hand, governments are content to meet a succession of disturbances with a succession of commissions of enquiry. This is not good enough...New forms must be created which will take the West Indian sugar industry out of politics in the sense of earning general acceptance, or the West Indian community will sooner or later simply tear itself in pieces and destroy the sugar industry in the process."

In a previous paragraph 56, Prof. Lewis, referring to the type of cane-farming in Fiji, states:

"Some people believe that this is the system which will eventually supply the West Indies with a solution to the problems of its sugar industry. A large scale agency will plough the land, control irrigation, supply seedlings and fertilizers, organise harvesting, and operate factories, while peasants will plant and cultivate the crop on their own account, subject to charges for services performed. The peasants will have a representative council, but this will not take over the functions of the agency. In Fiji and in the Sudan the agency has been a private company, but it might equally well be a public corporation, as it is now to be in the Sudan."

I have quoted those points because the report of the Venn Commission

is very silent on this aspect of the sugar industry. It leaves the whole matter untouched, but recommends minor reform; which, in my opinion, will not solve the problem in British Guiana. Only recently we have had a strike in the sugar industry and, no doubt, possibly in the future the same thing may occur. We have to look at this problem very realistically, and I am very sadly disappointed that this Commission did not recommend major reforms as are suggested not only by eminent authorities such as Professor Arthur Lewis and Dr. Neumark but by Mr. Frampton, who is Adviser on Agriculture for the Colonial Development and Welfare Organisation. In his paper "*Land Tenure in relation to the British West Indies*", on page 20 he says:

"It is no use waiting for a slump and the unemployment which goes with it to lay down so-called settlements with a system of Land Tenure politically acceptable. Let us start now with a new approach to the subject and be really objective about it."

As long as our workers in the sugar industry feel a sense of dissatisfaction, whether that dissatisfaction is based on fact or is merely psychological dissatisfaction, nevertheless it is something we will have to take care of and have to account for. We hear arguments on one side that our people are lazy; that they do not want to work very much; that they have only limited objectives, minor objectives in that they have very limited wants and when these wants are satisfied they do not want to work any more. And the argument goes on that if better wages are paid these people they would have their wants satisfied by working lesser number of days and consequently the industry would suffer and the economy of the country as a whole would suffer. I would recommend to Government's consideration a very illuminating paper written by Mr. Simon Rottenberg, who is Director of the Labour Relations. Institute University of Puerto Rico, on "*Voluntary Unemployment in the British West Indies*." It was a research study made in the Island of Antigua. As Hon. Members know, Antigua depends primarily on its sugar production for its economic salvation. The point was well taken there, whether or not workers were voluntarily un-employing themselves where they had few wants or for other psychological reasons. I would like to point out for the benefit of Hon. Members a few of the conclusions which this gentleman came to. He said when workers in Antigua were asked whether they would like to prepare their children for work in the cane fields, only 1.5 per cent of those interviewed expressed a choice of the cane fields for male children and less than one per cent chose cane-farming work for female children. Of the unemployed people who had no work when asked if cane field work was acceptable, 37 per cent answered in the affirmative and the other 63 per cent objected to cane field work. In paragraph 28 of his report he states as follows:

“The tendency for workers in the sugar cane industry to devote less than full weeks seems to be more rationally explained in terms of the unwillingness to accept cane field employment and the desire to; escape from the cane fields, which is a pervasive and powerful influence in the community, rather than in terms of low level aspirations and a high preference for leisure. In any case, the simple fact of the short work week is not completely attributable to worker-attitudes nor does it always represent an economic loss. . . .”

This is a study of Antigua. But what is said about Antigua, I feel, is very much pertaining to our Colony of British Guiana, and we have to keep these things in mind. If for one reason or another, as I have said before, whether psychological or economical, workers would not continue to work on the sugar estates, and if this attitude would cause strikes and disturbances, then the sooner we get down to the reorganisation, as suggested by these eminent authorities, the sooner we would be producing a better basis for agriculture in this Colony and a better basis for economic salvation not only for Government but for the people as a whole. I, therefore, feel very sorry that this Report does not touch on this aspect of the matter, and consequently I must express my disappointment, because so far as I am concerned this whole matter has been a great deal of wasted time and, no doubt, is merely intended to be a palliative which will not solve our problems in this country.

- Those are not my words.

With reference to your comment on this recommendation:

“Adequate arrangements already exist in the sugar industry in British Guiana for the settlement of such matters by collective bargaining and an agreement between the employers and employees provides for the negotiation of wages from time to time. Neither the Sugar Producers Association nor the Unions recognised by them consider the establishment of a Wages Board necessary. . . .”

I may state that it raises a hornets' nest, because when we come to the question of recognition of Trade Unions, that is a different matter altogether. I was able to have introduced and passed at the West Indian Conference a resolution stating that in cases of dispute a poll should be taken by Government to determine which Union has the majority of members and the necessary legislation enacted. I do hope that when that recommendation comes before this Council we will enact such legislation and see to it that we do not have these kinds of Unions in which the people seem to have no confidence. I do not see why the employers should recognise those Unions. While the workers of this Colony, it is recognised, have the right to organise, the right to collective bargaining is denied them. Therefore I cannot agree with the comment appended to this recommendation. I cannot accept the statement that the agreements which have been carried out by these recognised Unions represent the wishes of the majority of the people

in this country. Therefore I agree with the Hon. Member for Eastern Demerara that this recommendation is one of the most important ones in this whole Report, and to have dismissed it entirely is really going a very far way against the interest and welfare of the workers of this Colony. I do hope that this matter will be given reconsideration and that sooner or later a Wages Board will be set up not only in relation to the sugar industry but other industries.

We are always hearing complaints with reference to the next recommendation, the one dealing with a Contributory Pension Scheme. The sugar employers state they have not enough money and, therefore, cannot implement that recommendation. On the other hand I can prove that the sugar estates are making plenty of profits. From the figures I have, the rate of exploitation is about 142 per cent. In other words, a man working on the estate works approximately four hours for himself and six hours for nothing a day. So do not let them tell us they are not making any profits and, when it comes to the establishment of a Wages Board and a Contributory Pension Scheme, that they have not enough money or that the recognised Trade Unions say they do not see it is necessary. I feel that a Wages Board will be able to go into these matters very carefully and fully and to determine whether the people are making enough money or the estates can afford to meet increased wages from the demands of the workers.

There is, one point we missed - I lost sight of it - that is in respect of the recent strike we had in the sugar estates. That strike was called by a non-recognised Trade Union and at the end of that strike in the writings of the President of the Sugar Producers Association we have had it that the workers lost a lot in wages. If the workers lost a lot in wages, it can also be said that the employers have lost in profits and the Colony has lost in taxes. But if this non-recognised Trade Union is able every month, or every six months or every year, to call a strike, and a successful one at that, as the sugar producers have admitted it was a successful strike -

If it was not a successful strike, I want to say that the sugar producers have come forward and said how many days work was lost and how many dollars in wages were lost. If it was not a successful strike that is a matter of no one's concern. Let us be realistic. We want to meet the production target and we want to give the workers a decent standard of living. I feel that if we permit this suggestion to continue and allow these Unions still to say that the workers want so and so and they do not want a Wages Board. I feel there is going to be trouble and further trouble in the sugar industry.

Medical (Amendment) Bill

Dr. Jagan: Only this morning I brought this matter up before the Medical Advisory Committee because on the last occasion when this Bill was considered by the Committee I was absent from the Colony and consequently I was not able to put forward argument against proceeding with the Bill at the present time. I feel that this matter needs a great deal of consideration and I do not think Members of this Council are fully apprised of the situation as it exists at the present time. The Pharmacy and Poisons Ordinance, Chapter 103, contains three Schedules in which certain drugs and poisons are listed, and certain requirements have to be met before licenses are issued for the sale of those items. In the case of Schedule 1 it is necessary for a qualified chemist to be employed on the premises. On the other hand, in Schedule 3 there is a list of a large number of drugs for the sale of which there is no necessity for a qualified Chemist to be on the premises. I would like to ask the Hon. the Attorney-General whether it is the intention of Government to abolish Chapter 103 completely and to introduce new legislation? If that is so I think it is most inopportune to give the Director of Medical Services the power now sought to be given him by this Bill, unless this Council is fully apprised of all the facts and of what Government intends to do in the future.

My information is that the items listed in the Third Schedule of Chapter 103 can be sold without the necessity of having a qualified chemist on the premises, but it is provided that those items must be sold in unbroken packages, such as patent medicines and so forth. In other words, they must be sold in the containers in which they are imported into the Colony. In that case I do not see any harm in permitting any store to sell items which are not separated from their containers, once they have been permitted entry into the Colony. What *is* very necessary is the control of the entry of drugs into the Colony. Under the Pure Food and Drugs Act of the U.S.A., I do not think the sale of many drugs is prohibited. I feel that this matter is merely a question of a checkup on the administration at the present time. If it is found that persons are selling drugs listed in the Third Schedule of Chapter 103, by opening the containers in which they are imported, then I believe those are cases in which the police can prosecute.

With regard to Schedules I and II and the drugs listed therein, it is necessary for a registered chemist to be employed on the premises. I am told that the practice is that many stores share possibly one chemist, so that those drugs are sold under the name of a chemist who may not be on the spot. If that is so it seems to me that what is necessary is legislation to stop such practice, but at present it will create a great deal of difficulty. I have in

mind that the Ordinance provides that no store beyond two miles of the City limits can sell those drugs. Many individuals have opened small stores, for instance at Kitty when that village was a country district, and those persons are continuing to obtain their livelihood in that way. I can see great danger in allowing blanket legislation like this to pass, unless we first of all know definitely what Government has in mind - whether it intends to abolish Chapter 103 and to confine the sale of drugs, whether patent medicines or otherwise, to premises which require a registered chemist. Before we know what is Government's intention I think it is inopportune to pass this measure at the present time.

There is another factor which we have to keep in mind. It is pointed out by certain individuals now in the trade, that certain people who have monopolies in drugs are now setting up drug stores in various parts of the City, and in fact in various parts of the country, thereby putting a squeeze on many small persons who have been making a livelihood in this direction. While I see the necessity for the public to be protected I feel that the matter should be carefully considered before this Council passes this Bill to give power to the Director of Medical Services to determine to whom licenses should be granted, and to whom they should be denied. I would like to know first of all what is Government's intention in the matter?

Budget Debate

Dr. Jagan: Sir, I notice that certain Hon. Members deplored the fact that last evening you were booed on your way from this Council. As the representative of His Majesty's Government in this Colony and the symbol of British rule here, a rule which has been responsible for a great deal of misery in this Colony, no doubt you will realise that what occurred last evening is merely a symptom of what is public opinion today. The people are today expressing their opinions, and if we are to have democratic government then I feel that those opinions must be listened to and must be respected. They must not be dismissed merely by saying that they have been engineered. I am sorry that the Hon. Member for Georgetown North (Dr. Nicholson) is not here, because I would have sympathised with him too. As an elected Member I feel that I should sympathise with him also. Nobody took the trouble to do so. We must look at issues squarely.

The Hon. the Financial Secretary in his Budget Statement makes several statements which are in one way or another self contradictory. For instance, on the first page he states:

"The surest means of securing improvement is greater production by those who actually produce as well as by those who work and serve the community in other ways - so that the common pool of wealth thereby generated and made available for distribution and consumption may increase and allow of larger shares to one and all."

A little above that he mentions the fact that a large proportion of the increase in the cost of living has been due to the recent increase in the prices of local products, the shortage of local commodities and so on. On another page dealing with the taxation proposals we are told of the attempt by Government to refund Customs duties on such things as salted fish, flour, condensed milk and cocoa powder. The mere fact that we have to import these items which are listed here - salted fish, pickled beef, condensed milk, and cocoa powder - is indeed a sad commentary of affairs as they have been administered for so long in this country. This is a large country, chiefly agricultural, and most of those items are agricultural products. At one time we lose a lot of money by dumping products into the sea. You yourself, Sir, not so long ago mentioned the fact - I think it was last year or the year before - that we suffered a great loss of nearly \$60,000 at the Produce Depot. Is the Financial Secretary correct in saying that the surest means of securing improvement is greater production? At one time we produce and suffer a loss; at another time we find that we are not produc-

ing the things which should be produced in this country.

Therein lies the whole story of the rule and misrule of this country. What is happening today is merely an indication that the people are not going to be content to have this country run as it has been run in the past. I took care to speak at the end because I wanted to hear the views of other Hon. Members, and from the views which have been expressed I gather that they are more or less agreed that the taxation proposals which have been put forward merely tend to soak the poor people of this country and let the rich continue to enjoy their ill-gotten gains.

Hon. Members have referred to the fact that we are paying increased wages but the cost of living is always rising. What we, have been doing within the last three years is merely to maintain the conditions which existed before the war, and which in 1942 were set out in the Cost of Living Survey Committee's report. I would like to mention one or two points to show why it is not important merely to say that we are not producing enough, but what is important is to diagnose why we are not producing enough and to remove the restrictions which may be there in the curtailment of production. The report of the Cost of Living Survey Committee, which was published in 1943, has appended to it a comment on Nutrition by the late Dr. Francis, and with your permission, Sir, I would like to read a few extracts. On page 21 Dr. Francis states:

"4. The food available represented a supply of 2,134.4 calories daily per man value. The Technical Commission on Nutrition of the League of Nations has placed the calorie requirements per man value to be 2,400 calories of food actually assimilated for an individual not engaged in manual work."

Dr. Francis goes on to state:

"Moreover the diet is not well balanced, as carbohydrates bulk very largely while the percentages of protein and fat are low. Sufficient of the protein, is not derived from animal origin."

In another paragraph Dr. Francis states:

"Apart from deficiency in total calories the food in several families may show remarkable deficiency in variety and may be wanting in many indispensable ingredients."

We are asking the people to produce and to produce more but we do not provide them with the food which would make them capable of doing so. What is necessary is a policy, but is there a policy? I do not want to go into all the details because many of those have already been settled, but I do want to point out a few of the weaknesses of our present economy. I have

just returned from an Agricultural Conference at Curacao where agriculture was discussed fully in all its related aspects, and if one thing came out of that conference it was this that we must cease depending upon the production of a few exportable crops which have to depend upon tariffs, quotas, preferences and protection from the Metropolitan Governments. When I spoke on the Venn Commission report I mentioned some of those points, but certain Hon. Members misunderstood me, thinking that I meant that we should not produce any more sugar or should abandon the sugar industry of this Colony. What I did say was that we should not depend so much on sugar; or on a few export crops, but should so diversify the economy of this country that we could produce the same articles with respect to which we are now seeking to remit Customs duties. If we cannot produce those things then it is incumbent upon Government to find ways and means to produce substitutes.

I have a copy of the Census report here and I wish to point out some figures to show why we cannot produce enough in this country. The people at the Curacao Conference were amazed when I told them that British Guiana is indeed a very large country statistically, but that there is definitely land hunger here. I did so because many of them were thinking of absorbing the surplus population of the Caribbean in British Guiana. The Census report verifies my statement. On page xii there is a paragraph on the median size of agricultural holdings, which states:

"104. Median size of holdings. The median size of all holdings was 2.48 acres, that is to say, half the holdings were below that size and half above. For farmers' holdings the median size was 3.69 acres; for other gainfully-occupied persons who cultivated as a subsidiary occupation the median size was 1.37 acres; for persons not gainfully occupied, who were mostly women engaged in home duties, the median size was 0.95 acres. Male operators showed a median holding of 2.70 acres; females of only 1.25 acres. The median holding for both sexes was highest in Essequibo and lowest in Demerara. The median size of holding operated by males was highest for the racial group of Other Europeans (5.38 acres). Other Asiatics (4.87 acres) and Portuguese (4.05 acres). The median for male operators of mixed race was 3.15 acres, for East Indians 2.94 acres, and for Africans 2.22 acres."

In other words, for people who depend solely on agriculture the median size of their holdings was only 3.69 acres. Agriculturists and experts have all agreed that with the exception of a very few cash crops, such as those which may be grown for a ready market very dear to the consuming area, for many crops the average size of holding should be between 20 and 25 acres of land. How can we expect people to grow rice or ground provisions and derive an adequate income from 3 1/2 acres of land? Why is it that we cannot provide those people with more land? The Hon. Member for Berbice River (Mr. Ferreira) suggested a way cut. He said that Government should put a tax on land which is not beneficially occupied. No doubt

he has knowledge of lands in the Berbice River which are held by plantation owners - lands which are lying idle and not beneficially occupied. I may point out that I was able to have such a resolution passed at the Curacao Conference suggesting that a land tax be put on land which is not being properly utilised or which is lying idle. That is nothing new. The Royal Commission which came here in 1938 recommended the institution of a land tax, but what have we done so far in this country? Not only individuals but sugar estates have thousands of acres of land lying idle, but what is Government doing about it?

I have given figures before but I cannot help repeating them. It seems to me that Government's policy is framed to help those goals, and unless those figures are made known we are not going to have a change of policy. The sugar estates of the Colony rent nearly 90,000 acres of land from Government at an average of 5 cents per acre. Is it not time that we put a tax on those people? Why can't we put a tax of \$3 per acre on land which is at present leased to those people? A farmer has to pay as much as \$10 or \$12 per acre to get land today to grow rice and ground provisions. Why should the assets of the people of the Colony be given away for 5 cents per acre? In many cases, because the rental is so low, those leaseholders can keep the land idle and keep it away from the farmers. The sugar estates have taken away land from the people which was being used for the cultivation of rice and ground provisions.

On the last occasion I was making the point that we should lay the basis for increased national production in this country and for increasing the national income, and that unless we have a policy which is clear-cut, and which has been studied very carefully, we will face difficulties in the future as we are now doing. I mentioned the fact that even though we talk about increased production we sometimes find ourselves producing too much with the result that the Produce Depot suffers a loss; while at other times we find that we are not producing enough, with the result that there is a rise in the cost of living. I also said that in order to be able to produce it is necessary that Government should place at the disposal of the people a sufficient quantity of land. I pointed out that at the present time farmers on the average hold from 3 to 4 acres of land which are not adequate to provide a decent livelihood for a family. I also mentioned the fact that the wages which the working class receive at present do not provide them with the necessary amount of money to buy the necessary amounts of food, clothing and so on to enable them to produce to their maximum capacity.

The thought occurred to me, that perhaps one of the major points in our policy should be land reform. British Guiana is indeed a large country geographically. In terms of population we are rather small, nevertheless we find that we cannot get hold of the land. An inquiry should be made first of all to determine why it is that the farmers cannot get more land. We are pursuing a policy which is dangerous in many respects. I know that in my constituency farmers in the villages of Plaisance, Beterverweg and Buxton

are encouraged to give up their mixed farming and go in for cane cultivation. From two to four acres of land are being converted into cane farming. It is true that at the present time that conversion may be very profitable, but if there is no war in the near future we do not know exactly what the world position is going to be with respect to sugar, and consequently the Colony's position. Quite clearly an agricultural policy is very necessary at the present moment, and there should be some sort of diversification of our agriculture. From time to time the same comments have been made in this Council but I find that very little is being done in that respect. Whether we have a policy or not if we do not have enough land we cannot carry out any policy.

Perhaps one of the reasons for the lack of land in the hands of the farmers is probably the very large holdings by private individuals. The question arises as to how we can get hold of that land. I said before that the Royal Commission of 1938-39 recommended that a land tax should be imposed. I notice that several Hon. Members are in agreement with that suggestion. I also feel that at the present time there are large areas of land held by the sugar estates which are leased from Government at very nominal rentals. Many acres of those holdings are today not beneficially occupied, or are lying idle. It seems to me that the average rental of five cents per acre, which was fixed years ago certainly should have been increased over these years. I think Government can justifiably levy a tax of at least \$3 per acre on the lands leased to sugar estates. My figures show that there are approximately 89,000 acres of land leased to the sugar companies. A tax of \$3 per acre would give us a revenue of nearly \$270,000.

The Hon. Member can make suggestions if he does not like what I am putting forward.

Those Motions never seem to come up in this Council. Notice is given and they seem to lie dormant in the files. We do not know if they will ever come up, consequently, while they are lying there we have to take opportunity to bring these matters up. The point I am making is that the Financial Secretary has proposed certain taxation and we are now suggesting what alternative methods might be adapted to raise the revenue required. Therefore I do not feel that this matter is out of place at the present time. If Government says that taxes must be levied on postal charges and on aerated drinks then we are perfectly free to say that taxes should not be levied in those directions, and to suggest alternative sources from which revenue can be obtained.

The Hon. the Sixth Nominated Member (Mr. Morrish) referred to the fact that there are large areas of Crown lands held by private persons, and asked whether I was suggesting that a tax should be levied on such lands. I have in mind an excellent example which occurred some time ago in this Council, whereby a certain individual was leasing Government land at 24 cents per acre and in turn was renting the same land to government at \$3 per acre. We all know of that example. It was an Hon. Member of this Council

who held large tracts of land in the Mahaicony - Abary area for which he paid a rental of 24 cents per acre and re-rented the land to Government at \$3 per acre. That individual was so fortunate that within a period of five years he made \$40,000. Later he sold his right to the land to Government for \$60,000. If we are going to spend the taxpayer's money in that way we are not going to be able to balance our budget. It is suggested that more money should be collected from the poor people of this Colony. We have already heard how considerable sums of money are being wasted.

Let me go back to sugar again and I will show why it is necessary that Government should get increased revenue from lands leased to the sugar estate proprietors. We are contemplating the purchase of certain areas in the vicinity of Georgetown from sugar companies for the erection of houses for people in Georgetown and for civil servants. What do we find? We find that land which was worth \$20 per acre in 1937 is now to be bought by Government for nearly \$190 per acre. If those people who own those lands are sugar estates authorities and are receiving benefits today by way of a very low rental of 5 cents per acre, then why the Colony should be penalised by having to pay this exorbitant price? Those lands are to be purchased. Why not reciprocate and lease the lands from the sugar estates? If our lands are valuable so far as sugar production is concerned, then our lands are valuable for the erection there on of houses for the people of the Colony. Why not lease the lands at five cents per acre instead of paying \$190 per acre for lands which were not worth \$10 per acre not very long ago?

Let us take La Penitence. I think Government's intention is to buy lands at La Penitence too. The same lands in another section, which were bought originally for \$20 per acre, are to be sold for approximately \$700 per acre. It is true a Bill is to be introduced in this Council to say how this money is to be paid. I believe it is to be paid at 3% per cent interest 3 1/2% interest on the amount will yield \$24.50 per acre. Aside from the purchase price we will be paying those individuals \$24.50 per acre for the same type of lands which they are now leasing from Government for 5 cents per acre. Where is the justice in all this? Is it because those people have so much power that they can get away with this kind of thing in this country? Why should this continue? I am saying, Sir, that the time has come when we cannot throw away the taxpayers money as we choose. There are many examples which I can give to show that it is no use collecting the money from the people, the poor people who can hardly balance their budget, and then giving it away to those individuals who can well afford at the present time to bear their burden. Sir, numerous examples come to my mind as I think over this matter, but I do not think I will relate them all because in doing so, perhaps, it will only show the vicious circle in which we are rotating all the time.

Hon. Members have referred to the wasteful expenditure of revenue. Some of them have suggested that certain Departments should be abolished. Some of them have referred to the Public Works Department as the

Public Waste Department. On the other hand we have, however, the Government and the Finance Committee usually giving assent to the wasteful expenditure of the taxpayer's money. The time has come when we must call a halt to this matter, otherwise from year to year our expenditure will be increasing and we will be taxing the people to get more revenue. That is what has been happening within the last few years. For the last seven years from \$7 million to nearly \$23 million has been the increase. Can we confidently say that the conditions of the people of this Colony have materially improved? Can we honestly and sincerely say that? I do not think we can dare to make a statement to that effect. All we do know is that, even though the workers may be receiving increased wages, in actual fact the real wage is always deprived them. Even though they have more money in their hands, the goods which they can purchase are becoming shorter and shorter every day. We want to know whether the policy is going to be in the future merely to add up when the end of the year comes around and find out how much it is going to cost each Department, say where the money is to come from and tax the various efforts. I think we must call a halt to that and say that we need a change of policy. The Hon. Nominated Members of this Council, with the exception of one, have given evidence before the Constitution Commission either yesterday or the day before to the effect that the Elected Members of this Council do not have the ability to be Ministers of this Government. Well, I can say, Sir, that the Elected Members of this Council can do no worse than that which has been done with the help of Government and, perhaps, with the help of the Nominated Members during these past years,

Let us analyse for a moment the Hon. the Financial Secretary's statement about our trade for 1950. Our exports were \$51½ million and imports \$65½ million. 66% of our exports went to Canada, 5% to the U.S.A. and 29% to the United Kingdom. If we break down these figures we would find that we earned from exports to Canada approximately \$28.84 million and to the U.S.A. approximately \$2.57 million, and to the United Kingdom \$14.9 million. But let us look at the imports. The imports were as follows: 48 per cent from the United Kingdom and 13 per cent from Canada and the U.S.A. In other words, we purchased from Canada and the U.S.A. \$7.34 million each and from the United Kingdom \$22 million. Taking round figures we have bought from the dollar areas approximately \$14½ million, but we have earned from the dollar areas approximately \$13½ million, whereas from the United Kingdom we have purchased \$27 million as against earnings of only \$15 million. Clearly from those facts, from those figures can be deduced the following - we are earning dollars from the hard currency areas but we are buying most of our products from the United Kingdom. But we do know, Sir, that today prices in the United Kingdom are higher than those of the, dollar areas. I may refer here, Sir, to the report of a committee which was set up in England lately called a Committee on Productivity to examine the productivity of the United Kingdom. This Committee

was made up of experts from the U.S.A., and in its report, which was published, said that on a general basis it may be said that the productivity of Great Britain per worker was much lower than in the dollar areas. In other words, goods, whether per item or by whatever you may want to measure them by, cost more to produce in the United Kingdom than they do in the dollar areas. Therefore when we have to buy more goods from the United Kingdom and less goods from the dollar areas, even though we are earning many more dollars than we are allowed to spend in the dollar areas, it means that the ultimate cost to the consumer in this Colony goes up. Not only that, but the Government collects more revenue in Customs Duties by way of *ad valorem* duties which are of varying percentages on the landed price including cost, insurance and freight. In other words, so far as Government is concerned the higher the price in the United Kingdom the more Customs duties are collected and, therefore, greater revenue is collected and, therefore, easier to balance its Budget; but so far as the people are concerned it only means that the cost of living is rising all the time.

One Hon. Member referred to the fact that possibly it is high time that we should abolish the Control Board and buy from the cheapest areas. I feel that the sooner that is done the better. I have before me a pamphlet which is produced in the United Kingdom called "*Labour Research*", and I merely want to quote certain statements there from in order to show there are areas dissociated from the dollar areas from which we can now purchase goods at cheaper prices, and we must take the opportunity as it comes. On the very first page of this bulletin it states as follows:

"Shirts from Hong Kong, presumably made in Japan, were lately being offered in this country (United Kingdom) at less than 30 shillings a dozen."

On another page speaking about the Federated British Industries which had recently set up a special section in order to keep track of Japanese export plans, it says:

"This section will watch for any evidence that Japanese traders are copying British designs, using trade names with a British sound, describing goods as British types or severely undercutting world prices on exports."

Referring even to American interests it states in another section what the American manufacturers are trying to do at the present time:

"Having knocked Japan out of the export market and taken over for themselves orders which went formerly to Japan, manufacturers are unwilling to recognise that sooner or later they must enable the Japanese to begin exporting again."

There is another section dealing with the German situation, and it states as follows:

"The first signs of the kind of German competition which may menace British markets soon are being felt in chemicals, coal, scientific instruments, internal combustion engines, bicycles and many other engineering products including ship repair and even motor cars."

I merely point out these things to show the trend in world affairs. The Hon. Member who spoke a moment ago said that the United Kingdom prices are cheaper than the dollar area prices since Devaluation.

The question may well be asked, taking into consideration our earning capacity so far as dollars are concerned, whether or not we should have devalued our currency. Of course that is another big story. Surinam and the Netherlands West Indies did not devalue their currency simply because Holland devaluated hers. So far as British Guiana is concerned it became automatic. So when the Hon. Member adduces the argument that in a good many cases prices were higher in the U.S.A. and Canada than in the United Kingdom, I can come back and say that if we had our own control in taking goods from the dollar area possibly we would not have felt like devaluating our currency.

Sir, I am being realistic. In fact I would like to quote the words of the Ministers in Great Britain even to show how realistic we are and why we are suffering at the moment because of the very realistic view they are taking. I would like to read from *"Thunder"* of September, 1950.

"Thunder", Sir, is a local publication. This is a quotation from Winston Churchill as Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1929:

"The income which we derive from commissions and services rendered to foreign countries is over £65 million. In addition, we have steady revenue from foreign investments of close on £300 million a year. That is the explanation of the source from which we are able to defray social services at a level incomparably higher than that of any European country or any country".

And Lord Cranborne, as Dominion Secretary, in 1943, pointed out that:

"Those who could not look beyond their personal interests should remember that their employment and standard of living depended mainly on the existence of the Empire".

And again Mr. Bevin's declaration of February, 1946, in the House of Commons when he uttered:

"I am not prepared to sacrifice the British Empire, because I know that if the British Empire fell it would mean the standard of life of our constituents would fall

considerably.”

I point out those to show that we are not masters of our own house at the present moment, despite all the statements which may be made here to the contrary that free import licences are issued here and there, and if we had not devalued our currency sooner or later we would have had to devalue. A deliberate policy is being pursued today, and that policy certainly affects the people of this Colony. Figures have been showing over many years that we have to buy from high priced areas and in fact we have to sell in the areas which are the cheapest. If Surinam can sell their rice and coconuts to Europe where they can get the very best prices, why should we be forced to sell our rice to the West Indies where the prices are lowest? If the British Government wants to subsidise the people of the West Indies, then let it do so directly. We must be able to determine our policy here in a clear-cut manner, and I am saying, Sir, that we are not controlling our policy here at the present moment, and until we get a change of government, which we are all desiring with the exception of a few persons who want to maintain the *status quo*, the lot of the people of this country will continue to be a miserable one. And it cannot be changed because this policy is being directed from Great Britain and is being pursued relentlessly in this country, and the vested interests in this country see to it that this policy has to be carried out. They control the lands; they are on various Boards and Committees where prices and other food policies are being determined. I say, Sir that we have to make a change because we have assets in this country, what are the assets of any country? The assets are the people and the land. We have the people and we have the land in this country, therefore, what we have to do is to find ways and means to put those people to work. A large number of people are unemployed today. They cannot find any work. It is true the argument is laid that the people are lazy, but that argument is only a way out of it.

Possibly the Hon. the Financial Secretary would then tell us why he made the statement and how production is to be increased, if it is not that the people are lazy Or are causing too much strikes and disorders and refusing to work. By what other means production is being curtailed? But what I do want to say is that production can be increased provided there is a clear-cut policy. We have the people here in this country who are sitting around and who cannot find work. You do not have to go very far to see that. In the largest industry in the country, the sugar industry, the sugar estates authorities themselves said that out of the 12,000 families they have nearly 7,000 are nonessentials or part time workers. But is their policy a clear cut one to put the people to work somewhere? There is none. The only policy there is, is to tie these people around the sugar estates by giving them money from the Sugar Welfare Fund to build houses around the estates. When they are tied there, I would like to know whether they will be given enough land to produce. The sugar estates have not got the lands. Those are ques-

tions which must recur over and over in our minds, and we have to take care of them otherwise production will not be increased. I have here a statement by the Chancellor of the University of Puerto Rico. In that country they are saying that they have a large surplus population and a very small amount of land, but the Chancellor of the University of Puerto Rico said that is not an insurmountable difficulty, because so far as they are concerned ways and means have to be devised, and in one section of his paper on *"Education and Democracy in Puerto Rico"* he states:

"Population drawbacks rest – in our opinion - not with the number of the healthy and able, but with the number of the sick, the destitute and the untrained."

We should not be faced with any difficulty in this country. We have the people, we have the land and we must devise ways and means to put the people to work and produce wealth. If they can do it in Puerto Rico, we can do likewise. They have adopted a vigorous policy of land reform; they have broken up the big landholdings by instituting 5-acre lots. The sugar estates and others whose holdings had grown to 10,000 and 20,000 acres were reduced to 500 acres and the balance of their lands taken over by the Government and given to the people so that they could occupy them usefully. The people in Puerto Rico have devised ways and means to put their surplus population to work; they have created a development bank. The Hon. Member for Georgetown South (Mr. Garter) referred to that matter.

What are we doing with our money? The Hon. the Financial Secretary referred to \$13 million in the Post Office Savings Bank, no doubt suggesting also that the people of this country are not so badly off on account of the big swollen savings they have in the Post Office Bank.

I have heard that view expressed by the Financial Secretary once before. The point is, what is being done with that money - is it being invested in British Guiana? No. it is being sent out of the Colony and invested - God knows where. Of course it will be said that it is invested in gilt-edged securities, but has Government no confidence in its own dollars? Can't Government put forward schemes which would be successful? If they are not, then Government would find the money to repay the people in some other way.

The people in Puerto Rico have done it: they have started major industries, some of which have proved very successful. Others have certain drawbacks which are now being corrected. The Puerto Rican Government was bold enough to tackle the matter, but our Government has not been bold enough, and I do not think it intends to be bold enough. Instead, money is being taken from the Post Office Savings Bank, the insurance companies and the private Banks and sent out of the country while we are always clamouring for development. How are we to get development when a working man is paid a wage on which he cannot live? With the exception of a few cases most of the profits made here are taken out of the country. I maintain that we are not going to get development, and we are not going, to be able to balance our budgets unless we have a clear cut policy which we can

pursue to finality.

With regard to the tax on bauxite I observe that the Financial Secretary has suggested a variation in that crude is to be taxed at one rate and, for the first time, calcined is to be taxed at a different rate, but I want to point out that it took Government three years to come to this decision. It is no wonder that a former Colonial Office official said that development in the Colonies was tardy beyond the dream of snails. In 1947, when the tax proposals were being debated in this Council there was a proposed variation from 11/2 per cent on the price of bauxite ore to a tax of 30 cents per ton, and I took great care to point out to the Financial Secretary and to Members of this Council that this country was being robbed. When the tax was 11/2 per cent on the price of bauxite the Company in Canada could easily manipulate the price of the bauxite, because it is the same Company which is operating here, or merely a subsidiary. For example, if the price of bauxite was \$8 per ton and the Company wanted to pay less export tax, all they had to do was to reduce the price. Government probably became smart and decided to tax bauxite at 30 cents per ton, but I took great care to point out to the Financial Secretary that that would not solve the problem because, from the information I had got from the Customs Department, the Company was producing three kinds of ore - crude, calcined and chemical ore - and I suggested a tax of 30 cents on crude ore, 60 cents on chemical ore, and \$1 per ton on calcined ore. I would like to quote from our Hansard report of March 5, 1948, at column 589. In the course of my remarks on that occasion I said:

“There are three types of ore exported from British Guiana, There is crude ore, there is chemical ore and there is calcine ore. The value of these ores is in the proportion of one, two and three; that is to say, chemical ore is about twice as much the value of crude ore, and the value of calcine ore is over three times as much as that of crude ore. What I am afraid of, Sir, just as the parent companies were able to juggle the price of bauxite which was paid to this country, and which resulted after the war in a decrease of the price of bauxite, they would be able to concentrate in this country, possibly with the development of cheap power here, on a concentrated ore of the type of chemical ore or calcine ore. If they do that then I am sure we in this country would be taking blows again. That is why I recommended the variation, so that we would have a check as to the amount of crude ore sent out on which a levy of 30c per ton is made, and the amount of chemical ore sent out on which a levy of 60c per ton is made, and the amount of calcine ore on which a levy of \$1.00 per ton is, made. But with the present recommendation rate of 30c per ton we would be at the mercy of the Alcoa Company and, therefore, I strongly recommend to Government that it should consider this variation I propose.”

Consideration did take place but, apparently it took three years before it could be implemented. We may ask whether the Bauxite Co. can afford to pay more tax at the present time. The Hon. the Sixth Nominated Member

(Mr. Morrish) said that we must be very careful in taxing the calcined ore lest the Company changed their decision to install new machinery. He also was not sure whether, since devaluation, the prices being paid for our bauxite were increased or were the same.

Whether they paid the original Canadian dollar price or they are paying the increased British Guiana price does not seem to make any difference. The fact that they can do that is certainly revealing. I want to show again from the Hansard report that this Company has made tremendous profits, and we are not sharing in those profits. In my speech, which is recorded on column 588 of the same copy of Hansard, I said:

"The Alcoa Company is a company started in 1890 with \$500,000, and today its assets amount to \$290,000,000. Those assets were accrued from profits on undistributed dividends."

I thought I had convinced the Financial Secretary at that time. I remember taking great pains to quote from a publication entitled *"Light Metals Monopoly"* in which it was pointed out that the Alcoa Company in the United States practically owned the Aluminium Co. of Canada, the parent company of the Demerara Bauxite Co. So that whether we call them different names they are still one Company. Don't let us split hairs and divide them up. Profits can be taken to either Canada or the United States. Monopolies are so smart that if taxation is high in one country, as it is now in Canada and the United States, they can very well retain their profits in British Guiana if taxation is lower here. Don't let us quibble as to whether the Demerara Bauxite Co. is owned in Canada or the United States, because the Company in Canada is owned by the one in the United States.

I have some figures with respect to royalty which show that we do not have to accept these minor bits of taxation proposals which the Financial Secretary has placed before us, because if we tax one or two major sources we could get all the revenue we need. I have already mentioned the sugar estates and a land tax. That is one major source. I will now deal with royalty on bauxite. Last year, in round figures, 11/2 million tons of bauxite was exported from this Colony by the Demerara Bauxite Co. and approximately \$68,500 was collected as royalty. If the Company paid 24 cents per ton as royalty on all their bauxite exported from this Colony they would have had to pay approximately \$363,000, but nearly two-thirds of their production came from their own lands, and on that bauxite no royalty is paid to Government. It may well be asked whether Government is satisfied that the wealth of the people of this country should be dug out of the earth and shipped out of the Colony without one cent being paid as royalty, with the exception of a small percentage of the bauxite on which the Company pays 24 cents per ton? Why can't we levy a royalty of 24 cents per ton on all the bauxite shipped from this Colony, whether it is mined on Crown land or on land owned by the Demerara Bauxite Co.? Because of some legal techni-

cality the Demerara Bauxite Co. own a considerable amount of land from which they obtain two-thirds of their production of bauxite. Let us get around that by making some other law. If laws can be made to protect the Company I believe other laws can be made to secure justice and equity to the people of this country. There may be a law which says that minerals in the earth belong to the Crown but, apparently, the bauxite obtained from lands owned by the Bauxite Co. does not belong to the Crown.

Instead of proposing taxation on aerated waters, postal rates and fees at Queen's College and B.H.S. Government should have given the question of royalty on bauxite serious consideration. I know that Members have suggested alternative measures of taxation but I think the matter should be reviewed by Government, because if three Members of this Council decide by a majority to submit alternative proposals I certainly would not agree to them.

I am interested in major sources of revenue. I do not think I should speak any longer because those points will come up again, and I shall have an opportunity to discuss them in detail. I have merely mentioned these matters in broad outline in order that Government might realise that what we need is a policy which we have not got so far - a real policy of increased production, to determine our terms of trade, with whom we should deal, and under what conditions we should deal, and that we should tax those who can well afford to pay. My information is that in the neighbouring Colony of Surinam (possibly I should not use the word "Colony" because they do not like it) - the neighbouring country of Surinam the export duty on bauxite is in the vicinity of \$4 or \$5 per ton. I do not see any reason why we should accept 45 cents and \$1 per ton when in a neighbouring country the tax is so much higher.

I thought I made it clear. I said I heard so.

I do not see how what I said could give that impression.

I will not pursue that point any further. All I would ask is that Government should consider these matters very carefully. There has been strong opposition in this Council to the tax proposals which have been presented. It is strong opposition because it has come from a united front that is from a businessman's point of view and also from the consumer's point of view. If it had not been so maybe the Financial Secretary would have had a very comfortable time. I hope that in the future Government will give these matters very careful consideration. There are many other minor points but I do not think I should tire the Council any longer.

Income Tax Amendment Bill

Dr. Jagan: Following upon what has been said, I was wondering, whether I understood the Bill wrongly, or whether the Financial Secretary is interpreting it in a different way. I think the Hon. Member who has just spoken referred to two associated companies, the parent company making a profit of \$45,000 and the subsidiary company making a profit of \$10,000, in which case the total profit would be \$55,000 and therefore above the limit of \$50,000. Does it not follow that in that case there would be an excess of \$5,000, and consequently the company would have to pay a tax of 40 per cent on \$50,000 and 45 per cent on the \$5,000? I believe the Hon. Member wanted to find out which of the companies would have to pay at the rate of 40 per cent and which at the rate of 45 per cent. I can see that it would create a great deal of difficulty, because here is the possibility that in the associated companies there might be different shareholders, and naturally every shareholder would want to get as large a dividend as possible, and if in the case of one company the rate of tax is 45 per cent and in the other 40 per cent it seems to me that a shareholder in one company would be given an advantage over a shareholder in the other company. I can see that this matter is going to lead to a lot of difficulties, and perhaps the simplest way would be to increase taxation generally to 45 per cent.

I have strong reasons for advocating such a course because I know that in this country taxation has been increasing over a long period of time, and most of it has been indirect taxation. I remember reading Col. Spencer's report in which he compared taxation figures in this country with those in Great Britain, and he said that we were paying as much indirect taxation as the people in Great Britain, but that as regards direct taxation our percentage is very much lower. In view of the fact that on the last occasion taxation was increased in this country - 1947-48 - most of it was indirect taxation, and we find at this time that there is to be a further increase in indirect taxation by way of increased stamp duties and other charges, I feel that the rate of income tax on companies should be increased from 40 to 45 per cent generally. That would obviate the difficulty which would be experienced in allowing companies of an earning capacity of \$50,000 to be exempt from the additional 5 per cent income tax. There is also the other argument that there are many companies which this Bill seeks to encourage, and which are not earning as much as \$50,000 per annum, therefore this Bill would not encourage them to any great extent. I feel that Government would be wise in levying a general rate of 45 per cent because only companies which are owned by a parent company would be earning as much as \$50,000 per annum, and when it is considered that there would be difficulty in deter-

mining which of the associated companies should be charged income tax at the rate of 40 per cent and which should be charged at the rate of 45 per cent I can see that it would be wiser to levy a straight tax of 45 per cent. There is one other point which I think Government should look into, and that is whether there should not be some distinction between profits earned by companies which may be considered as trading concerns, that is buying and selling, and those engaged in business which is considered productive. I know that a great deal of money is being spent on trading ventures. As soon as a person accumulates a certain sum of money he opens a shop or a wholesale grocery or hardware store, or a retail grocery or hardware store, and it seems to me that it would do the Colony much more good if some of that money could be channelled along productive lines such as Your Excellency mentioned a few minutes ago. The only way that can be done is to impose some sort of preferential rate on productive companies as against trading companies. I think if Government does that it would in the long run help this country's development, because some of the capital which is now being invested on speculative lines, buying and selling, would be channelled in the right direction, and this country would benefit in that respect.

I did not say that. I merely said that compared with Great Britain the rates of indirect taxation were more or less the same, whereas in the case of direct taxation they were much lower.

I object to that statement. The Hon. Member must quote facts and figures to show where I am always giving wrong information.

Estimate - Economic Advisor

Dr. Jagan: I move the deletion of this Head. I want to speak very strongly on this Head, strongly and feelingly, because it is my considered view that we have too many experts in this Colony. Not too long ago, when Col. Spencer was appointed on contract, we were told of his marvellous qualities and of his great ability, and he was subsequently put on the Fixed Establishment. After a while that gentleman left this Colony, I believe on promotion to Malaya. During that time we had Mr. Fletcher who was supposed to be an expert - at least that is what we were told - in the Control Department, but suddenly we found that on the promotion of Col. Spencer to Malaya Mr. Fletcher was transferred from the Control Board to the office of Economic Adviser and Development Commissioner. Are we merely finding posts for people in this Colony because posts cannot be found for them in other parts of the world? If officers have to leave their posts, possibly for Israel, are we to find posts for them in this country merely because they have to be placed? Whenever appointments are being made we are told that we have at last got an expert. We got Col. Spencer but now that he has been transferred on promotion Mr. Fletcher has been removed from the Control Board to fill his place, and an officer from the Department of Lands and Mines has been sent back to the Control Board. Why all this juggling? As far as I can see we are merely trying

We are always being told that. We want to see them in British Guiana and, if necessary, to have more trained people because, as far as I can see it, the more doctors we have, the more lawyers, dentists and engineers we have the better it would be for this country. If they are not all employed by Government at least they would be hustling around making a living outside.

I am not disputing the fact that we have provided scholarships.

That is so, but all those people who are being trained - dentists for instance - are not being trained at Government expense, and we have no guarantee that they will be coming back to British Guiana. I do not think we need any more lawyers. It is not that we are not spending money on scholarships, but my point is that we should spend much more. In the rural areas today, I know as a fact that the Government doctors are in many cases overworked; they have too large districts to operate in and in many cases many of them fleece the people. The poor people have to pay them high fees. If there were many doctors, I submit, the people in the long run would get better and cheaper medical service. I have referred to doctors as an example. I will give another example. Let us take the case of Dental Care

for school children. It has long been recommended that a mobile unit be set up. The Hon. Member for New Amsterdam can verify what I say. Four years ago reports were submitted but up to now we have no such thing, and it does not appear that we will have that for a very long time. This \$40,000 which is being wasted on these two Departments can provide us with a very admirable dental mobile unit for the children in the country areas. Why cannot we give services like that instead of wasting money on these Heads? With reference to the Development Commissioner, the Hon. the Financial Secretary has practically told us that the Ten- Year Development Plan is now more or less thrown overboard.

The point is, that Plan has been so much revised today that it does not resemble anything that was proposed before, and we are merely going from day to day on what money is available to us and what plans we feel should be given priority. What I mean is, the original Plan, as at first proposed, had to be given up and we are now proceeding from day to day to carry out certain schemes within the limits of the financial provisions of the Colony. So far as that is concerned I do not see the necessity of having in the Estimates a Development Commissioner. As Governor, Sir, it is your duty to coordinate the activities of the different Departments with the help of the Colonial Secretary and the Financial Secretary. Those are the persons who are to coordinate the activities of the different Government Departments; they are to determine whether or not we should embark upon irrigation schemes or should stop that work. I do not see the necessity for a Development Commissioner at the present time. Every Department has, as we know, besides an Advisory Committee the Head and Deputy Head who know the requirements of that Department. As you yourself know, Sir, before the Ten-Year Development Plan was accepted, each Department was asked to provide a sketch plan of their requirements, and that amounted to a sum of \$110 million which was subsequently cut down by a Committee, which was appointed, to \$26 million for a period of ten years. If every Department has in its mind a clear cut view as to what is required and that programme and policy is discussed every day with the Advisory Committee, and all that is being coordinated by the Colonial Secretary and the Financial Secretary and then finally by you, Sir.

I do not see the necessity of having a Development Commissioner at the present time. I never saw the necessity of it and, no doubt, my views are correct, because if there was this great necessity we would not have allowed Colonel Spencer to go on another job to Malaya. People come here, either on contract or otherwise, and stay for a few years after taking a long time to learn details in this country, and then go elsewhere. We can well appreciate the fact that it takes a man a long time to learn all the details about British Guiana, but after he has wasted all that time to learn details we find ourselves in the position that we do not have his services any longer and a new man is put in his place and that person has to go through the learning of details all over. That state of affairs is most unsatisfactory, and

I hope in the future that matter will be looked into. In the meanwhile I wish to move the deletion of this Head.

Estimate – Development Commissioner

Dr. Jagan: I, too, would like to join with the Hon. Members in this issue of protective tariffs for local industries. I know that in these days the tendency is to remove all tariff barriers. In the West Indies, for instance, we are thinking of a Customs Union whereby tariffs would be eventually removed, and we are also thinking of being able to sell and buy from those areas very freely. But I want to point out to Members of this Council that if we study any country we find that at one stage or another in their development protective tariffs had a lot to do with it. I am thinking particularly of the U.S.A. When the United Kingdom was, perhaps, the chief industrial country in the world and the U.S.A. was a country just growing up; they used to resort to protective tariffs and very high tariff barriers, which in fact are still there up to the present time: But in these days we in the Colonies do not have any protection. In the case of the United Kingdom there are preferential tariffs, and in the case of the other exporting countries there are tariff rates which are somewhat higher than the preferential rates. I think the time has come when we must think of our own development here and develop our local industries, especially the secondary industries, because I feel that is the direction in which our development will first take place in British Guiana.

I know there is always a clamour for heavy industries to be set up in most countries. I can see that that is very far away in British Guiana. Bills have been introduced already in this Council for aid to pioneering industries which are to be set up in this country, but in many of those we would find that not many persons are to be employed. I have the case of the C.D.C. which came here and certain concessions were given to them - free duty on the importation of equipment, costly duty remissions, and certain concessions in the interior with reference to large tracts of land, etc. But when we analyse the whole aspect of it, all we find is that the C.D.C. in the case of the timber industry has merely purchased from the former employers and really has not supplemented it. It has only supplanted those who were there before. What we have to keep in mind is the small people's dairy industry, leather industry, and even preserves industry, condiments, etc. Those are the things which can be developed in this country. We are spending a lot of money on cottage industries and we have a man specially trained who is Head of the Social Welfare Department at the present time. Unless we can have some protection for those things, so long will our industries not be developed and also possibly in the long run help to increase the cost of living to the people in this country.

It is no use merely trying to import cheaper goods into this country be-

cause if the people do not have the money to buy those goods it does not matter how cheap they are. They are not going to be able to purchase them in the long run, and attempts must be made to find employment and produce those things right here. I do not see the necessity for importing milk, meat, cheese, butter and other items which are now being imported in abundant quantities in this country. If any realistic policy is to be pursued, at least those items should be first looked after, and let this Department, if it is to be retained, concentrate its efforts in that direction for the immediate period of four or five years and not the long term period we are thinking of for the big and heavy industries which would develop the country. In a short term do not think of concentrating on big projects but on small ones which would help to develop this country.

This whole talk seems to have gone astray from the question on broad policy to the general question of development. I was told that when the Colonial Development and Welfare grants were being discussed in Great Britain the Government had a great deal of trouble to convince the Members in Parliament to vote those huge sums, because they were very reluctant to spend the money of the taxpayers of the United Kingdom on these various territories. Now that they have given the money of the taxpayers of the United Kingdom in Colonial Development and Welfare grants, I wonder if a true report has been given as to the way in which those sums of money have been spent, and whether the people in Great Britain would be really satisfied if they knew the truth. I personally am not satisfied. We have a lot of people, a lot of Departments utilising some of this money, and it is not going towards the real development of this country. The Hon. the Financial Secretary mentioned a moment ago, and for which he was sharply criticised, about the Development Commissioner coordinating the activities of the Agricultural and other Departments on the question of milk production, cheese-making, etc. I know that when I was a student in the U.S.A. the Afghanistan Government used to give scholarships to students and the students went to the various Universities in the U.S.A. to study different aspects of agriculture and minor industries. Since the British have left India not too long ago the Indian Government has given hundreds of scholarships to students to go to Canada and the U.S.A. to study mining, refrigeration and all sorts of things. Apparently, so far as British Guiana is concerned all we need to do is to appoint a man to sit in an office and coordinate how butter and cheese are to be made, and how milk production is to be increased. I would like Government to find out whether the services of the Agricultural Economist are really being utilised to the fullest extent. If we want to produce milk let us read the report of the Agricultural Economist on the cow-byre setup at Windsor Forest. Let us set up such byres all over the country and put the Agricultural Officers in the various parts of the Colony to do some work instead of having them to walk around in collar and tie and write reports. We need people who are going to get down and do the job. We have had too many reports. Lately we had a Rice Com-

mission from the U.S.A. Then we had the Manager of the Mahaicony-Abary Rice Scheme going to the U.S.A. Then we had to get two experts from the U.S.A. to advise us. Let Government study the report of those two gentlemen. It is only a rehash of the information already at the elbows of Government in the various files in the Agricultural Department. What does the Commission say? - You can cultivate so many more hundreds of acres of rice at Essequebo provided irrigation and drainage is available. In other words, you can do so and so provided you have so and so. I can do that and any child coming out of school in the Sixth Standard can tell you that. We have had too many reports, too many advisers and too many experts. If we want to produce cheese, send someone to some place to study how to make cheese, and when he returns let Government set up a cheese factory, and let us give the product protection even if we have to protect our cheese against the cheese of the United Kingdom, New Zealand and Australia. I see the Hon. the Financial Secretary is laughing about this, but I would like to see a man like Professor Arthur Lewis as Head of this Department. He is a practical man, a West Indian, and knows the problems and peculiarities of the people of the West Indies. He has written on the industrial development of the West Indies. I hope Government has a copy and will study it well. He suggests that we should copy the example of Puerto Rico.

He is there but the C.D.C. here is run by Steel Bros., which is a different thing altogether.

Anyway I was mentioning the instance of Puerto Rico. There I can see the necessity of having a Development Commissioner, because they have taken a brilliant professor of the University to be at the head of the Development Department and given that Department \$20,000 odd. If the capitalists would not invest money in this country in the manufacture of cement or glass, then you should set about it and see how fast it can be done. What is the use of having this consolidating Department, and you have no money and no prospects for it. Is it mainly to coordinate work which should have been done by you, Sir, and other officers of Government? I do not see the necessity for it. We have too much overlapping and too much waste of money in this Government. Mr. Huggins, who is now at the University College of the West Indies, was at one time Agricultural Economist of this country. He wrote a report saying about the people from Liliendaal to Bel Air that their chief means of livelihood, about 75 per cent of it, came from dairy farming. But how do the people carry on dairy farming there? Those of us who drive along the East Coast road can imagine when there is a flood how those people have to take their cows on the Sea Wall, and when they stray they are impounded in Georgetown and the people have to pay \$4.00 per head to regain them. What is necessary is to give the people a communal byre. Give them facilities to improve themselves, to produce more milk and to make butter and cheese.

At the present time we are only talking about development, but as far as I can see, until we get a change of this Government, a change of the Consti-

tution which I hope will be very soon, we are not going to get any development out of this country. All we are doing is to give sweet jobs to people, and these people are earning a good livelihood only to write a few reports and everything is satisfactory, but the people are not satisfied and will not be satisfied to see money being wasted, whether it is Colonial Development money or not. A lot of this money has been given to us as grants, and with these grants these Heads of various Departments have been set up, and the Colony is now saddled with these Departments. I think the time has come to call halt and push them out.

Head put, and the Committee divided and voted as follows: -

For-Messrs. Luckhoo, Morrish, Carter, Smellie, Phang, Peters, Kendall, Fernandes, Farnum, Raatgever, Lee. Dr. Nicholson, the Financial Secretary and Treasurer, the Attorney-General and the Colonial Secretary -15.

Against - Mr. Debidin and Dr. Jagan -2.

Head passed as approved by the Finance Committee.

Estimates – Civil Aviation

Dr. Jagan: Some time ago I asked a question in this Council and so far no reply has been given. That was in respect of the employees at the Base. I asked whether at the determination or the holding by the Americans of the Base, when the agreement was signed between this Government and the American Government for the taking over of the Base by this Government, then was a clause in the Agreement stating that the employees who were to be retained by this Government were to be paid at the same rate of pay to which they were accustomed before. That question has not been answered, and I do not know whether Government is willing to answer it now. I think it is unfair if an agreement was made and subsequently the conditions of that agreement are not carried out. There was another issue with respect to a petition which I tabled in this Council with respect to the employees of the Base for what was called at the time "Back Pay". While they were employed by the Americans they were not paid the rates of wages to which they were entitled by American law and in respect of which the Supreme Court of the U.S.A. ruled that those people were covered by the Fair Wage Standard Act. I wonder whether Government did anything about that petition which had been placed by me in this Council. I remember the Hon. Member for Georgetown South mentioned the case of a University student who is now pursuing a course in the United Kingdom and holds one of the posts in this Department. I am told that this person was a former civil servant and that he has been serving with the R.A.F. He is now getting a University degree and is seeking to come back to British Guiana and continue his employment with Government. In view of the fact that this person - his name is Hutton Griffith - has been getting training with the R.A.F. and has been specialising in Transport, I feel it would be a good gesture on the part of this Government to offer him one of the posts which, I am told, have become vacant.

I have heard so much these days about employing local people that I thought of mentioning the fact because we must keep it in mind. I am not trying to advocate this individual's cause. I am merely using it on the basis of the principle of the thing.

While the statement you have just made, Sir, is true, nevertheless we do find from day to day certain occurrences. When we come to the Medical Department I shall refer to one particular case where we see that. Even though it is said as a matter of policy that local persons would be given opportunity to be placed, we find one excuse or another always being given for not putting these people in positions. In some cases people are placed

in jobs-

You raised the question of the principle of it and, therefore, I thought of speaking.

Estimates – Queens College

Dr. Jagan: In view of the insidious influences which are said to be operating in the United Kingdom I think we should seek some other institutions to send our Guiana scholars to.

Sir I would like to find out whether the Committee, whose appointment you have recently announced, will look into the Question of secondary education, with particular reference to Queens College?

I would like to make a few remarks under this head. At the present time there are not many facilities available for students outside of the Government institutions to have a well balanced secondary education in order to secure entrance either to the University College of the West Indies or Universities in other parts of the world, for which it is necessary to have a very high standard of what I may call primary secondary education - the first phase of secondary education. There is, as we all realise, a shortage of places in a great many of the Universities, with the result that there is severe competition for those places; and only those students who have the most rounded secondary education are usually admitted. In British Guiana, with the exception of Queen's College and the Bishops' High School for Girls, there are only one or two other secondary schools equipped for giving Science training. There are large numbers of private secondary schools but they have no means to teach either Chemistry, Physics, Botany or subjects of that sort. I feel that now that we have a new and larger Queens College some effort should be made to increase the number of students in that institution by some system of rotation in order to make the facilities at Queens College available to the private secondary schools. In the past I believe that private students who required Science training have had to take recourse to private tuition during the hours when Queen's College was closed. The Masters who taught at the College during the day gave private tuition in the evenings and charged fees which were really very high in comparison with the normal fees, the reason possibly being that it was overtime work. I consider that it was a great handicap to students who desired Science education but could not afford to pay those high fees.

Government would do well to give the matter serious consideration because in these days if one wants to become technician or agriculturist some elementary knowledge of Science is necessary for a correct understanding of the principles underlying industry or agriculture. Consequently I feel that Government should enlarge the facilities at Queens' College so as to give the benefit of a wider and better secondary education to the masses of children in this Colony. At the present time I would say that only a very small percentage of the students in high schools are being trained at Queen's

College and B.H.S. I think they are also taught Science at St. Stanislaus, but those schools can only accommodate a very small percentage of the total number of high school students in this Colony, and Government would do well to consider this aspect of the situation. I understand that at present 400 students are receiving tuition at Queens' College, and that at the new Queen's College building it is proposed to accommodate 500 students. I feel sure that if we can get additional staff the new building could accommodate at least 1,000 students. I think this country would do well now that we have embarked upon the establishment of a Technical Institute, to allow a large proportion of the population to have recourse to proper secondary education, and I hope that Government will give this matter serious consideration.

On the question of admissions to Queen's College I would like to make a comment here too. We have referred to this matter before. I think the Hon. Member tabled a Motion asking for the abolition of the Preparatory Form. When it is considered that Queen's College is being subsidised by Government it is an important point to keep in mind, because if there was no question of a subsidy there could be no objection to people taking their children to Queen's College from the time they begin to creep if they care to do so. But when we realise that the school is being heavily subsidised by the taxpayers, and that those children whose parents can afford to put them in the Preparatory Form automatically get entry into the College, we can say that the general taxpayers are subsidising those children through out their school career. Every year there are new entrants to the Preparatory Form, with the result that other students whose parents cannot afford to send them there are denied an opportunity later on when they apply for admission to the College. They are told that they are either too old or they have not passed the entrance examination. I think the time has come when Government should abolish the Preparatory Form and make entrance to the College only on graduation from a primary school on some system of scholarship, possibly the Primary Scholarship Standard. That should be the basis of admission to Queen's College. Selection should be made on the results of an examination in the primary schools. I think it is definitely against the interests of the people of the country to reserve Queen's College and B.H.S. for a select few whose parents can afford to send their children there at a very early age. I hope this matter will receive serious attention from Government.

Estimates – Forest Department

Dr. Jagan: There is one point I would like to make with respect to the question of revenue. Looking over some of the heads which yield revenue in terms of royalty and export duty I added the figures with respect to the Interior, Lands and Mines, Forest and Geological Departments, and I find that those four Departments cost this Colony \$500,833 per annum while they are bringing in revenue to the extent of \$511,370. It seems to me that we are spending a great deal of money on those four Departments, but we are not really obtaining a large amount of revenue, especially when we consider that the Lands and Mines Department deals with minerals: such as gold, diamonds and bauxite, while the Forest Department deals with timbers, etc.

I agree with the Hon. Member that attempts should be made to increase our revenue in that direction. There is one fact which I think should be given very serious consideration by Government and that is the setting up of a factory to produce prefabricated houses. I do not think that the C.D.C. is contemplating the establishment of such a factory at the present time. I know that they are erecting a large sawmill at Houston, but I believe it is particularly intended to produce more timbers of various sizes. I feel that Government would do well to make an investigation in this direction with a view to setting up a factory of its own to produce prefabricated houses. We know that there is a great demand in this Colony at present, not only for houses for Government officers but for houses for people in various parts of the City and in the rural areas. There is also a great demand for houses of that kind in the West Indies, and I think Government should give the matter some consideration if it is not going to be considered by the C.D.C. in the near future.

There is one other matter which I feel should be given some consideration, and that is the setting up of a central marketing organisation for handling the timbers of this country - an organisation similar to the Rice Marketing Board. I know that the tendency in this country is to set up centralised marketing, and we all realise the advantages of centralised marketing, provided it is done on a democratic basis. I was told that at the present time there are many small producers who receive orders from abroad, but because the importers require large quantities, many of those small producers cannot fulfil those orders, with the result that they have to compete in the local market for the sale of their timber. If we had a centralised marketing organisation it would be able to supply from a common pool the various demands which are made for Colony timbers, I hope that this matter will also receive Government's consideration.

Estimates – Interior Department

Dr. Jagan: That is a very good point taken by the Hon. Member. The price of \$35 per ounce has been fixed over a very long period of time. We appreciate the fact that the cost of production even in the case of gold-mining is increasing as in other spheres of activities. This is really a fundamental issue which he has taken up, and I know the Hon. the Financial Secretary would dismiss it rather lightly; but I do not think the matter should be dismissed very lightly, even though it may touch on international agreements, etc. The whole point is, gold either has to be sold directly or indirectly by us to the U.S.A. in order to earn dollars, but the possibility cannot be lost sight of that we can sell the same gold to non-dollar areas and get more on the exchange than the equivalent of 35 U. S. dollars. For instance, we may sell gold to Holland and get more than 35 U. S. dollars in return. It is true that Holland may require to buy certain goods from the U.S.A. and may prefer the exchange, but it is a question of whose dollar is worth more and to whom it is a great necessity. We all appreciate the fact that there is a deficit on the balance of payments by the Commonwealth as a whole and, consequently, every commonwealth territory has to contribute to the dollar pool, but the fact must not be lost sight of that we at the present time contribute more to the dollar pool and receive less out of it. Consequently we are losing at all times.

Estimates – Local Government

Dr. Jagan: I am in agreement with the setting up of more and more land settlement schemes in this country. I know that Government is spending a great deal of money on land settlements, but the question may well be asked: are those land settlements properly organised so that sufficient income can be obtained to compensate for the expenditure incurred, and also to give the settlers a decent standard of living? If we look at the Cane Grove land settlement scheme at Appendix C in the Estimate we find that Government has merely put a Manager and a few other people to organise the business of the settlement and rent land for rice and ground provision at \$7.20 per acre. I do not think that that is enough. I think that land settlements are an ideal proposition, and being under Government control they should bring about increased production and greater prosperity for the people concerned. But what is happening today on these land settlements? A man and his family are allotted a few acres of land for which he pays rental to Government just as he would to a private landlord or a sugar estate. If he assists his cattle on the settlement he pays fees as he would to any landowner. It seems to me that now that we have a Cooperative Department some effort should be made to organise those settlers, either by coercion or persuasion, into producer cooperatives, because I can see that unless that is done we are not going to raise the standard of living of those people.

Let us take, for example the coconut estate at La Bonne Mere. All that is being done on that estate is that the Manager appoints somebody to take charge of that section of the settlement, and all he does is to sell 550,000 nuts at \$22 per 1,000, yielding an income of \$12,100 estimated for this year. I do not consider that good enough. I think the people in that section should be made to take a hand in the organisation of the coconut industry on that settlement. Let the Cooperative Department go in there and organise 20 or 40 persons into a cooperative. Give them so many acres of land for coconut cultivation and charge them a block rental. Once organised into a cooperative various things could be done on that coconut cultivation which is already producing fruit. On a cooperative basis the people could go in for coconut oil making, the production of sweets made from coconuts and shredded coconut which could be exported with the help of the Social Welfare officers. What are we paying the officers of the Social Welfare and the Cooperative Department for if, on a settlement controlled by Government, we cannot get those trained officers to organise the people? Unless that is done we will have the people planting rice and in many cases only a few acres, and when there is no work to be done in the cultivation of rice they will sit idly doing nothing during the rest of the year.

It may be the policy of Government but it seems to me to be proceeding so slowly as not to be visible at all.

If I had a hand in it I would.

I always gone about preaching cooperation. I feel the time has come when the Cooperative Department should move along a little faster with this business. It is true that it is only two years since we have had a fully staffed Department and on the other hand I appreciate the fact that there are many individuals who are not willing to join producer cooperatives, but I feel that Government has power in its hands to give an incentive to these people. Take the question of rentals. Instead of charging the settlers a flat rental of \$7.20 per acre for land I think Government would do well to consider the proposition of giving the land free to the people who would join producer cooperatives, and charge them a certain percentage on their yield which would take into account land rent, drainage costs and such things. But what is Government doing at present? The settlers are charged a rental of \$7.20 per acre for the land. They borrow money from the Loan Banks, and for machinery which is bought in from the Abary scheme they have to pay \$3 per hour for the use of a plough. Then comes a flood and the people lose everything, or most of what they have planted. It seems to me that the correct procedure would be to provide an incentive to those people. They should be told that if they would form a cooperative the land would be given to them free of rent; that drainage and irrigation would be provided, and when they reap their crops a certain percentage would be taken from them for the facilities provided. In that way the farmer's would not stand to lose anything. At present they incur debt at the Loan Banks and for the hire of machinery, and in many cases they are worse off when they reap than they were before they planted.

Another matter to which I think Government should give serious consideration is the question of setting up machinery pools in various parts of the Colony, especially in relation to land settlements. There again I think Government should levy a certain percentage on the yield for the hire of machinery instead of charging a flat rate. If they have to pay \$3 per hour for the hire of a plough and it breaks down during operation they stand to lose money and are not encouraged to use mechanical tillage. The effect of that would be that they would sooner or later revert to the use of oxen. The correct procedure would be for Government to set up machinery pools in the various land settlements and encourage the people to form producer and consumer cooperatives. I hope that something very tangible will be done, and very quickly, to reorganise the land settlement schemes. I have very great hopes of those schemes, but in their present state of organisation I fear that they will be failures. I know that Government is subsidising all those land settlements, and on the present basis it will have to continue to subsidise them at the expense of the general taxpayers.

Estimates - Medical X- Ray Department

Dr. Jagan: I notice under this Head provision for three radiographers. In answer to the Hon. Member for Eastern Berbice (Dr. Gonsalves) the Hon. the Colonial Secretary said a moment ago that there was no discrimination so far as appointments are concerned. In this case we know that recently one such person was employed on a temporary basis on the salary scale stated in the estimate - \$2,400 - \$3,000 per annum -but I am informed that the person in question has been demoted from a salary of \$200 to \$150 per month. I am wondering what is the reason for that because the radiographers all have the same qualifications. I am also told that the person who has been demoted holds a diploma from one of the best hospitals in Ireland, and has the highest recommendation from those in charge of the institution. I would like to know the reason for discrimination in this particular case in which the academic qualifications are the same. I know that the matter has been discussed in Finance Committee where the view of Hon. Members was that this particular radiographer should be allowed to continue at the Public Hospital, Georgetown in order to gain experience, if such experience is necessary at the present

At the present time there is only one other radiographer at the hospital, for whom I see provision for a personal allowance of \$360 per annum. If there is provision in the estimate for three radiographers, two of them are to be stationed at the Public Hospital, Georgetown, and it is felt that one of them has not sufficient practical experience, it seems to me that the best way for that one to gain experience would be to become an understudy to the trained radiographer at the hospital. Instead, I am informed that it is Government's intention to remove the radiographer in question to another institution. I cannot understand the reason for such a step because, if a person has not the necessary experience, I do not see how that experience can be gained at another institution where she will be solely in charge. I should have thought that she would have been made an understudy of the trained radiographer in order to gain experience before she was transferred to another institution.

It seems to me that this incident bears out the remarks made by the Hon. Member for Eastern Berbice a few minutes ago about discrimination. We have been told in the past, and we are continually being told that there is no justification for such a feeling, but we are being faced with cases here and there where persons with diplomas are told that they have not the requisite experience. Some persons are placed on probation, and their probationary periods extend over two or three years. We do not understand how long one has to be on probation, in some cases, before one gains the

necessary experience. On the other hand we find that in some cases allowances are given to certain officers to qualify for posts in which they are employed before they have acquired the necessary qualification. In this very Department that has been done. Government has been very generous to certain officers who did not have the necessary academic qualifications. They were appointed to posts and then given facilities to go and get the necessary academic qualifications, but in other cases that practice is not adopted.

I know from personal experience of the subject of radiography, that a person has to get accustomed to various types of apparatus at his or her disposal, and necessary adjustments have to be made. A person may be accustomed to using a modern type of apparatus, and with an antiquated type cannot give the same results. I go further and say that working with the same type of apparatus in different places, one has to adjust oneself to the new apparatus. I know that from practical experience with X-ray apparatus, and the Hon. Member for Eastern Berbice (Dr. Gonsalves) can verify that statement. In the case of the radiographer who has been employed for only a few weeks, using what may be described as not as efficient equipment as perhaps that she has been accustomed to, one can see that a period of readjustment was necessary before there could be any evaluation of her ability or otherwise. Consequently, in this particular case, if Government does not consider it to be discrimination then I feel that Government has been very - I would not say high-handed, but I would say that it has taken too stringent a view of the whole situation, because the initial period was very short. I am sure that over a longer period the lady in question would have produced results, if at all her ability was in question. I hope the matter will receive Government's attention.

I would like to make a few further comments on this issue. I do not know why there should be all this fuss about experience because, as far as I know from personal experience, radiography is a very simple operation. It is not such a very technical operation as all that.

As far as I know that is a different matter.

A radiographer is just like a photographer; he takes pictures.

The point I was trying to make is that so far as the picture taking aspect of the work is concerned there are only two things which a radiographer is called upon to do. One is the positioning of the patient in relation to the part of the body to be X-rayed, and the other is the time exposure required. I am sure that within a period of two years of study and training in radiography a person can acquire the necessary amount of education and experience. It does not take that long to know in what position to put a patient, and how many minutes of exposure are required. Assuming that radio therapy is part of the duties of a radiographer, it seems to me that now that we have two radiographers one could do the photography part of the work while the other person who is better qualified could look after the more technical aspect of radio therapy. If the lady in question is said not have

experience in radio therapy that difficulty could easily be overcome. I know that there is a good deal of work to be done in that direction, but if one arrangement I suggest was adopted I think the same amount of work would be done as was done before the second Radiographer was appointed. If the duties were divided, as I suggest, I am sure the lady in question, with the training she has received abroad, would acquire the necessary experience to do the Radiographer's work and, if necessary, even the radio therapy aspect of the work.

You mentioned, Sir, a short while ago that Government was always faced with regular shortages in medical staff. This Government has appointed a Radiologist on a contract which, I believe, was entered into about two or three years ago. This contract will expire some time during this year. I would like to ask Government what it has done to see to it that we get another Radiologist. Are we going to wait until the contract expires to get a Radiologist or will this gentleman be reappointed? If the Government wants to have a solution to this regular shortage of staff it must have a practical way of dealing with it.

It seems to me that what should have been done in the case of the Radiologist is that one of our local boys who are already graduates should have been sent away to study for a year or two for this post, so that when the contract expires we would have someone to fill the post. At the present time this officer is receiving the fees collected. I think, 50%, which is not so in the case of other specialist officers. That is because he is at a premium and we cannot get another person for the post. It seems that Government should make proper arrangements to get these people trained.

Head passed as recommended by the Finance Committee.

Printing Contracts

Dr. Jagan: There are various items under this Head which I would like to speak on. I take item 2 first. Today I have tabled a petition to the Secretary of State for the Colonies about the new contract which is intended to be signed by the Government and the Argosy, Co., Ltd. According to the first contract which covered a period of five years, the sum voted or agreed upon was \$280,000. Then the Argosy Company was given a grant of \$100,000 as an initial advance on that sum, and subsequently they were to be paid \$36,000 per annum. As a result of demands made by the Argosy Company for an increase on this global contract for the sum of \$280,000 the Government undertook an investigation of the Company. I have before me a memorandum, No. 15 of 1949, in which is set out an extract of Mr. Davies's report on this Company's activities. I would like to read for Hon. Members from this memorandum a relevant section so that they would realise that the present amount which is being asked for, a sum of \$193,906 per annum is really an exorbitant figure. Mr. Davies in his report states that public printing usually gives a profit of approximately 50 per cent, but in the case of Government printing, because of the staid nature of the work over a long period of time that profit is usually lower. He mentioned a profit figure of around 25 to 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ % to be the more equitable figure in the case of the Government printing contract. But the real point about his report is this, and I would like with your permission, Sir, to read to Hon. Members, what he says-

"Following upon this, taking into account that as far as can be ascertained from the information given to me there is approximately a 25% backlog of work, it is indeed indicated that the Company has only been working on the Government printing contract to the extent of three-fourths production, the cost of which has averaged \$66,500 per annum. If in full production total cost of materials, plus working expenses would then be in the region of \$83,000 and a profit of 25% would show a figure of approximately \$20,000 per annum or \$100,000 in five years."

He recommended that the Company should be given the additional amount of \$70,000, which was agreed upon and voted by this Legislative Council. That increased the sum of \$280,000 to \$350,000 for a period of five years; in other words, \$70,000 per annum. Under the new contract which is to be signed by the Government the sum which is set out in the Finance Committee's Report is \$518,718 for three years, or a sum of \$193,906 per

annum. In other words, the increase is from \$70,000 per annum to \$193,906 per annum, nearly a threefold increase.

Let us go back to Mr. Davies's figures for a moment. He says that the Company was doing about three-fourths of the total amount of work which they were pleased to do for the Government year by year, and that was done at an average cost of \$66,500 per annum. If the full amount of work, as set out in the contract, was done it would have cost the Company a total of \$83,000 per annum. Let us assume that from the time this report was written- the latter part of 1949 to the present time - costs have increased; let us say wage costs have increased. We know that the Fletcher Committee recommended a 20% increase in wages for Government employees. Let us assume a 20% increase in wages is to be paid to the workers of the Argosy Printing Company, and let us assume again an increase of 20% in the cost of paper and other printing materials. That will give an additional amount of approximately \$20,000. So that if the then cost to the Company was \$83,000 to do the total amount of Government printing, then today it would cost them an additional 20 per cent increase for wages and cost of materials or a sum of nearly \$100,000. Let us there on add a sum of 25% for profits that would be in the vicinity of \$125,000. If we are using the figures of the report of Mr. Davies, (apparently he went into this matter very carefully) how is it that \$125,000, based on his calculation, is raised to \$193,906? Certainly something is wrong here. It is a pity the Hon. The Deputy President of this Council (Mr. C. V. Wight) is not here to support me in this argument. I notice he has come back from England and only one question is upper most in his mind.

Anyway I am asking that the Government should not enter into this Contract pending the decision of the Secretary of State for the Colonies on the petition which I have tabled today, because I feel that this is one time when hold-up tactics are being used against Government. If a man in the street points a gun at another and takes away his money he would find himself in prison, and being prosecuted and persecuted by the Attorney-General and his officers.

In this case this is really a hold-up method to get money from Government, without a gun, it is true. I want to say that three years from now if Government signs that contract it would be in no better position and the same thing would recur because there is no other printing company in Georgetown capable to do this printing. Government was very generous towards the Argosy Company in giving them an initial advance of \$100,000. I know that many people would be glad to get \$100,000 from Government today to set up a printery, and probably do Government printing at the same figure it was done for before. I see the Hon. the Financial Secretary is laughing, but that is true. Has the Government found out whether anybody would like to set up printers to do its printing?

If the Hon. the Financial Secretary would give \$100,000 to the tender we would do the contract at the original price and we would give a guarantee

too. It is true that tenders were called for, but may I suggest that all these printing presses in Georgetown are practically owned by the same people? Examine the shareholders and the directors and you will see that these companies are interlocked in their directorate, the same people being the bosses. So you are not going to get very much variation so far as that is concerned, and Government will not be in a better position three years from now. I am strongly suggesting to Government that this contract should not be entered upon, and that this sum should be taken out of the Estimates for the time being.

We were told when we gave the additional \$70,000 that the Company was going to bring up its entire printing backlog, but up to now we have not got that. We gave the money but the promise has not been carried out. I am suggesting that Government reopen the matter for tenders and, if necessary (the Hon. Member for Demerara - Essequibo (Dr. Singh) mentioned some time ago the case of the printery at the Mental Hospital Berbice, an electric printing plant there is not in use at the present time) Government would do well to purchase one or two Linotype machines and maybe another electric machine to be used in conjunction with the Technical Association, not as members of the Association but individually, and certain members of the Chamber of Commerce. In the case of the *Graphic* we find the same members of the Chamber of Commerce and the sugar producers Association are well represented. In fact there is an interlocking directorate. In the case of the *Argosy* the Wights are the directors; in the *Chronicle* there are the Wights and certain sugar people, and in the *Graphic* -

I am only clarifying a point that was made here.

The Financial Secretary said that the first contract was unfavourable to the Company. Assuming that it was, we have the figures given by Mr. Davies who carried out an investigation and reported that in one year the average price for doing 3/4ths of the Government printing according to the contract was \$68,500. So that if the Company did all the Government printing the price would be in the vicinity of \$83,000. It is not that I am comparing one figure with another. The only way we can arrive at an equitable figure is to consider costs - what it cost to do the printing in the past. We have figures supplied by a Government expert; therefore I do not consider the statement of the Financial Secretary really valid argument.

On the question of costs again I do not know if due consideration was given to the fact that the *Argosy Co.* also prints a daily newspaper. It is a known fact that the newspaper is run at a loss, and I am wondering whether the printing is really subsidising the newspaper. It is also a known fact that there is a lot of extravagance in that Company. We also know that recently its Manager was dismissed, and perhaps all those things tended to raise the cost of printing for the Government. Taking into consideration the extravagance and the loss which may be incurred in publishing a newspaper, Mr. Davies's figure of \$83,000 per annum cannot be thrown out of the window simply because Government wants to shut its eyes to those figures

now. If the figure is \$83,000 per annum and we are to allow the Company 25 per cent profit which would not include wages and other charges and then add another 25 per cent for wages, and materials, it still would not amount to \$200,000 per annum.

In the case of small people we are always talking about the inviolability of contracts and the good name of British Guiana. That was said in the case of the contracts between the Rice Marketing Board and the West Indian Colonies, but in the case of a large Company like this Government made a contract for five years and was very generous to the Company in giving them an advance of \$100,000 to buy equipment, and subsequently gave them an increase of 25% on the contract price. Now that the price is to be increased to such a great extent I agree with the suggestion of the Hon. Member for Georgetown Central (Mr. Fernandes), supported by the Hon. Member for Eastern Demerara (Mr. Debidin), that as the time is so late Government would do well to enter into a temporary contract for one year or six months until the question of its printing is thoroughly investigated. If an investigation is to be made I can see no purpose in entering into a 3-year contract.

In these days we hear a lot about West Indian Federation, Closer Union, a Customs Union and unification of the Civil Services. The Financial Secretary has pointed out that the cost of printing in Jamaica and Trinidad is indeed very high. Why can't the Governments of the various territories consider the possibility of establishing a unified printing service? I can see that a good deal of money could be saved in that way. It is true that certain people may become unemployed in British Guiana, if a Government printery were set up in Trinidad or Jamaica, but I can see no difficulty in sending our printers there to work. The Financial Secretary has made great play of the cost incurred by the Jamaica and Trinidad Government in having their own printery, but I have visited the Government printery in Jamaica and seen the volume of work they do. They produce all kinds of statistical reports and other items which we do not handle in this Colony. We must all remember that Government has printing which is not under contract, and every year we spend large sums of money for printing under that Head. Government also incurs additional expenditure in doing cycle style work of its own. All such work is done in Jamaica at the Government printery. When all these things are taken into consideration it will be seen that Government is paying too much for its printing. I do not know what is going to be Government's decision in this matter, but the only way I would agree to the passing of this item is if the contract will not be entered into for three years. Before the vote is taken I would like to know definitely whether a contract will be entered into.

May I ask if an advertisement for tenders was published in the West Indies?

Estimates – Tourist Bureau

Dr. Jagan: I wish to support the Hon. Member in his Motion to delete this item from the Estimates. What is passing through my mind is this: When I look at item 20 for the Tourist Bureau, and then at item 31 for the Fishing Industry Development, both of which are supposed to be development, I find that in the case of the fishing industry development \$2,500 is to be spent, and in the case of the Tourist Bureau the sum of \$10,000. It is a known fact that for years and years the people have been clamouring for development in this Colony. I am going to refer particularly to the fishing industry. What are we doing about it? The people have to be squeezed into some wharf belonging to somebody, and that is supposed to be a fish market without any facility placed at their disposal such as refrigeration or any other facility to benefit them and the fishing industry. That is something we can call development, but what we have in the Tourist Bureau is a waste of \$10,000 to this colony.

Only yesterday the remark was made that we do not have enough surveyors. I take it that about 20 surveyors can be trained every year with that \$10,000, taking into consideration the very meagre salaries paid here. That is something being done. For so many years we heard an Anaesthetist was coming here, and while on the boat he got another job in the U.S.A. and he went there. No wonder British Guiana is in the position it is. It is because we are perpetually wasting money and this is one item, if it is not a waste, and if Government thinks so much of tourism, why not join the Central Tourist Bureau of the West Indies? We did not because we thought it costly. Why costly? Probably it is because we felt that we do not have enough here to attract tourists. If we had thought we had enough here, I submit that we would have paid our share to be in this central organisation. Having not joined this central organisation in the Caribbean, why waste \$10,000 on tourism?

I do want to say that the only people who can be encouraged to tour British Guiana are British Guianese themselves. By that I am referring to item 23: "Passages, Public Officers On transfer". We are spending about \$20,000 per annum on that aside from item 29: "Leave Passages, Public Officers, \$45,000". It seems to me the time has come when we must make Public Officers know what British Guiana looks like, know what the North-West District is like - I myself have never been to the North - West District (laughter) - know where the Rupununi is, know the facilities in those areas, the potentialities of those areas. Those are the places where our Public Officers should go instead of speaking of the United Kingdom as "home", and most of them waiting to go back there and no doubt enjoy the beautiful

trip, etc. I would suggest in the present conditions, the present stage of development of British Guiana, when we compare conditions with the other West Indian territories - beautiful hotels, nice blue waters, good food, good scenery - we have nothing here to offer tourists to come here. We have Kaitaur, but when we remember the difficulties which are experienced in getting there we may well not encourage those people to come here at all. I would suggest, Sir, that item 20 be deleted, as the Hon. Member suggested, and that \$10,000 be added to the amount for Fishing Industry Development. Let us build a market right away for the people in the fishing industry, with a proper refrigeration Plant. We can get such a plant for \$10,000. So far as Leave Passages for Public Officers are concerned—

Venn Commission Report

Dr. Jagan: I do like to record my acceptance of Government's views on this matter, because unlike the Hon. Member for Western Essequibo I cannot see anything of value in this Recommendation.

He seems to feel this is one of the best recommendations of this Report. Perhaps I should like to ask him whether he would also approve of the fact that no professional man or any other person should hold shares in a company or should be on the directorate of a company, and whether such a person as a King's Counsel should represent the Sugar Producers because he has direct interest in the sugar industry? I wonder how far he would go, because what is good for the goose must also be good for the gander. If we are to place restrictions on the workers as to their right to choose their leaders, then it seems to me that we would also be using powers possibly to infringe on the rights of other members of the community. I am wondering, Sir, whether such an objection stems from the fact that other members of the community, who do not give their services to trade unions but who are quite qualified and on the other hand give their services to the employers, feel that their shares or their dividends will in any way be affected by the representations of others in trade unions besides workers? I wonder if the Hon. Member is thinking that if individuals who are not workers represent trade unions it might affect his shares.

We do know that the Hon. Member has shares in one of the sugar companies, and I am wondering whether the law permits him to be a shareholder in a sugar company, while on the other hand he suggests that workers should not have the right to expert advice and knowledge by people who may not be workers. There are some of us who genuinely feel sympathy for the working class movement.

Whether it comes under the head of aggressive ideology or not there is a definite sympathy for the working class movement, and taking into consideration the fact that in this country the workers are hardly removed from the state of illiteracy, every help should be given to those people. What is applicable in another country must not be transplanted here. There may be different historical reasons for legislation such as is proposed under this Recommendation in different countries. In Great Britain we know that the workers have had long experience in trade unionism. They have had long struggles over centuries, and with that experience gained they are able to manage their own affairs. Who knows what were the reasons for the introduction of this law in Malaya and Hong Kong? Do we know whether it was passed by a capitalist legislature in those countries, and simply because it was passed there is no reason why it should be adopted in British

Guiana.

I wholly agree with Government's view in this matter, and I feel sure that to have accepted this Recommendation would have been the most retrograde thing that could have happened in British Guiana. The workers must be led. It is true that some leadership may come from people outside of the workers themselves, and I am not denying the fact that there are a lot of charlatans who prostitute their positions, who climb on a trade union band-waggon in order to gain publicity, but taking everything into consideration, including the state of our development, I feel that Government has done the very best thing in the circumstances.

Public Loans Bill

Dr. Jagan: First of all I would like to ask the Hon. Mover of the Motion a few questions before speaking on the Bill. In the Schedule the first item set out calls for \$1,150,000, and when that is divided up — I think he mentioned them all — the purchase of Campbellville, La Penitence and Bel Air Park, the development of Bel Air Park and the removal of the Turf Club and the redevelopment of Bel Air Park—the purchase of the three — Campbellville, Bel Air and La Penitence — amount to \$701,000, and the Mover suggested that he does not know how the rest of the money would be raised but that would be in the issue of the bonds if those properties are to be purchased. As regards the second item of the Schedule for \$300,000, I can see that that would possibly come from the Widows and Orphans Fund. I wonder how the money for the development of Bel Air Park and the Turf Club, which amounts to \$440,000, will be raised by issue of bonds if they are not to be open to this public.

In the case of the development of the Turf Club I can see that bonds can be issued to those people who can trade them to raise the necessary money. What I am wondering is what assets Government would hold. It does not seem that these people have any tangible assets which Government would be issuing in bonds. I do not know how that can be done. I do not think this is the appropriate time to introduce this Bill and if it is passed by this Council it seems to me that many of these items are tied up together. I do appreciate the fact that there is great urgency for building not only houses for the working class of people but also for the civil servants. But in view of the fact that these bonds are to be issued to the landlords who own the estate, or the money will be raised by Government, I do not see the necessity for passing this Bill until these schemes are all approved by the Legislative Council — those stated in the Schedule — because one is tied up with the other.

I remember some time ago when the question of the development and removal of the Turf Club was brought before Finance Committee, the matter was turned down. It was suggested that a grant of \$50,000 and a loan of \$150,000 be given.

That was at first turned down and subsequently, when the matter of the purchase of Bel Air Park came into consideration, some Members felt that possibly in view of the large price then demanded for Bel Air Park it would be cheaper for Government, in view of the fact that the Thomas Lands had to be developed, to reconsider the arrangement with the Turf Club to give \$50,000 as a grant and \$150,000 as a loan. In view of all this I do not see the necessity at the present time of having this Bill passed, because the matter

will have to be debated fully all over in respect of the purchase of these lands. I have a great deal to say, and I am now preparing a petition to be sent to the Secretary of State for the Colonies on the purchase of these lands. I do not see the necessity for it at the moment. I notice that the Hon. Mover mentions in the case of La Penitence \$21,000. I think that was modified in Finance Committee and the amount and area reduced. I have divided the relevant amount into \$701,000 to be issued to the landlords, provided these lands are purchased, and the rest of \$440,000 will be provided, by Government. So in any case there is no haste to pass this Bill at the present time. Unless we approve of the scheme to purchase this land it would not be necessary to issue bonds at all.

I would like to know whether Government intends to adopt that procedure, otherwise I would have to speak fully on this matter. I suggest that we defer consideration of this Bill until the schemes themselves have been considered. They have been considered by Finance Committee a long time now, and one thought they would have been brought to the Legislative Council for formal approval. I think that will have to be done very quickly and this may await that. If that is done I would submit nothing further, but if the intention is to proceed with the Bill I would have to make my comments along this point.

Venn Commission Report: March 21, 1951

Dr. Jagan: I am glad to hear that. I did not know there was a change in that policy, but while that is so I also know that in the case of workers who desire to live outside of sugar estate lands a similar lease for 21 years is required before loans are made available to them from the Sugar Welfare Fund. I know that there is great difficulty at present in getting leases for 21 years of land owned by private individuals, and I hope Government will look into the question of reducing the tenure of the lease in respect of non-sugar estate lands to a shorter period than 21 years? But my main point as regards housing on sugar estates is that Government should adopt some policy which would take into consideration the nonessential or part-time workers. If those people are tied around the sugar estates and as a result of the mechanisation of the sugar industry there should be a substantial reduction of manual labour, those people would find great difficulty in obtaining a livelihood.

I have calculated that if lands which are available on sugar estates for the cultivation of rice and ground provisions were allocated to workers' families in equal amounts each family would get an acre of rice land and an acre of land for ground provisions. In view of the policy of the sugar estate authorities ties to give lands to regular workers only, the part-time workers would be faced with the possibility of not getting any lands at all. The problem, therefore, is what will be the position of those occasional workers in the future, should there be either a drop in the production of sugar or as a result of mechanisation, less demand for manual labour? I think that some effort should be made to remove those casual workers from the neighbourhood of sugar estates, to land settlements where they could obtain an adequate livelihood for their families and also produce more goods necessary for the improvement of the national income of this country. I know that when the Sub-Committee submitted the original draft of the Ten-Year Development Plan it was intended that Government should purchase some of those areas, and that Schoon Ord and Versailles were mentioned. It was stated that an area of about 200 acres would be handed over to Government at a nominal sum of \$1 per acre, but subsequently. I believe that plan was abandoned.

According to Dr. Giglioli's report over 9,000 house lots are to be laid out on sugar estates. I am glad to hear that the leases will be for a period of 21 years, but I hope Government will also implement my Motion which seeks to extend the application of the Rent Restriction Ordinance to the entire country, because instances have been brought to my knowledge in which attempts have been made to increase land rentals from the nominal sums

of from 12 to 24 cents per month to \$1 per month. It seems to me that the correct policy would have been for Government to acquire those large areas of land which are being converted into housing settlements, and subsequently declare them as village districts. I believe the Venn Commission has commented on this phase of the matter in its report. I hope Government will not adopt the short-sighted policy of making available what I would regard as a waste of money — loans from the Sugar Welfare Fund to nonessential workers to build houses around the sugar estates. I think that money would be better spent if Government acquired lands outside the sugar estates and made loans to those people to build houses on those settlements.

I know that Government contemplated the establishment of a land settlement scheme in an area on the Demerara River known as Lowlands, but I do not know whether it is proposed to proceed with that scheme. Many workers on sugar estates have come to me seeking financial assistance to enable them to move into other areas. Some of the workers at Ogle recently came to me with a request that Government should either make lands available to them or supply them with planting material so that they might settle in some of the abandoned lands on the East Bank. I feel that the Sugar Welfare Fund can be better utilised in those directions rather than in giving loans to workers to build houses on lands around or adjacent to sugar estates. Such a policy is merely providing a means of tying the workers around the sugar estates without making any long-term plan for the proper well-being of those people. I trust that before making any additional funds available from the Sugar Welfare Fund Government will give this matter very serious consideration and adopt some other policy for the betterment of the workers on sugar estates.

I can remind the Hon. Member that during the last strikes we had before the Venn Commission came, the workers who were on strike were given notice to leave the houses they occupied, and when they did not leave they were taken before the Magistrate. Merely building houses without giving some necessary security is not enough. I have before me an agreement. I do not know if that is the agreement to be entered into, but I would like to read one clause in order to get some information. This is an agreement to be signed with Ogle Estate Limited by the workers there not to house any person warned off the estate or permit any such person to enter, reside or remain on the house lot or house. I do not see why it is necessary to restrict the rights of persons in this clause. As you know, at the present time the sugar estate workers cannot meet their Union leaders on the estate.

(Mr. Morrish: That is quite incorrect. The Trade Union leaders, at least on one estate to my knowledge, live on the state.)

Dr. Jagan: So far as the Hon. Member's reference is concerned, that is his estate. We do know that as the result of the last strike six persons were

given trespass notices by those estates controlled by Bookers. Even in my own constituency I cannot go into the estates, and there is now a trespass damages claim for \$500 pending in the Supreme Court. I am speaking from knowledge. These factors are important in the life of that committee which operates the whole Fund, and the speed with which these old ranges will disappear depends on the speed with which the people, who wish to settle themselves in these "extra nuclear" areas, make application to the Fund for loans. I can assure Hon. Members there is no shortage of sites for them. It does not seem to be very clear to certain Members of Council that housing, even in respect of the nuclear workers on the sugar estates is housing which is attached to a job. If a man no longer wishes to continue to work on a sugar estate he cannot be expected to be housed rent free for the rest of his days; he must of necessity vacate that house.

We have been told that people are put out at a day's notice. I am surprised to hear that. I do not deny that there were times when that did happen, but I think it is incredible that such a thing has happened this year. It is very many years since I heard of such a thing. The Hon. Member, who has just taken his seat, said that nothing much is being done and the housing is going on very slowly. He also said it is no use saying we are spending over a million dollars on this and that. I suggest that the fact that the cost of "nuclear" housing on sugar estates is going on to the extent of \$1 million, I admit, is an appreciable effort. I am sorry I do not have the figures as to how many "nuclear" houses have been built, but on the East Bank, Demerara alone it has got on to close on 300, and I do not think that is small effort at all. I think that is very appreciable. The Hon. Member also made reference to what may be interpreted as an obligation — the fact that an individual was indentured to a sugar estate carried with it a perpetual right of being housed during his lifetime. I do not know whether that is so or not.

The main point of my whole argument with reference to this question of housing is that the worker should be considered in all aspects of his life. What is to happen to him after he is housed? Merely giving him a house over his head and nothing in his belly is not enough. That is the whole consideration. I remember reading in this Council the report of Dr. Nieumark, an admirable paper which he presented to the Caribbean Commission, in which he mentioned the question of the cost of production. Not only should you tie the workers around the estates but you should think of the welfare of the workers who have to be tied around the estates. These workers may be tied there so as to provide cheap labour for the estates. If there is a strike there would be a pool to draw upon. But that would not be in the interest of the workers or of the country as a whole. That is why I place emphasis on that aspect of the matter. I do know the Sugar Welfare Committee can provide the funds, but to plan for the workers demands a comprehensive view of the whole matter.

Estimates – Atkinson Field

Dr. Jagan: On this question of Atkinson Field I referred the other day to the agreement which was made between Government and the U.S.A. authorities, and asked whether in that agreement it was stated that the employees who were to be retained by this Government were to be paid the then existing rates of wages. I would like to know whether the Hon. the Financial Secretary is in a position now to answer that question.

With respect to the operation and maintenance of the airfield at Atkinson Field I support the remarks made by those Hon. Members who have spoken, because I feel that the position has not been sufficiently clarified to Members of this Council. We do not know what the position will be in the future, because for all purposes it does appear that the base is still American territory, having been given on a 99-year lease to the American Government, and in the case of an emergency they can come back and take it over. Does it mean that we are to hold the baby, and when they choose to come back we are to hand it back to them in proper condition? It was because of the fact that we could not use the base for civil aviation during the war that Government spent nearly a million dollars to construct an airfield at Mackenzie.

Whether it was Imperial Government money or not, it was a grant to this Government and had to be accounted for. I am not concerned at the moment as to whose money it was, but it was placed at the disposal of this Government and it was spent. The position is not clarified as far as I am concerned, and I would like to know the terms of the agreement. That is the whole trouble. Agreements are made but generally we do not see them. All we are told is that we should vote the money, and I think the Hon. Member was right when he suggested that a great deal of time would be saved if the estimates were printed and passed without the formal approval of this Council. It does appear that the cost of maintaining the base is increasing year by year, and I think we should make certain decisions right now in the light of what the Hon. Member for Georgetown Central (Mr. Fernandes) has said. If we find it is too expensive to maintain the entire base as a going concern I think it would be well if we gave up vast areas of it and confined ourselves merely to the portion which concerns the airfield.

I do not see the necessity for this large expenditure on the maintenance on the whole base, if there is no provision.

Old Age Pension – Appropriation Bill

Dr. Jagan: The Hon. Member said he did not see how Government would be able to abolish the means test unless there is a contributory pension scheme. I do not wholly agree with him, because when I introduced the Motion first in this Council I gave certain figures which showed that if Government removed the means test and reduced the age qualification from 65 to 60 years it would cost one million dollars. If Government was thoroughly organised and run on a different basis it would have money to pay old age pensions from the age of 60 years. The Financial Secretary stated a moment ago that in order to implement the Council's recommendation of an age qualification of 60 years and the raising of the means test to \$10 per month, a sum of \$360,000 would be required, but I would like to ask him if he has separate figures with respect to the two proposals. We would then be in a better position to determine whether we can afford at present to implement at least one of the recommendations. I feel that giving an additional 50 cents per month to those already in receipt of old age pensions is not going to relieve the suffering of those people who are now disqualified either by age or by the fact that the means test is now fixed at \$4.50 per month.

I would support the remarks of the previous speaker by saying that some of us get up in this Council and speak what is in our minds, whether it pleases other Members or not. At the present time the Finance Committee goes through the Estimate before it is brought before this Council. From time to time the tactics of the Chairman of the Finance Committee have been revealed in this Council. If a measure is not passed and Government wants it to go through it is brought back again. In the interim some amount of lobbying is done. We have had numerous examples of that sort, but we hear a lot about talking and wasting time. I would suggest that we do away with the Finance Committee, at least as long as this Council is constituted as it is. Resolutions are passed in this Council, considered in Executive Council, and if they involve expenditure on the estimates the approval of Finance Committee is sought. Finance Committee is merely a place where opinions are stifled, because the proceedings are private. Editors of newspapers who think we are wasting time here are serving their masters well. I am not concerned with them at all; I am concerned with the manner in which the taxpayers' money is being spent. The burden of taxation is very heavy.

I propose next year to suggest that the Estimates should not be considered in Finance Committee, because it simply means that some of us will come back here in Council and speak again on the same issues. So far as I

am concerned I give notice right now that I do not intend to attend the meetings of Finance Committee on the next occasion. The Hon. Member for Georgetown Central (Mr. Fernandes) has resigned from all Advisory Committees because they are a farce. The Finance Committee is a similar farce, and the quicker we get rid of it the better, so long as this Council is constituted as it is. I hope that the Constitution Commission will make its report very soon, and I hope that when that report comes out it will be worth the \$25,000 which this Colony has to pay for the Commission's inquiry. I was surprised to find that we have to pay such a large sum. Had I known that we would have to pay \$25,000 for the Commission I would have recommended the appointment of a local Commission - a Constituent Assembly or some such Commission - for which we would not have had to pay this excessive amount of money. However, I hope that when the report comes out it is going to be worth the \$25,000 which the taxpayers of this country have to pay. Recently we have seen the progress being made by other countries around us.

I am here speaking on an appropriation of \$22 million, and it is the time for me to speak very carefully in order to safeguard the interests of the public. I think I have 20 minutes to speak on this Bill according to the rules. I notice that recently the people in the neighbouring Colony of Surinam have been given a very advanced Constitution, and they are making progress. I foresee that not very long from now we will have to go there and learn a lot of lessons, if we do not have to go right now. Only two days ago it was announced that the people in the Netherlands West Indies have been given responsible government entire control of their internal affairs and until we can have similar control in this country I am afraid we are only wasting time and money. I, hope that on the next occasion when the Budget is to be prepared Members of this Council will be consulted, and that the views they have expressed on this Budget on the question of taxation will be given some consideration. Taxation is very high, and I hope that in the coming year the people of this country will not be further taxed to meet this huge expenditure, most of which is unnecessary.

Rice Farmers Security of Tenure.

Dr. Jagan: This question of security of tenure to rice farmers, I feel, is a very desirable step to protect these people, especially since we are thinking of an increase of our rice cultivation and expansion of the rice industry in order even to sell outside in the open markets. I cannot remember exactly if I have a Motion at the present time before this Council, or if I have it in mind, but I do recall that in the case of the sugar plantations their lands are exempted from this Ordinance. The Hon. the Attorney-General would correct me if I am wrong.

(**The Attorney-General:** I would like to point out that this Rice Farmers (Security of Tenure) Ordinance with which the Hon. Member is dealing, does not embrace the rice lands cultivated on sugar estates.)

Dr. Jagan: I feel that the Ordinance should be amended to bring within its scope the lands which are given out on the sugar estates also. We do know that at the present time the sugar estates do have a large amount of land which they own, and which they lease from Government, all of which is not cultivated in cane, and I see no necessity of having the rice lands which are given out by the sugar estates to workers exempted from the Ordinance. There have been a lot of complaints made to me about these lands being taken away from certain workers and given to others. If the same lands are to be cultivated and are not to be utilised for other purposes by the sugar estates authorities, I do not see the necessity for changing hands from one person to another. As I said before, even if the sugar proprietors contemplate extending their cane cultivation, they still have a lot of land available not yet under cane or rice cultivation. Therefore I feel that that land should also come within the security of this Ordinance.

There is another point with reference to this matter, and that is there are certain landlords who purchase estates merely for speculation. I believe the original intention of this Ordinance was to protect these farmers by the security of their tenancy, especially in those cases where improvements have been made to the land by the farmers. Recently I have had to petition you, Sir, on behalf of certain farmers on the West Coast, Demerara, where a landlord seeks to convert his rice lands into house lots. While it is admirable to house people not only in the City of Georgetown but in the rural areas also in proper and fit places, I feel that very grave consideration must be given to the question as to the lands being converted from rice lands, into house lots for the purpose of erecting houses there on. The whole object of the Ordinance is to protect all farmers, not only that they should

continue to produce rice on the land they occupy but also that they could make certain improvements on the land. We know there are large tracts of land in this country which were abandoned, and which were not in a proper state for cultivation, but on which in many cases rice farmers have spent a lot of energy and money to bring into a proper cultivable state so that rice can be grown. When all that is done are the people to be deprived of those lands merely because it chooses the landlord to change the land from rice cultivation to house lots? I feel that would be defeating the purpose of this Ordinance if that is allowed.

I would support the measure at this time. This is a really good Motion before the Council, and I feel that not only the Ordinance should be continued from time to time, as is now being sought, but should be made a permanent part of the laws of this country in the same way that you have the Rent Restriction Ordinance in the Laws of this Colony and not for a limited period. I hope Government would consider the wisdom of including the sugar estate lands which have been under rice cultivation for a long period of time outside the provisions of this Ordinance.

Venn Commission Report

Dr. Jagan: The Hon. Member who has just spoken said that he will not permit "pirate" unions or organisations to come in within the realms of the recognised unions. May I inform him that the very union in which he is was at one time considered a "pirate" union and it had the greatest difficulty before it was recognised by the very same Sugar Producers' Association. What is good for one person one day must also be good for another person some other day. I am also wondering who are to do the recognising whether the unions themselves are to permit others to be recognised, or whether the employers are to determine what organisations are to be recognised. It is true, Sir, that certain Members are given very free scope. We also admit, as the Hon. Member suggested, that the Trade Union Movement is being used today as a political platform, and we do know too, that certain Members use the Trade Union Movement for political purposes and, as he suggested, forcing a certain ideology on the unsuspecting workers. But there again we have ideology and ideology, and we have been invited by the Hon. Member to come into the ranks of the M.P.C.A. I wonder what kind of ideology we are to give and get in that organisation. Some of the unions which are now recognised - let us take for instance the Workers League. When was the last election held? Are recognised elections held by the Workers' League? How many members does this League has? These matters do not seem to affect the Sugar Producers' Association at all; neither does it seem to affect the Hon. Member who speaks so much of the recognised unions. But it is important from the workers' point of view to know who is representing them.

That is why I want to speak under other Heads, so that I can make my point all-impressive. If we must live by democratic standards and if people are non-recognised by one set of persons, then the other side, if the sugar estates would permit them to, should also give vent to their feelings. Certain persons are today easily accepted by the Sugar Producers' Association. Is there any reason that the masses should not become very suspicious? Other persons who are genuinely trying to do something for these poor people are told "*You must not set foot on this estate. You must not hold a meeting here, and so on.*" You spoke, Sir, some time ago about the right to register a union by law. Yes, that is a right, but I would like to know if that right to register a union embraces the full right of association which the I.L.O. accepted years ago that any international body has the right to register an association of their own choosing. The Hon. Member referred to the fact that the workers are not intimidated today. One has not to be coerced openly today, because we knew there are several indirect means of coer-

cion: starvation, being thrown out of your house and others, which are subtly forced on the people at all times on these estates. If the workers are to have the right to organise free associations, then their leaders must not be obstructed at every turn. Their leaders are given trespass notices and are hauled in front of the courts, whereas others are accepted with open arms. One begins to wonder what is behind it all. Anyway, I shall have more to say about this matter under the other heads that are coming up.

But I will insist that Government make provision for the right of free association, the right for collective bargaining. It is no use telling a man that he has the right to join a trade union, a legal right to register a union, and then you tell him you will not recognise that union for the purpose of collective bargaining. The mere fact that a union is registered and goes about making members, it is for the purpose of collective bargaining. If that purpose is obstructed then why have registration and say the M.P.C.A. and the Workers' League represent the workers? If that is to be, then we may go to the United-Nations and say "*Let the Malayan Government be transported to British Guiana.*" I do not think the Government in Great Britain, which subscribes to the various international conventions on human rights and what not would sit by idly and see these methods used in British Guiana. I do hope an enactment would be made shortly in British Guiana to permit free association of individuals in this country with the right to collective bargaining.

This Recommendation, in my opinion, is a retrograde step. It is felt in all quarters that there should be only one union in the sugar industry; we are hearing that all the time. Now the Venn Commission comes along and says that the sugar producers should recognise the Drivers' Association, the Sugar Boilers' Union, and the Sugar Estate Clerks' Association. It is a known fact in trade union development that industrial organisation is taking over the craft organisation in any industry. In other words the tendency is to organise on an industrial basis. We have a typical example in the U.S.A. where the American Federation of Labour, an organisation of crafts, was eventually superseded by the C.I.O. Here we find the Venn Commission recommending the very retrograde step of recognition of a multiplicity of organisations in order to split the workers in one industry into several small organisations so as to keep them disunited. I have heard a lot of praise of the Commission in this Council.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary is merely coming back to the point I made a moment ago. If we make a Council of slaves to represent free people I do not think they would get very much out of it. That is exactly what Recommendation 24 suggests. The proposal is to federate the Workers' League with the M.P.C.A. and other small unions into an Advisory Council. I do not see any necessity for that. I feel that the principle of having one trade union for the sugar industry should be accepted. That principle is accepted in the U.S.A. and Canada. Perhaps it does not suit the sugar producers, and no doubt that is the reason why the Venn Commission has

reported in this fashion. I suggest that this is a backward step, tending to disunite the workers and allow certain people to exploit them and keep them in the miserable state in which they are existing at present.

If Government is in favour of that I wonder if it would authorise me to draft a Bill.

It is not a question of making it compulsory but of providing machinery to allow such a union to be recognised.

Public Loan Bill – Second Reading

Dr. Jagan: I am coming to that, since the Hon. Member has raised it. I have before me the “Caribbean Land Tenure Symposium” and would like to read to Members of Council at page 61 of this report. It says, Sir, under the chapter “Trend of Modern Thought” with reference to the Question of leasehold and freehold systems:

“The second principle which appears to be accepted is that accretions to land values due to the activities and general progress of the community – “unearned increments” - are not a proper subject for private profit”.

I know one Member has dealt a lot with ideologies here. I will not deal with all the ideologies but would like to tell him that as long ago as 1919, when there was no talk of communism or any talk of ideology, the German Constitution of 1919 had a clause which stated that unearned increment in the value of land was to be used for the common benefit. I would like to ask, who caused the value of the land to go up? It was the people who settled there, the people who braved the swamps, cleared the rice fields and built houses in the mosquito-infested swamps. It was due to the expansion of the city because more people were coming into the city. That does not mean to say that putting money in the purchase of land is production; it is like putting money into the bank which earns interest. If we want to be fair, let us find out how much money these people have put in that piece of land which was purchased for \$60,000 in 1937, and let us assume it was banked and earned interest year by year. If you want to do that I would agree, but I cannot agree to a figure of \$480,000 for a section of the land which is almost equivalent to 96 times increase in the purchase price of the piece of land.

In fact it will mean that by Government taking over that land, through - let us use the term nationalisation or socialism the profits that would be given to the landlords would be more than they had been making over a long period of years from 1937 to the present time. And apart from that, we would still have to redeem the bonds in 15 or 20 years at a very high figure of \$480,000. There is the injustice of it all. I am not opposed to the purchase of it, as I would ask Government to take over the whole area from Turkeyen to La Penitence and use the land for the building of houses. I do not want Government to take over the area which has been transported to individuals. I mean the lands owned by the estates which are not being used and which have not had houses built on them because the landlords have been demanding exorbitant prices.

As I have said before, I am preparing a petition to the Secretary of State for the Colonies on this issue, and if it means going to Great Britain to oppose this issue we will do so. I would like Government to proceed immediately with my Motion to set up a Land Valuation Committee so that in purchasing land this Committee would go into all the relevant facts: the purchase price, the profits earned and whatever increase in land value has occurred in the meanwhile. In the circumstances, even though I feel that no purpose would be served in opposing this measure at the present time, as it would have to come back and I would have to say the same things over again, I am opposing it. That is why I suggest we are merely wasting time. In view of these remarks I do hope Government will not be afraid to acquire compulsorily these lands, if it is found that the landlords do not want to sell at an equitable price.

I hope Government would not be afraid to use it.

I would be satisfied, but I want that to be done quickly, because this price is not satisfactory to the people concerned. The Hon. Member for Georgetown South mentioned the poor working people. We have these people who cannot afford to pay high rentals. The Cost of Living Survey Committee which examined the situation reported that people were paying less than \$2.00 per week for rental. May I inform the Council that for Campbellville alone the purchase price is approximately \$1,905 per acre with interest at 3% per cent or \$66.66 per acre? So when we consider that six or eight houses are to be built there we can see right away that without the benefit of building a house or building roads and putting other amenities there, the people would be burdened with this initial weight from the start. If people go there they might get a loan from the Building Society to build their houses, but they would have to pay 6% on that. While we are thinking of the poor people of the Colony we must ultimately think of protecting their interest and assisting them and seeing that they would not have to bear the burden of this expenditure in the long run. We have been carrying the burden of the Railway Permanent Annuities as a standing example and, I think, the time has come when we should cry halt to such expenditure in the future.

I object to that remark. The Hon. Member must state facts and not make malicious statements in this Council. He is making a remark there to indicate that I have been trying to turn the minds of the people against the proposition of Government.

I move the deletion of the words "*three and one-half*" and the substitution of the word "*done*" in respect of the rate of interest to be paid on the debentures. I have very good reasons for moving this amendment, because we know what is the object of this Bill. The object is to issue bonds to the owners of the land to be purchased, and in view of the fact that it does appear that the Bill will go through even though some Members are opposed to the high purchase price, I think the only thing we can do at the present time is to try to secure a reduction of the rate of interest so that the annual

income to be derived by the Company from this transaction may bear same relationship to the profits which they are now making on these properties. We know that the land has been used as pasture land, and rice land, and the average price of such land is between \$7 and \$8 per acre. Interest at the rate of 1% would more approximate the true figure which should, be paid to the owners.

Purchase of Campbellville

Dr. Jagan: I have spoken on several occasions on this matter and there still seems to be a great deal of confusion so far as this purchase is concerned. When the Loan Bill was introduced a week ago in this Council the Hon. Mover of the Motion said, as he has said today, that this purchase is intended to safeguard the interests of the people who are residing on lands at Campbellville. He also said, Sir, that there was some rumour that private speculators were attempting to purchase these lands, and from the resale of which they would have made handsome profits. I do know that there have been malicious people who have gone around the streets telling people that I was associated with individuals who wanted to profiteer on the people who are already occupying these lands. But I want to make it quite clear that from the very inception of this project of the purchase of Campbellville I was instrumental in initiating Government's purchase of this area. I also want to make it quite clear that I am resolutely opposed to the purchase of this area at the price which it is proposed to be paid by Government.

In the past this country has had to pay a great deal of money for lands and other things which were purchased, with the result that the Colony today is burdened by payments of interest charges, and the taxpayers have to meet those payments from year to year. I have in mind, Sir, the purchase of the Demerara Railway. Hon. Members of this Council are aware that in respect of that the taxpayers of this country will have to pay a sum of approximately \$80,000 per annum forever. We cannot go on making more payments such as that against the interests and welfare of the people of this Colony. It is true that certain people are going to benefit thereby, but I do not think it is either the duty of this Administration or the duty of Members of this Council to preserve the interests of certain people, as against the welfare of the masses of this country. Sir, I will speak separately on these two items in order to convince Members that this matter should not be passed today in this Council.

A few days ago in this Council I tabled a petition to the Secretary of State for the Colonies asking that he intervene in this matter, and that a Land Valuation Committee be set up, and, having done that, that Committee should determine what is a fair price to be offered to the present owners of Campbellville and La Penitence. I also gave notice of a Motion in this Council quite a long time ago, advocating that a Land Valuation Committee should be set up, but so far that has not been done. Government has been paying in the past large sums of money for lands which it purchased. In that petition which I have tabled for transmission to the Secretary of

State for the Colonies I have pointed out that not too long ago this Government bought from the Rupununi Development Company, through their subsidiary Company, the Abary Cattle Ranch Company, a piece of land known as No. 27 Western Berbice. That land was purchased for \$150,000. If the facts are gone into it would be revealed that that land was originally obtained by the owners as an absolute free grant from Government at a cost of 50 cents per acre. We have had recently the case of the purchase of land rights from the late Mr. C. A. McDoom. Government was leasing that particular area of 2,700 acres of land at Mahaicony-Abary and paying a sum of \$3 per acre, whereas the same individual was only paying Government a sum of 20 cents per acre for the same land. That went on for five years, over which period a sum of \$40,000 was made in profits, and then this Government subsequently purchased the rights in respect of that very area of 2,700 acres of Crown Lands for a sum of \$50,000.

I point out these facts to show why it is absolutely necessary that a Land Valuation Committee be set up with competent individuals to go into the question of the price paid for land when they were originally purchased, the amount of money which might have been spent on the development of those lands, the profits or losses which might have been made during the occupation of those lands, and on consideration of those factors, to determine a fair and just price to be paid now for them. But that has not been done. For the benefit of Hon. Members of this Council I wish to point out the case of Campbellville so that Members would see that this Motion must be opposed at the present time, because in passing this Motion it would merely mean that the taxpayers of this Colony would be saddled with a burden for the next 15 or 20 years. In reply to my questions tabled in this Council, in which I asked Government what was the total area of land which was purchased in 1937 for a sum of \$60,000, Government stated that the lands comprising Cummings Lodge, Turkeyen, Liliendaal, Sophia, Bel Air, Blyegzigt, Kitty, Werk-en-Rust and La Penitence amounted to a total of 2,991 acres. That purchase was not made very long ago. Any Member of this Council can examine the Deed of Transport which is lodged in the Deeds Registry. A total of 2,991 acres of land was then purchased for \$60,000.

This land was owned by the La Penitence and Bel Air Estates Limited. It was sold in 1937 to the Corentyne Sugar Company Limited for a sum of \$60,000.

I thought it was not the practice in this Council to go into the interrelationship of Companies. It seems that the Hon. Member wants me to do that at this particular time, whether it was an internal transaction or not. If it is an honest transaction the correct value would be transferred by one company to the other. I am not interested as to whether the sale was from one subsidiary to another. Whether that is so or not, the true value had to be set but in the transport that was sworn to by the people who made the deed and that can be examined at any time. I did not include my remark. The Corentyne Sugar Company, Limited, which purchased the land in 1937,

was subsequently merged in 1950 with the Bookers Estates Limited. This Council is being asked to vote a sum of \$480,000 for the purchase of 252 acres of that land. We should ask ourselves whether it is a fair price. I am not opposed to the purchase of this land but the price to be paid must be a fair one.

Going into the balance sheet of the Company I find that at the end of December, 1937, the profit carried to profit and loss account was \$1,559.61. In 1938 the profit was \$9,268.74; in 1939 it was \$8,196.33, and in 1940 the figure was \$8,209.12. Those are the returns which were made to the Registrar of Deeds. I hope they are not fictitious, or shown to be lower for the purpose of evading income tax. We have to take those profits at their face value or the value set out in the reports of the Company. We know that the Rent Restriction Ordinance applies to Georgetown and within three miles from the boundaries of Georgetown, so that the whole of this estate comprising 2,991 acres of land comes within the provisions of the Rent Restriction Ordinance.

The question may then be asked, that if in 1938, 1939, and 1940 the Company made a profit of less than \$10,000 per annum, and with the existence of the Rent Restriction Ordinance which does not allow an increase of more than 12 per cent, can we say that the profit earned today would be increased to a very great sum? It cannot be increased to any great extent over the figures I have quoted, but what will happen when Government purchases this land for \$480,000? The Company will be entitled to interest at the rate of 31/2% on the lands, and the Campbellville purchase alone will mean an annual income to the Company of \$16,800 by way of interests on the bonds. When we compare \$16,800 per annum as income on 252 acres of land, with an income of less than \$10,000 per annum on the whole estate we can definitely see that this land purchase is being made in the interest of the land owners, and not in the interest of the people of this colony.

H.M. Government today is a socialist government and has been carrying out several nationalisation projects in Great Britain, and the yardstick being used for the purchase of land or coal mines is the amount collected in rents less expenses. In other words the profit earned over a period of 20 years is taken into account in fixing the price to be paid for the land. So that if it was the intention of this Government to deal fairly with the people of this country, it would acquire not only 252 acres of land but the whole estate, determining the average, annual profit made by the Company, multiplying it by 20 and giving them the sum arrived at as the purchase price. Why should, a profit of less than \$10,000 per annum on the whole estate of nearly 3,000 acres be increased to \$16,800 for less than one-tenth of the estate?

With reference to the other bit of land at La Penitence which is to be purchased from the Company, it can be said that it is rice and pasture land on which Government will have to spend a great deal of money to build it up so as to make it suitable for building houses. The purchase price is \$21,700

for 30 1/2 acres of land, which works out at about \$700 per acre. At the rate of 31/2% interest on the bonds the income to the Company will be \$24.50 per acre per annum. The people of Campbellville or La Penitence will tell you that the rental of that pasture land obtained by the Company has been \$8.80 per acre. By what stretch of the imagination can Government justify an income of \$24.50 per acre per annum to the Company for pasture or rice land from which it has been deriving an income of \$8.80 per acre? If the same yardstick as used in Great Britain was used here we would, find that \$9 per acre over a period of 20 years would amount to \$180, which should be the purchase price of that land per acre, and not \$700 per acre as proposed. If the purchase price was \$180 per acre the taxpayers of the Colony would have been assured that the land was being acquired at the same income the Company has been obtaining from it during its period of occupation.

I cannot understand the principle on which Government is acting in purchasing this land. It appears to me that the only principle is that money must be taken out of the taxpayers' pockets and put into the pockets of Bookers and others who own these lands. I do not think that is good enough. I have a booklet before me entitled "*Nigeria - Why we fight for Freedom.*" I should like to quote from it a statement by Mr. Arthur Creech-Jones, a former Secretary of State for the Colonies, which is reproduced in this pamphlet from Fabian Colonial Essays, published in 1945. The statement is as follows:

"It ought no longer to be the function of colonial Governors to hold the ring for alien interests to exploit and develop what natural wealth there may be; to see the surplus wealth drained overseas for the enjoyment of anyone outside the people who produce it, or whose natural resource it is, to remain indifferent to the claims of health and education and social advance; to concede little to the people in the way of consultation and collaboration or of political representation and responsibility."

What is happening today is that the Administration is falling to this bait which has been set by - I don't know whom. Because these people are Bookers it does not necessarily follow that Government should bow down to them.

If Government is not bowing down to Bookers it seems to me that the best thing would have been to acquire these lands compulsorily. Take it away from them! Laugh if you will, but we cannot continue to allow people to come here and plunder and rob the poor people of this country. That is what this amounts to.

There may not be any motive but year by year we see how this country is governed and run, not in the interest of the people. It is true that this honourable Council is going to pass this Motion. We know how this honourable Council is constituted, and how almost anything Government wants

passed is passed.

It may be a reflection on the Council but -

If you ask me to withdraw it I will do so but I shall then prolong the debate. That is all.

All right, I withdraw it. What can we expect from a Council constituted like this? I am free to say what I have to say. If Members do not like it they can sit down. I will not be interrupted again.

All right, Sir, I will drop the issue, but I want to make it quite clear. We all know that it is going to be passed by this Legislative Council but I want to inform Government and all concerned that Government may accept this bill and the Council may accept it in its wisdom, but the people of this country will not accept deals like these. The people of this country will object to it. The same money which is being paid to Bookers is probably building Bookers' Town at Bel Air - those nice stone houses which are going up today, mansions at the expense of the taxpayers of this country. That is what it is going to add up to subsequently. Nearly half a million dollars could certainly complete the scheme up there. Perhaps the only thing which would be left to the people of this country in 15 or 20 years to come will be to move into "Bookers' Town" and take it over. I know we do not like to hear about expropriation in this country and in this Council, but when we see the Constitution being used to put burdens around the necks of the people of this country I say that the people are not going to stand for it.

I am asking that even though this Motion will be passed today it should not be implemented because, as I said before, I have tabled a petition which I hope has already been forwarded to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. This matter will also be raised in the House of Commons, and until the Secretary of State approves of this purchase I hope Government will not go headlong and acquire this land. I would like to see Government take over the whole estate for \$480,000. That would at least be more just, because it would be at least eight times the price the Company paid for the land, but to purchase a small section of it for that price in the name of proper security for the people is not good enough.

It is true that the people of Campbellville are monthly tenants and, consequently, are subject to being dispossessed at any time, except that they have the protection of the Rent Restriction Ordinance. It is also true that there may be individuals who may want to acquire these lands and speculate on them. That is why I say that since Georgetown is likely to be extended in the future, and there are large tracts of land owned by these very proprietors, I think it would be the best thing if Government undertook to acquire the entire estate at the purchase price of \$480,000 which it proposes to pay for Campbellville alone.

In that way we would find that not only would the housing problem be settled adequately for all concerned, but that the people who are obtaining their livelihood in that area, such as dairy farmers, would be provided with good pasture lands.

In the Financial Secretary's statement in moving the Motion I did not hear any mention of what is to be done at Campbellville in the name of development. I did hear once in Finance Committee, however, that the Central Housing and Planning Authority intended to develop the area at a cost of something around \$600,000 but, apparently, that scheme has been stopped, because I have not heard the Financial Secretary make any statement with regard to the development of that area. What is going to happen now? Does it only mean that Government intends to purchase without developing the place, building proper roads and putting in proper sanitation? Does Government merely intend to purchase at this high price and charge rentals to the householders there, and the rates of interest which will be paid to the Company? The revenue per acre for Campbellville will be \$66. On that sum the interest charges will be in the vicinity of \$10 or \$11 per annum to the people concerned. Let us say that the interest charges will be \$10 per annum for the owners of house lots. If the area is subsequently declared a Village or Local Authority the people would have to pay rates and taxes, and perhaps other necessary charges.

I want to know, therefore, what Government intends to do about this area - whether it intends to subsidise the farmers or the people who at present occupy lands there. We know that at present the people are only paying between 90 cents and \$1.50 per house lot, and if we are not careful we may find that in purchasing this land at this high price we would be putting an additional burden on the very people we are trying to protect.

Another factor which must be taken into account is that many of those people do not have the wherewithal at present to build houses, and many of them will have to have recourse to loans from the Building Society at 6% interest, which would mean that they would be jumping from the frying pan into the fire. They would be burdened with interest charges in respect of the purchase of the land, and also interest charges for building on the house lots. I do hope that Hon. Members appreciate all the facts relevant to this issue, and will let justice be done in this country, because for a very long time now we have had nothing like justice in this country.

Schedule of Development: March 30, 1951.

Dr. Jagan: When the report of the Salaries Commission was considered we gave substantial increases to public officers, and the comment at the time was— and even the Chamber of Commerce took it up—that the rentals which were charged public officers were very low in comparison with what the working class people have to pay for housing accommodation in these days. It was pointed out at that time that the rentals charged public officers were 10% of their income to a maximum of \$40 per month for an unfurnished house, and for a furnished house 12% of their income. I believe those are the correct figures. An officer earning \$300 per month, who is charged 10% of his salary for rent, only pays \$30 per month. It seems to me most unfair to charge an individual drawing \$300 per month only \$39 per month as rent when, in view of the cost of the house, the rent should be between \$40 and \$60 per month. The buildings which have been constructed at the Decanting Centre are very commodious, but when we consider that ordinary working people will be living there we find that indeed a large percentage of their incomes will be paid in rent. I understand that \$18 per month will be charged for each of the apartments.

The point I am making is that if it is the policy of Government to provide houses, whether for the working people or Officers, some yardstick should be used as to what is a fair rental. Even though the rental charged for the Ruimveldt Decanting Centre may be considered quite reasonable in comparison with what is demanded by private landlords outside nevertheless in relation to the income of those individuals occupying those buildings we find the rental is anywhere between 25 and 30% of their income. Those people can hardly afford to pay such a great percentage of their income, whereas an individual who is earning \$300 or \$200 per month can better afford to pay 10% of his income. But as applied now the highest paid officials are only made to pay 10% of their income. I feel that Government should first of all determine what it costs to build those buildings. I am not against the policy of building houses for public officers, but I feel that if these buildings are built for public officers due consideration should be given to the cost of those buildings and to the income which those officers are earning. I do not think it is fair to fix a static percentage, but due consideration must be given to some percentage according to the person's earnings, whether it be \$700 per month or \$200 per month, or it be \$11 or \$12 per week by a working class person. I too would like to support the Hon. Member. I opposed this matter when it came up in Finance Committee, because I felt that most of the houses which are being built by Government for public officers at a very high cost are being rented at too low a charge. If

the Government intends to revise upwards the rental charge for its houses
I would agree that these houses be constructed.

Venn Commission Report

Dr. Jagan: I too, would like to support the Hon. Member in his request that Government should do something to see that all the lands which are controlled by the Sugar Producers' Association are properly used both for the good of themselves and the good of the inhabitants of this country. The figures, which were given in reply to my questions some time ago in this Legislative Council, reveal that the sugar estates own approximately 80,000 acres of land whereas about 90,000 acres are leased from Government. The Venn Commission Report has revealed that the sugar estates were only growing canes at one time on 60,000 acres with about 20,000 acres under flood fallow. In any one year the aggregate holding was 80,000 acres which is equivalent to their freehold share of all the lands controlled by them. But what is being done with the 90,000 acres leased from Government? When we examine these things we see how much land is being kept idle at the present time.

So far as ground provisions and rice lands are concerned, in 1943 only approximately 11,500 acres were under rice and in 1947 that was reduced to approximately 9,500 acres. Under ground provisions there was a total of approximately 3,500 acres in 1943, which was reduced in 1947 to approximately 2,500 acres. If we take the 1947 figures we would find about 12,000 acres of land under rice and ground provisions. We know also that the estates keep some cattle and allow cattle to be agisted by the workers. In 1947 only 12,000 head of cattle approximately were agisted on sugar estates. So, therefore, from these figures alone it can be shown or it is revealed that there are large holdings which today for one reason or another are not being utilised either for cane, rice and ground provisions cultivation or for agisting cattle. Sir, I submitted a memorandum to the Venn Commission and with your permission I would like to read one relevant section dealing with this. After an examination of my own constituency revealed certain figures I went to the Lands and Mines Department and got the returns made by the sugar estates of their land holdings. I quote from my memorandum:

"Acreage Tax Returns for the first six months of 1948 indicate that for Le Ressonvenir Estates, comprising a total area of 8,667.1 acres, 2,395.26 acres or approximately 28% were returned as waste land, dams and trenches. Much of this area can be utilised if made available to the workers residing in the estates and adjoining villages. Ogle Estates, Ltd., consisting of 6,500 acres, have 2,132 acres or approximately 33 % returned as grazing."

These figures are only for two estates, but the same picture can be presented for most estates in this country. Lots of the lands held by the estates are lying idle, and some of us have the suspicion after we have studied the reports, and Government Reports too, that this is a deliberate policy to keep the people from becoming too independent. We do know that in 1947 a Government Committee headed by Mr. King reported:

"The reason why available work is not fully taken up is because resident workers find it more profitable to work on their own rice fields and farms, and some nonresidents have left working on the fields on the estates for more profitable occupations."

Perhaps, that is the reason why this acreage allocated in 1943 for the cultivation of rice and ground provisions was reduced in 1947. Is it fair, if the workers find it more profitable to work on their farms and rice fields, to withhold the lands from them? I am speaking in the sense of justice not only to the workers but to the economy of the country. It is true that we have a target of 230,000 tons of sugar, but at the same time we must look at the total picture and see to the interest of the Colony as a whole. Sugar will not always be in the fortunate position it is today. We have heard and read of the British Government's negotiation with the Cuban Government in so far as sugar is concerned. We do not know what will come out of that. We do not know what will be the picture five years from now in respect of sugar and, I feel, it is a dangerous policy to put all our eggs in one basket; and the quicker we get down to a diversified economy and give the people land so that they can produce what is profitable to them and in the best interest of the Colony the better it will be for us. That is not being done at the present time, and that is why I feel the Security of Land Tenure Ordinance where the rice farmers are concerned should apply also to the sugar estates. It is said that the sugar estates want to meet their quota. That can be done without taking away any lands from the rice farmers who are workers on the estates. The sugar estates have a large acreage at the present time not being used, and also we know that the sugar estates at all times are trying not only to extend their cultivation, not only to have an extensive production of canes, but to have an intensive production, and that is to produce from each acre more canes. They are doing that every day either by research or mechanisation. Therefore all this extra land which is being held by them can easily be given to the rice farmers or workers on the estates who want to plant rice or ground provisions or set up a dairy farm industry.

I do not think it is enough to give these people merely one acre of rice lands and possibly a half or quarter acre of ground provisions land. That may be quite good merely to keep them from being disgruntled as the result of not getting enough work or employment on the estates and from being desirous of getting away from the estates. I do not think it is a sound

policy and should not be pursued further. I have said with reference to housing that it is a dangerous policy especially in respect of the extranuclear workers to tie them around this estate.

From time to time I have given figures in this Council relating to lands held by sugar estates which are lying idle, and it seems to me that some effort should be made by Government either to get back those lands or, if they cannot be obtained, to impose a land tax in order to force the sugar estates either to cultivate those lands or give them up. This was one of the major subjects discussed at the Caribbean Conference held at Curacao — the question of large areas of land not being properly cultivated or lying idle — and on my suggestion the Conference adopted a Motion seeking to impose a land tax wherever it was felt necessary. I feel that such a step is vitally necessary in British Guiana, and I hope the time is not far distant when a land tax will be imposed on those idle or unused portions of land, especially held in large areas on some sugar estates. At the present time land is very scarce. British Guiana is a very large country and one gets the impression that in view of its small population land would be very readily available, but when we examine the Census report we find that farmers only have an average of about 3% acres of land. The reason for that is that many farmers either cannot get properly drained or irrigated land, or because the lands are held by private individuals they cannot get large areas of land for cultivation. In some cases farmers would like to go in for mixed farming, but because of the limited acreage at their disposal they are afraid to go in for cane, rice or provision farming. We do realise the necessity for a diversified agricultural programme, but that cannot be exploited until there is more land available to the farmers. I trust that the question of a land tax will be gone into very fully in order that idle lands held not only by the sugar estate authorities, but by private individuals, may be brought into proper use for the benefit of the Colony as a whole.

This Recommendation deals with the question of a subsidy which was recommended by the Venn Commission and which was subsequently refused by His Majesty's Government. Sir, the statement quoted in this Recommendation is that the average profit per ton of sugar produced was in British Guiana \$8.11 and in Barbados \$15.43. I do not know whether the Venn Commission during its short stay in this country was able to consider all the factors in arriving at the statement it has made here, but from my own observation I have not been able to come to the same conclusion that the sugar producers are only making a profit of \$8.11 per ton. In a memorandum which I submitted to the Venn Commission I was able to use figures of the cost of production based on the average figures which were then being paid by the industry for field work, and in order to calculate for certain overhead charges—fertilisers, etc.—I used the figures from Dr. Benham's Report for 1942 on the sugar industry. I did not want to go into the factory side of it, because I felt that was a matter very complicated, but I used the field portion. I determined what it was costing the sugar produc-

ers to grow one acre of cane, taking into consideration the price that was then being paid for farmers' canes. It was interesting to observe that the profits derived are indeed very large. I do not know where the profits are going, because it does not seem to show up in the accounts, but if it did, it would not only be a figure of \$8.11 per ton. These are the figures which I submitted to the Venn Commission —

“For constant capital, which is capital for such things as fertilisers, mules, oxen, punts, stock feed, etc. — things used only for field operation — the figure was in the vicinity of \$33.28 per acre, an average price of \$33.24 per acre, whereas the cost of labour, the average price per acre, was \$86.89.”

When we total those two figures we find an average of about \$120 per acre of sugar canes. But if we take into consideration the yield of an acre of canes, taking the average yield and the price which is paid for farmers' canes of \$6.20 per ton, we find that one acre of sugar cane yields a sum of \$243.32. So, while it is costing the industry \$120 per acre of canes the yield for that per acre of canes is in the vicinity of \$243.32. I make this observation —

(Mr. Morrish: To a point of correction! On that basis of \$243.32 per acre at \$6 per ton one would expect to get an average yield of 4 tons per acre which is well below the average.)

Dr. Jagan: The figures which I worked out were an average of 38.5 tons of sugar cane. It is known that the yield per acre is in the vicinity of 3 to 3.5 ton per acre, and when we consider that it takes about 10 or 12 tons of sugar cane to make one ton of sugar that is why I have used those figures which I have given here. The point I am making is this: even if we assume that the figure given by the Hon. Nominated Member is correct and that the yield I have of 38.5 tons is too high, let us say 30 tons. Taking 10 tons of sugar canes to give one ton of sugar it gives an average yield of 3 tons of sugar per acre. I realise that much depends on the juice quality, but we do know that the sugar producers are very skilful in using the best varieties of canes, fertilisers etc. It is in their interest to produce the best type of cane, and they are getting very good results. We know that Blairmont sets 4 tons of sugar per acre and in other places it is less. But I took as the average 38.5 tons of canes which is equivalent to 3.3 tons of sugar. From the figures which I have given, if those figures are exaggerated and an average of 30 tons of sugar cane is taken as the average yield per acre, we would still find it would be in the vicinity of around \$200 per acre. If the cost is \$120 per acre and the yield is \$200 per acre, then we certainly can see from that that the profits are indeed very large. I have pointed that out because I intend to raise this matter again with reference to the pension scheme which we are not finished with at the present moment.

But this Recommendation deals solely with the question of a subsidy which the United Kingdom has refused, and I am not here to discuss whether that is right or wrong, but it seems to me from our point of view we should get a subsidy. However, from the United Kingdom Government's point of view it should not be given because that is a burden on the taxpayers of that country. But if they can buy sugar from Cuba and other places at a price less than from British Guiana, possibly it is in the interest of the taxpayers of Great Britain to purchase sugar from Cuba and other sources; they ought to strengthen the weakness of our economy. We have, taking these figures at their face value, to depend on preferences and long term guarantees and what not in order to keep this industry going, and I am wondering whether that is a satisfactory basis on which to operate the economy of this Colony. In the same paper which was written by Dr. Nieumark he suggested that the basic weakness of West Indian economies was the concentration of that economy on sugar, and we must see to it that we should so re-orientate our agricultural economy in this area so that we would not have to depend on this factor and consequently have to go hat in hand to the United Kingdom Government for quotas and guarantees, etc. I do not know how long this is to continue. Right now in England negotiations are taking place between His Majesty's Government and the Cuban Government, and I notice also the Commonwealth areas are protesting against any agreement which is likely to be signed between the Cuban Government and His Majesty's Government for the purchase of sugar from the Cuban Government. If that is done by His Majesty's Government in the future, I can see that while we are trying to increase our production a time may come when we may not be guaranteed these quotas and large prices with the result that we may find ourselves in a very serious and precarious position. I do hope Government has this matter in mind when determining the economic policy of this country.

(Mr. Morrish: I have listened with considerable interest to the remarks of the Hon. Member who has just taken his seat, and I am afraid his figures do not amount to very much in my opinion. Dealing first with profits, I think we have a very able Income Tax Department in this Colony and, if there was anything wrong with their books, it would have been taken care of by that Department long before now.)

Dr. Jagan: The only thing is, everything does not go to the Income Tax Department; and we all know that. Lots of money goes through and is not accounted for. I know from actual experience gained on sugar estates that is so. We know that certain people do not get work but yet are paid. That happens on sugar estates and on public works that is why the estates do not make profits—

(The Chairman: As Chairman of the Public Works Advisory Committee

I would be pleased to get the names of those persons who do not work but are paid.)

Dr. Jagan: I should say it used to happen. That is my point. I want to save time and I want to show the relationship of one item with another. We are wasting money in one aspect of development, whereas in other aspects on which we should spend more money for development we are not doing so at the present time. I beg to suggest that the Tourist Bureau vote of \$10,000 be deleted.

Income Tax in Aid of Industry Bill

Dr. Jagan: This is the clause to which the Hon. the Financial Secretary referred a moment ago. There is one observation I would like to make. While it is true that in the long run research will benefit an industry and likewise the country, we must nevertheless keep in mind that there are lots of products, especially in this agricultural country of ours, in respect of which no research is ever undertaken. I have particularly in mind ground provisions — yams, plantains and so forth — which have been grown here for years, and it is a known fact that very little research, if any, has ever been done in regard to them.

At the conference at Curacao it was specifically stated in some of the papers presented that some amount of research should be undertaken in respect of those food crops which are grown in such abundant quantities in the Caribbean area. I think even the Royal Commission commented very critically on the fact that even at the Trinidad College of Tropical Agriculture research was centred only on a few products, and that for a long number of years sugar cane was the only product on which the greatest emphasis was put. Now we find that cocoa, and to some extent bananas, are two products on which research is being undertaken. But when we come to ground provisions we find that very little is being done by way of research.

It seems to me that while clause 38 will allow a company, such as a sugar company, to get a deduction of three-fifths of their expenditure, the small man who needs to have research carried out with respect to the products he grows can hardly afford to undertake research, because there is no organisation of small farmers at the present time. I know that an attempt has been made to organise the primary producers, but until we can have farmers' institutes concentrating on several lines, such as yams, potatoes, rice and so on, I do not see any centralised body being able to offer to undertake research or to afford the capital expenditure which would possibly be involved in those undertakings.

So that when we examine clause 38 we find that whereas it would permit any person undertaking research a deduction of three-fifths of his capital expenditure, only a very few industries would benefit under this clause. I have in mind the sugar industry, and I have no doubt that the buildings which will be attached to the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture, Trinidad, will be devoted exclusively to sugar cane research, and will involve huge expenditure with consequential loss of revenue to this Colony under this clause. I see the Financial Secretary shaking his head, perhaps indicating that that will not be so. In passing this blanket clause which seeks to give protection to the various interests which may be involved, we must

take care that we are not at the same time temporising with one or two industries by giving them these benefits simply because the other primary producers are not able to carry out research at the present time.

UK-Cuba Trade Pact

Dr. Jagan: I am opposed to the Motion being taken at the present time. I do not see why the Standing Rules and Orders should be suspended in order to deal with the Motion now. We are not apprised of all the facts relevant to this matter, and I do not feel that this Council is constitutionally competent to deal with this matter. Not very long ago I gave notice of a Motion seeking to ban the importation of goods of South African origin into this country, and I was told by the Hon. the Attorney-General that that Motion was not within the scope of this Legislature as it dealt with a matter beyond the bounds of local problems. In fact it dealt with Commonwealth problems. This matter about the Agreement between the United Kingdom and Cuba is still being discussed, and we do not know what conclusions will be reached. I therefore do not see that any useful purpose would be served by discussing or passing such a resolution. I do not consider the matter urgent, and therefore I am opposing the suspension of the Standing Rules and Orders.

If it is the feeling of the Council that the Motion should be taken early, I think that notice of it should be given, and that the Hon. the Attorney-General should advise whether this Council is competent to deal with such a Motion. If it is in order then it should be put on the Order Paper early, and Members would then have an opportunity to express their views on it. On several occasions I have attempted to speak on questions of Empire preference, tariffs and so forth, but on every occasion it has been said that they were big questions and should be left for future discussion. However, from time to time we have had Motions such as this discussed in this Council without giving Members an opportunity to go into the subjects comprehensively. Consequently I do not feel that it is right for this Council to discuss this Motion until we have gone into the matter thoroughly.

One Member referred to the fact that sugar plays an important part in the economy of our country. Certainly no one will deny such a statement. Another Member said that sugar is like a red rag to a bull so far as I am concerned. It seems to me the implication is that I do not appreciate what really is the place of sugar in the economy of this country, and that all I want to do is to destroy the sugar industry, or some such thing. Other Members referred to the fact time and time again, that on the one hand we have to sell our sugar to the United Kingdom and on the other hand, as the last speaker said, we do not even get the dollar exchange for the same sugar sold in turn to Canada, and possibly other areas. We also know as a fact that presently we sell a limited amount of goods to the United Kingdom. I believe the figure for last year was in the vicinity of \$14 million, whereas

we buy from the United Kingdom in the vicinity of \$27 million. Obviously, from those figures it would appear that we are buying much more from Great Britain than we are selling to her. From that the conclusion can be reached that this Colony stands to lose because we have in the long run to pay more for those goods imported into this country, because the first cost of goods originating from the United Kingdom is in many cases higher than that of goods from other areas.

Let us, Sir, take the U.S.A. and Canada. Last year we sold to them and earned as much as \$13 1/2 million, but we only purchased from those areas about \$1.4 million worth of goods. Obviously it would be said that if we have to buy from the United Kingdom goods which originated from there at a very expensive price, then we must be given guaranteed prices and protection for a long period of time, and larger quotas for the things we sell to the United Kingdom. By that I mean particularly sugar. It seems on the face of it that that is logical argument, and the Hon. the Seventh Nominated Member referred to our motto "*Damns Petimusque Vicissim*" — We give and we seek in return. In other words, if we are to buy from the United Kingdom at very high prices when we can buy those same goods at cheaper prices from other places, then the United Kingdom should reciprocate and buy our sugar at a higher price even if they can buy cheaper from Cuba. On the face of it such an argument would convince anybody.

But if we analyse the situation and do so very carefully, we would find it is that very policy which has been keeping this country in the backward state in which it has been for years. It is that policy of buying from there and with preferential tariffs we are allowed to pay low duty rates for goods originating from Commonwealth sources. But I do not feel that that policy has been in the interest of the people of this Colony as a whole. It is true that we are speaking of the sugar workers, and when we think of the sugar workers we are always thinking that the more money they get the better it will be for their welfare; but at the same time we have to keep in mind that this country is being run, not only for the sugar workers, but for the benefit of the workers of the whole Colony. While sugar plays an important role and is the sheets and anchor in the economy of this country, we must not stop to consider whether sugar must continue in the years to come to play the same role it has been playing all these years.

I am not satisfied that this Motion is ultimately in the interest of the people of this Colony as a whole. We know that the West Indian Colonies are fighting for self-government. We want to rule ourselves, but when we go to the U.K. Government and say we want to rule ourselves they will ask: "*Can you balance your budgets; can you do without our quotas; can you do without our protection?*" I am not satisfied with this state of affairs. At the Conference which I had the pleasure to attend at Curacao dealing with this important aspect of agricultural economy in the West Indies, most of the experts expressed the view that the concentration on sugar is a weakness in the economy of the West Indian Colonies, and, I cannot overemphasise

that statement. When one reads the statements of the P.A.O. experts, Dr. Nieumark, Prof. Arthur Lewis, and Mr. de Frampton, Agricultural Adviser to the Comptroller for Development and Welfare in the West Indies, one must inevitably come to the same conclusion. It has been said from time to time, and it was said at the Conference, that we have to adjust our economy in order to grow the things which we are most capable of growing at the most economical cost.

I observe that some Hon. Members are very forthright in championing the cause of sugar, but when we examine their views on the question of rice, we do not see the same degree of diligence. Why is it that in the case of sugar we have to go hat-in-hand begging the U.K. Government to buy our sugar at a higher price than they could buy it from Cuba and other sources, while in the case of rice we find the same champions going to the West Indies and telling them how they can get rice cheaper?

(**Mr. Morrish:** I rise to a point of correction. I think the Hon. Member will find that Cuban sugar has been selling at a higher price than that of the British West Indies.)

Dr. Jagan: We all know that the cost of production of Cuban sugar is lower than that of sugar in the West Indies. That is the only reason why the West Indies sugar producers are afraid of Cuban sugar competition— because they realise that having met its quotas, Cuba can dump its sugar at any time and glut the markets.

(**Mr. Debidin:** I have waited until the Hon. Member completed his sentence in order to get the full context. He started off by remarking that some Hon. Members have been very forthright in championing the cause of sugar and implying that they had not been so diligent in regard to the cause of rice. I wish to take strong exception to that remark so far as I am concerned, because his statement might also refer to me.)

Dr. Jagan: I said "*Some Members.*"

(**Mr. Debidin:** There are three members who have spoken very strongly on this Motion, and I feel that the Hon. Member's remark might include me.)

Dr. Jagan: I was merely trying to show what is happening in the economy of our country. We grow rice but we find that the same effort is not being made to give to the producers of rice the best world price. Why is it we do not produce coconuts in abundant quantities in this country so that we could produce all the oil we want, all the soap we need, and export soap, copra and oil? Why is it that we have to import oranges into this country? Why do we have to import jams and jellies? The reason is not, as one Mem-

ber suggested, that sugar is like a red rag to a bull so far as I am concerned, but because sugar has too much influence in the economy of this country. That is the reason. The Hon. Member for Eastern Demerara (Mr. Debidin) said a moment ago that when mechanisation does come into the sugar industry, many people will be put out of work, and if we do not get an increased quota what will be the lot of those people? That is how he put it, but I want to put it in other terms. I would suggest that those people could be put to do something else, but at the present time Government has no such policy.

I have mentioned on several occasions in this Council that in their housing programme, the sugar estate proprietors are attempting to tie around the estates a source of cheap labour. That is in the interest of sugar but not in the interest of the economy of this country. I wonder whether those Members who are so much interested in the question of quotas and long-term guarantees would, in the same way, champion the cause of the nationalisation of the sugar industry? We know that in the United Kingdom some time ago, there was a suggestion of the nationalisation of sugar, and it was Lord Lyle who carried out a campaign from house to house and shop to shop against nationalisation. It is the same Lord Lyle who is now championing the cause of Commonwealth sugar.

(Mr. Morrish: To a point of correction. The British sugar beet industry is nationalised, and that is why it is so heavily subsidised, I should imagine.)

Dr. Jagan: I was not talking about beet alone, but of the plans of the Labour Government for nationalising sugar. We know that many of those very people—Lord Lyle and others—who are today championing the cause of sugar have vast interests in the West Indies and British Guiana, and naturally they are interested in protecting their investments and their profits. What has been happening to British Guiana throughout all these years? We have been passing Bills upon Bills seeking to encourage industries for the further development of this country, and as I remarked on one occasion, I think that while we are trying like a dog to grasp at the shadow we may lose the bone. We may lose even what we are getting at the present time by giving various concessions to industries which are already established in this country apart from encouraging capitalists from abroad to come here and establish industries. Sugar has been the sheet-anchor of this country for nearly 150 years, but what has been the progress of the people of this country? It is not my view but the view of the experts, that sugar is the greatest weakness in the economy of the West Indies and British Guiana, and the sooner we stop concentrating so much on sugar and using trade unions, Labour leaders and others to maintain this imperialism, the better it would be for the economy of this country. I am opposed to imperialism in the sense that we have to buy—

(Mr. Wright: Communism!)

Dr. Jagan: I am afraid the Hon. Member who has referred to communism does not understand all the facts relating to communism. He, like others, is confused about the term imperialism and, consequently, associates everything with communism. Nevertheless, this imperialist policy has been pursued for a long time. We buy from the Mother Country at high prices and encourage them to buy the goods we produce while the profits are being drained away from this country year by year. Hon. Members should read the report of Dr. Benham on the national income of this country, and they would realise that this Colony has not been developed because the same people who are today championing the cause of the sugar industry are the people who own the shares and are mostly absentee proprietors. They are the people who are taking the profits away from this country. It is that policy that I am against. While we work for 20 cents per hour we have to buy goods produced by people who work for 60 cents to \$1 per hour. While we plant plantains we buy shoes and motor cars at exorbitant prices—prices out of all proportion to the wages people earn in this country. The reason why we remain poor is because sugar has been the sheet-anchor of this country for a long time. I am not denying the importance of the role which sugar plays, but I do not want to see sugar continue to dominate everything else in this country. That has been the policy in the past, and if we are not careful it will continue to be the policy in the future.

The time will come when all tariff barriers will eventually be removed. Because the people of the U.S.A. are able to produce goods more cheaply than any other country in the world, they are crying out for free trade today. They have forced the devaluation of the pound on the British people, and because of that we in the Colonies have to suffer. The Americans want free trade and open markets because they know they would be able to sell their goods freely in all parts of the world, and the time will come when we will also have to face up to similar conditions. When the gentlemen from this Colony signed the contracts for the supply of rice to the West Indies they were thinking of competition with Burma, even though their premise was wrong. In the same way we have to begin to think in terms of world competition.

We must produce things which we can sell at competitive prices abroad, and we must buy from the cheapest sources wherever they may be. That is the policy which this Colony must pursue. In Surinam there is no protection for sugar or any long-term guarantees or quotas. That is a blessing which the people of Surinam are enjoying today, because they have no sugar barons or absentee proprietors on their backs. The profits of that country are not being drained away to Holland as ours are. They sell their rice and coconuts at world prices. Their delegates supported the views of the experts at the Curacao Conference, and today we find Surinam pushing ahead. They have a more rational economic policy which we will not have as long

as we are governed as we are. Only when we get a greater measure of self-government in our hands will we be able to change the present setup in this Colony.

In conclusion I wish to state that I am not opposing this Motion because I do not realise the importance of sugar in the economy of this country at the present time, but as a long-term measure, and taking into consideration our trade relationship with other Commonwealth countries and their tariff rates, I am opposed to the Motion.

Dental Mechanic Committee Report

Dr. Jagan: I really did not intend to speak on this Motion since it may be felt that because I am a dentist I would be taking a personal interest in the matter, but in view of what has been said here during the last few days it does appear that there is a great deal of misunderstanding about this whole matter. I too have been receiving petitions and deputations, but the facts must be stated very clearly. As I stand here I am wondering why I ever went away to study dentistry. I went away in 1936 but it seems to me that all my father had to do at that time was to pay \$400 or \$500 to some registered dentist to train me, and today I would have been qualified to be registered. I am also wondering why, on my return to the Colony, I had my brother working with me for a year as a laboratory assistant before I decided to send him away to the United States of America to study dentistry at very great expense. I am sure that if he had spent six years with me he would have acquired more knowledge and information than many of the men who are trying today to get on the dental register. I really should not be objecting to this Motion at all, because I have ten brothers and one sister, and I could train them all within a period of three or four years and post them all over the Colony. I also have several cousins who could be similarly trained, and I feel sure I could give them as good, if not better, training than that received by many of those people who are today attempting to get on the register.

I have listened very carefully to the speech of the Hon. Member for Demerara-Essequibo (Dr. Singh) who said that some of us who are qualified would not be able to take an examination today because we have forgotten a lot of our theory. I would say that as a medical man he has forgotten almost everything he may have been taught in the medical schools. I do not say it in any way to attack him, but surely, as a medical man he should know that there are such things as Bacteriology, Physiology, Histology and Anatomy which have to be studied, and that a person who wants to qualify for the medical or dental profession is supposed to have a knowledge of those subjects.

Let me come back to the law itself. I know that this issue has now become like a political football, and is being kicked around, but I wish to assure my friends that whenever I feel that a certain thing, has to be done, whether it is politics or not, the question of an election does not mean one thing to me. If my constituents feel dissatisfied with my representation in this Council they could turn me out at the next election and I would continue to practise dentistry. In the report of the Committee we find that in 1924 the door was definitely closed against unqualified dentists. It was

then said that those men who could not be registered would not be allowed to practise as dentists any more. Subsequently we find that, because of certain definitions and what not, we were told that certain people had the necessary skill. I will quote from the report which says:

“We refer to this legal definition or interpretation of the practice of dentistry for the reason that we incline to the view that its omission from previous laws created a loophole which enabled certain, dental mechanics to acquire legitimately skill and competence of the type which they now claim should qualify them for indulgence in the full practice of dentistry.”

Let us examine for a moment the 1924 Ordinance and we will see that those people were supposed to do only what is known as “minor dental work.” What is minor dental work? In 1922 the Ministry of Medical Services put out a statement which is set out on page 17 of the Committee’s report. These are the persons’ who were permitted to do minor dental work:

(a) a dental student who has received training for at least two years in dental mechanics and for at least six months in practical operative work—in other words, a student who had got matriculation into a University and had finished two years’ laboratory Work and at least six months in doing operative work;

(b) a dental nurse who has received a course of instruction approved for the purpose by the Minister after consultation with the Dental Board;

(c) a person employed at the date of the approval of these conditions on minor dental work in the School Medical Service under arrangements approved by the Board of Education. .

Then follows what must be done by the registered dentist under whose personal supervision the work is performed —he must always be present when operative work is being carried on; he must not supervise more than two persons at one time if he himself is performing operative work at the same tithe, or more than six persons at one time if he himself is not so performing; in other words, if there is a clinic dealing with school children at least certain minor dental work must be performed by those people whose names are set out in the paragraph, and a registered dentist would be supervising their work. Further, the registered dentist must prescribe the treatment to be given and inspect every case after treatment and be responsible for the efficient carrying out of the treatment; in other words, the dentist in charge must say what must be done and what drugs are to be administered. Let us look at the definition of “minor dental work” which is set out in the same conditions appearing on page 17 of the Report. It says:

“The approval of the Board of Education must be given to the employment in

the School Medical Service of the person concerned, and such approval shall not be given unless the local Education Authority undertake that the work shall be limited to cleaning and polishing, applying or removing dressings or temporary fillings, charting, recording or work of like responsibility."

On page 13 of the Committee's report, paragraph 33 (b) of the extract from a circular issue by the Medical Board in 1928 to all registered dentists states:

"The term Minor Dental Work" has (been ruled by the Board to include only mechanical denture or laboratory work, not connected with actual operation on the mouth in any way."

One Member has said that this definition of "minor dental work" is not legally correct and, consequently, these people were permitted to carry on a practice over a wide field. But when we consider that in dentistry one can do either one of three things—do all the dental work a dentist is supposed to do, or do minor dental work,—for instance taking out temporary fillings, making charts, removing dressings, etc. under the supervision of a dentist, or do only laboratory work. But what do we find at the present time? We find that an attempt is being made by certain individuals to be allowed to practise dentistry over the whole field. Let us assume that they have acquired experience in minor dental surgery or minor dental work as set out in the Ordinance. If we take the ruling of the local Dental Board, then they would be only entitled to do minor dental work or laboratory work confined solely to the laboratory. If, on the other hand, we see the definition which is included in the School Medical Service there is a somewhat different situation. Only a trained dental student or a nurse can do minor dental work in a clinic where many children are being treated, and that work is limited to "cleaning and polishing, applying or removing dressings or temporary fillings, charting, recording or work of like responsibility." So even if we stretch the definition of the term "minor dental work" to include that which was allowed for the School Medical Service, as was allowed in Great Britain, we would still find that these people could not have acquired the necessary experience to practise over the wide field of dentistry.

Then the question arises, how should these people be now made to practise over the wide field of dentistry? Some Members suggested,—at least one Hon. Member—that these people should be given licences permitting them to practise in the rural areas. Obviously the question to be asked is whether the people in the rural areas must be subjected to a type of treatment which is inferior to that which they may receive from a qualified dental practitioner? Numerous statistics have been quoted in this Council. I myself like to use statistics very much and, therefore, I know the intricacies of the game very well. It was said by one Hon. Member that in 1925

there were over 100 dentists in this Colony, and today, because we have only 28 on the register, obviously the people are suffering a great deal. Let me exploit that one. Twenty or thirty years ago, or even 40 years ago, the efficiency of a dentist was very much limited to what he can perform today. The dentist of today is almost four or five times as efficient as his counterpart of 30 years ago, because the dentist of today has at his command modern equipment with which he can perform operations more quickly. He has at his disposal dental materials which can shorten the time of certain operations to give one example. Dental practitioners taking an impression many years ago had to use Plaster of Paris for taking a partial impression, and sometimes they had to take half an hour to remove that impression and reassemble it, because when that Plaster of Paris became set between the teeth when it is taken out it is broken in several places as the result of the impression going within the spaces of the teeth. Consequently a lot of time is wasted in the operation. Today we have new materials which can shorten the time to less than five minutes.

When we compare figures only of how many dentists were practising one year and today, we cannot say that because the number is less the people are suffering undue hardship today. Another point is that Members referred to the fact that we have in this country nearly half a million people, and we have 20 dentists in Georgetown, five in New Amsterdam and three in the rural areas. It was suggested that because of this distribution the people in the rural areas particularly are not being served. If we break down these figures we find that there is one dentist to approximately 20,000 people in British Guiana. In Georgetown, if we take 20 dentists to be practising for a population of 80,000, we find there is one dentist to 4,000 people. Now it may be said that one to 4,000 is in itself a large proportion, and indeed it is if every one of those 4,000 people had to go to the dentist regularly. I can tell you that at the present time the people are so poor in this country that they can hardly afford the fee of one dollar for an extraction. Consequently, it is through no fault of their own that many of these people do not get any service and have to go to the hospital and have their teeth extracted, , sometimes free and sometimes at a token figure of 24 cents.

Mention was also made that we cannot attract American dentists to this country. For the benefit of the Hon. Member for Demerara-Essequibo (Dr. Singh). I would to point out that within the last five years these dentists have come back to British Guiana - Ho a-Kie, Stone, Tallim, Jagan, Agard, Sue - A-Quan- Ng-a-Fook, Fung-a-Fat and others. Within a short time these men have qualified and returned to British Guiana. It is true he suggested that we should stop allowing American dentists to come into this country. I would like to tell him that however much he pleads the cause of the British dentist I am not going to say at the present time that English dentists should not be accepted. They are accepted in this country from an English and Irish University but it is well known even in Great Britain itself, that dentistry today has reached its highest standard in the United

States of America.

(Dr. Singh: Question!)

Dr. Jagan: When I was in North-Western University—The Hon. Member says “*Question !*” because he does not know.

(Dr. Singh: For the information of this Council I was a dental student myself when I was in Edinburgh. When I started I entered for both dentistry and medicine.)

Dr. Jagan: The Hon. Member seems to have forgotten that since his time progress has not stopped. May I mention, Sir, that while I was in school there were many dentists from the United Kingdom who had qualified there but went to the United States of America to get postgraduate training. There were students and graduates who were practising in Germany and Japan and had to go to the United States of America to go through two years of training in the same University where I was, so as to get their diploma. In fact there was one student, a Hawaiian and an American citizen, who had got a diploma from Tokyo University Dental School, but before he could be allowed to practise in Hawaii he had to obtain an American degree in dentistry, and so he had to study for years in the University where I was. So do not let the Hon. Member tell us that he questions the course of training in the U.S.A. I am not championing the American training.

(Dr. Singh: I think the Hon. Member for Central Demerara ought to know that similarly American doctors go to the United Kingdom and have to study there for several years before they can get an English diploma. They have to pass an examination and are not given the diploma like that.)

(Dr. Gonsalves: To a point of explanation! I would refer the Hon. Member to the fact that if he went to London he would find many of the highly qualified dentists there are American dentists. Whether they have to take an examination or not it does not gainsay the fact that England has admitted that American dentists are the leaders of the world today in dentistry.)

(The President: Will the Hon. Member for Central Demerara proceed?)

Dr. Jagan: As I said, I am not here to say whether the American dentist is really better than his English counterpart or not. I am only trying to show that dentistry today has reached a high standard, as I do think is the case in all professions. In medicine today we know that the standard is higher than it was 50 years ago, the same as in dentistry. Not very long ago when people were extracting teeth it was done by jumping on a man's shoulder

and pulling with all your might. That was done until anaesthetic was discovered, and the Hon. Member would know that since it was discovered it has been a boom to the medical profession as it was to dentistry, and it was discovered by a dentist. The Hon. Member should know that we cannot say that because our grandfathers practised, without anaesthetic we must practise so at the present time.

The Hon. Member for Eastern Berbice (Dr. Gonsalves) made some very good points when he was speaking on the question of the mouth being a part of the body, and the dental profession being a part of the whole medical profession. Specialists today, Public Health authorities, have come to the conclusion that the mouth *is* one of the places from which we can have focus infection conveyed to various parts of the body. We can have heart trouble, eye trouble, troubles of the joints from focus infection set up in the mouth. You go to the Eye Specialist today and he looks at your eyes. He sees the whole mouth with crowned teeth and says *"Let me have an X-Ray examination to see if these bad teeth you have covered by the crown are responsible for your eyes"*. Eye Specialists always send them to us. It is said that a crown covers a multitude of sins. In British Guiana another aspect of the situation which has to be very carefully considered is the aspect of training people to accept inferior dentistry. People have been accustomed to accept bad dentistry because of the standard set in the past.

I remember when I was practising in Main Street a fellow came to me. He had very good anterior teeth in his mouth and said he would like to have two open face crowns and two other crowns. I said to him *"Your teeth are in very good condition, and people would pay large sums of money to get teeth like yours. You should do nothing to them"*. He implored me but I did not treat him, and he subsequently left. Four years after, when I moved into another locality he came back to me. The teeth had to be extracted—those on which crowns had been put. The work was not done properly and gangrene and pyorrhoea had set in. The whole thing had to be done over. We have patients coming to us—the Hon. Member for Eastern Berbice can tell you and saying *"Doctor, I want to have this tooth pulled"*. We examine the tooth and say to them *"We will give you anaesthetic in order that it would not hurt and will open the tooth to see whether it can be saved and advise you to save it"*! Having done all that the patient returns with the answer: *"Doctor, I don't want to save it at all"*. Fillings had been put in and had all dropped out, and therefore they preferred to pull it out. That is what we have to deal with day by day. It may be said that what difference it would make to allow a few people to go into the rural areas and practise as they would be serving the people. They will give service to the people, it is true, but I can say, not only from my experience but from the experience of others, that in dentistry no service is better than bad service. At the present time we have no Eye Specialist. I wonder if we would recommend any layman to practise in the interim and persons would subject themselves to his treatment? If it cannot be done with the eye, I do not see why it should be done so far

as the teeth are concerned. I have been reading a report on nervous paralysis, and it shows that polyopia is caused from nerves which are exposed, nerves which have been subjected to disease and bad treatment. Let us allow these people as someone suggests, to go and practise in the rural areas, then we will have to define what are the rural areas; we will have to define what dentist should go into those areas.

One Member suggested that at the present time there are dentists who are going into the rural areas. Aside from that, most of those persons who are claiming registration today are resident in Georgetown. I would like to know how the rural population has been served in the past by those people. I for one as a dentist would spend most of my time in the rural areas, provided the facilities were there. One knows that it is because of the facilities not being available most dentists are practising in Georgetown. One has to have electrical equipment. One has to have sterilising equipment to sterilise the instruments and running water. It is not that these things cannot be provided in the rural areas, but when one considers that to become a trained dentist it costs anything between \$6,000 and \$10,000, when one considers that to equip a dental office with the necessary modern equipment today costs something in the vicinity of \$3,000 to \$5,000, one will very well realise that a dentist cannot incur other expenses merely to set up practise in the rural areas.

What is the solution? Obviously the report has made very valuable suggestions. Let us set up three mobile units. I can tell Government that if one was placed at my disposal I myself would practise in the rural areas. It would serve my purpose as a politician. But the only reason I have not done it so far is because it is difficult for me to spend \$10,000 or \$12,000 to acquire a mobile dental unit. But other dentists are setting up part-time practise in the rural areas, and what I would suggest to Government is that in addition to having three mobile units they should provide at every one of their outstations —Mabaruma, Leguan and Wakenaam where they have Health Centres or Clinics - a room with certain facilities, so that dentists can go and visit those places from time to time.

It is being said that dentists are making fabulous sums of money. I want to assure Hon. Members I had to sit many hours in my office and wait until patients came. It is not true to assume that all dentists are busy all eight hours a day. Statistics can be quoted, but often they do not tell the whole truth and the whole story. Many of the dentists today in Georgetown, the names of those I have called, are new people. We know the difficulty of establishing a good practise. It takes a long time. I am sure several of these people, if the opportunity is placed at their disposal, would be glad to have the benefit of a mobile unit to go to some centre where Government has a room with certain facilities.

Another factor which has to be taken into consideration, as the Hon. the acting Colonial Secretary and Mover of the Motion had suggested, is that in dentistry perhaps the most acute form of treatment is extraction. A man

gets a pain and he has to have an extraction. He also stated that at the present time we have the facilities. Doctors are permitted to perform extractions; sick nurses and dispensers are allowed too, but we do know that at least these people have had training in certain fields —bacteriology, anatomy, etc. They know what they are about. It must not be concluded that simply because extraction is a simple thing anyone should be allowed to do it. The Hon. Member on my left (Mr. Fernandes) has suggested to me that with one action a tooth can be extracted, and especially children's teeth, when they are very loose, can be extracted by means of a string and a door knob. I wonder if we could give the Hon. Member a diploma to practise dentistry too. I am not suggesting that the Hon. Member is asking for it but I am saying that we dentists know that there are certain teeth which are so loose that they can be extracted by any lay person, but that does not say that all extractions and all surgery should be allowed to be performed by those semi-laymen. The question is where to draw the line, and when to stop this registration of unqualified persons. So far as those persons are concerned who have acquired a certain amount of skill and are supposed to be competent, I would suggest that Government take a serious view of the situation and give them an opportunity to qualify. Give them a loan or a grant if necessary, as has been done in the case of doctors, and let them go abroad and qualify.

I have heard it said that the people in the rural areas must be served, and statistics have been referred to. What about the doctors? There is also a shortage of doctors. From Skeldon on the Corentyne to New Amsterdam there are only two medical officers. I wonder if those Hon. Members who have given figures are satisfied that those two medical officers are providing proper service for the population in that area? Nevertheless, I see the necessity at the present time for Government to do something. At present Government employs one dentist full-time at the Public Hospital, and he pays monthly visits to various parts of the Colony. I have had to draw the attention of the D.M.S. to the fact that when the dentist is on a visit to the outlying districts the people who go to the Hospital for treatment are neglected. I would suggest that Government should consider those people and employ at least two other dentists so that they could visit the country districts. If necessary, those dental mechanics who have acquired some skill and some knowledge should be encouraged to qualify themselves. I would not object to that, but I certainly would not agree to their being placed on the dental register now to do all phases of dental work.

Not very long ago Dr. Richmond came to this Colony after acquiring a very good education in the U.S.A., and when I asked him why he was leaving the Colony he said that the people here did not require good dentistry. He said that when he suggested to a patient what treatment he should have the patient dictated what treatment he wanted. It is true to a certain extent, and it is because in the past people have been performing services of an indifferent quality—in some cases not because they could not do better but

because of the equipment available to them, because they had to indulge in illicit practice of dentistry which, in the long run, did more harm than good.

We have to encourage more qualified dentists to come to this country. We need more dentists as much as we need more doctors, and Government should grant scholarships or loans to people to go away and qualify themselves and return to the Colony. If we allow those dental mechanics who were practising dentistry up to 1939 to be registered we would find others coming forward and asking for an extension. There may be hundreds of others of whose names we are not now aware. We may find that certain persons have had training from dentists who are now dead, and the names of dead persons would recur from time to time. How can Government or any Committee deal justly with such a situation? I suggest that when the register was closed in 1924 all and sundry were given notice of that fact, and it was only because it was felt that a mistake was made on that occasion that the register was reopened in 1939. That was a grave error and Government should not commit a similar error.

Extension of Rent Restriction Ordinance

Dr. Jagan: In respect of Georgetown the Ordinance applies within three miles of the limits of the city, but I do not know if the same applies to New Amsterdam.

(**The Attorney-General:** I am not in a position to say, without having the particular Order in Council before me. I have to get it.)

Dr. Jagan: I have several cases, some of which I have already reported to the Hon. the Colonial Secretary, and on which some action was taken. There is another matter which I recently took up through the Colonial Secretary's Office, and which was submitted to the Labour Department for their consideration. An individual, who was leasing a piece of land from Lusignan estate on which he built his house, sent some cane to the estate's factory to be ground. As we know, the cane farmers usually send their cane to the estates to be ground and they are paid a fixed sum per ton by the estate. When this individual applied for the money which was due to him for his cane, amounting to \$44.76, he was told that he could not get that amount as he owed the estate the sum of \$60 which was calculated on the basis of a land rental of \$12 per annum for a period of five years. This individual claims that he was paying a small sum per month and was never notified that it had been increased to \$1 per month. Consequently he did not feel that that sum should have been deducted from his cane money.

I have a few other cases from Turkeyen, Cummings Lodge, and Ogle pasture. I do not like the tone of the letters which were written to some of these residents notifying them of an increase in the rentals. In one case, I would like to read for the benefit of Hon. Members of this Council, a notice to quit which was given subsequent to the notice for increased rental. The note which was appended to the notice to quit reads as follows:—

"After your tenancy has expired pursuant to the above notice, the estate intends to let the above premises at one dollar per month, and is prepared to consider granting you a new tenancy on that basis."

In this case I am not arguing whether or not the estate was charging a reasonable rental, but it does appear that a notice was given for an increase in rental, and appended to that notice to quit was a note saying that if the individual agreed to the increase in rental, then a new rent contract would

have to be signed. Those are reasons which prompted me to move this Motion in this Council, because I do feel that some protection should be given to the inhabitants of the rural areas. I can anticipate the Government, or some Hon. Members adducing the argument that it would be creating a great deal of work for the Magistrates in the rural areas, but I would point out that in the rural areas one finds that many houses and land on which houses are built are owned by the individuals occupying them, but there are a few cases in which houses or land on which houses are built are being rented or leased. Consequently I do not anticipate, if the Ordinance is extended to protect the inhabitants in the rural areas, that there would be an undue number of cases coming up before the rural Magistrates. In view of these circumstances I commend this Motion for the consideration and approval of Members of this Council

Sugar Industry & Legislative Council (Housing of Workers) Bill

Dr. Jagan: Some Hon. Members have received petitions from the B. G. East Indian Association on this matter, and so have I. Relative to this same matter, as long ago as 27th May, 1949, I tabled a Motion in this Council asking Government or this Council to recommend that Government make certain provisions for the housing of sugar estate workers. With your permission I would like to read the resolve clause of that Motion, which I introduced in this Council on the 27th May, 1949:

“Be it resolved that Government acquire from the sugar estates all front lands and make available grants and loans to all sugar estate workers for the erection of houses there on;

“And be it further resolved that each housing area in each sugar estate be declared a local authority under the jurisdiction of the Local Government Board.”

The whole object of this Bill is, apparently, to permit the lease of a piece of land for a period of 21 years to be exempt from the provisions of Chapter 177, so that the normal process will not have to be gone through. But tied up with this matter is the question of the security of those persons who will be building their houses, partly with their own savings and partly with funds obtained from the Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Fund. We have only recently in this Council voted a sum of \$14 million for the purchase of certain lands to be placed at the disposal of individuals for the purpose of building their own houses. One of those pieces of land is Campbellville, on which people have built their houses, and the reason why Government decided to purchase that area was because of the insecurity of tenure of the tenants there who, most Members of this Council felt, should be afforded an opportunity to own their own homes.

It may be assumed that if an individual is granted a lease for 21 years he would be quite secure, but I would like to point out certain matters with regard to this lease so that Members may be apprised of all the facts. At the present time some of these sugar estate lands are being rented on the basis of a monthly tenancy to persons who are either whole-time or part-time workers on sugar estates. That security of tenure, which most Members of this Council advocate, is not really guaranteed at the present time, and I do not think it would be guaranteed even by a 21-year lease, in view of the terms and conditions under which these leases will be granted. I have in my hand a copy of a letter dated May 22, 1950, which I sent to the Colonial Secretary, giving the text of notices sent to tenants who have built their

own houses on lands owned by the Ogle Co. Ltd. With your permission, Sir, I will read the relevant sections:—

“Notices to quit received by Kublall and Ramkissoon Pln. Industry, south of the railway line:—

“Take notice, that we, the Ogle Company, Ltd., hereby require you to quit and give up to us or to whom we may appoint on 1st day of June, 1950, or on the expiration of a month of that date hereof the tenancy and possession of the premises situated at Lot 2 Facing South of Railway Line, as per plan, in the County of Demerara and Colony of British Guiana which you hold from us as a monthly tenant.

Dated this 30th day of April, 1950.

N.B. After your tenancy has expired pursuant to the above notice, the estate intends to let the above mentioned premises at \$1.00 per month and is prepared to consider granting you a new tenancy on this basis.”

Dhoon alias Naphadeen & Angie, Pln. Ogle Pasture, E.C. Dem:

“This will serve as a warning to you that your conduct is, and for some time past has been, unsatisfactory, and unless there is an immediate and sustained improvement you will be evicted from Pln. Ogle, in the County of Demerara and Colony of British Guiana.

The conduct in respect of which this warning is given that:—

- 1. You are refusing or refraining from giving your labour to the estate, and*
- 2. Your general behaviour is calculated to disturb the other residents on the estate and to lead to a breach of the peace.”*

Let us assume that, instead of a monthly tenancy, a 21-year lease was granted under certain conditions. If those condition were similar to those I have just read it would be seen that such a lease would really mean nothing, and that a tenant could be thrown out at any time. *“Your general behaviour is calculated to disturb the other residents on the estate and to lead to a breach of the peace.”* That could mean anything. An individual who takes part in trade union activities could be kicked out because it might be felt by the estate authorities that he was disturbing the peace of the estate. It should not be implied that, because a person builds a house on a piece of estate land, he should necessarily have to give his labour to the estate.

In this Bill provision is also made to cover cane-farmers. There are some cane-farmers who give their labour to the sugar estates, but there are others who do not work on the estates at all. I feel that if individuals desire to build their own houses on sugar estate lands proper security of tenure should be given to them whether they work on the estates or not. I have before me also a draft copy of an agreement which was given to residents

at Ogle by the management of the estate, to be entered into in the event of their desiring to lease house lots under the 21-year lease. Let us examine the conditions under which these leases are to be given. With your permission again, Sir, I will read from the draft agreement. It says:

“The tenant covenants with the Company as follows:

(e) Not to house any person warned off the lands of the estate or permit such person to enter upon, reside or remain on the house lot or house.”

That clause certainly interferes with the liberty of the individual.

(The Attorney-General: I am sorry to interrupt the Hon. Member, but I did not gather between whom the agreement is to be made.)

Dr. Jagan: This agreement is between the Company and a tenant. In other words it is an agreement which will be signed by the members of the sugar estates and tenants who will be taking up those lots

(Mr. Luckhoo: To a point of correction! I think the Hon. Member is reading from an agreement of lease between the estate and private individuals, but properly drawn up leases have been agreed upon. Evidently the Hon. Member has not seen a copy of those leases in which there is no such clause at all. The draft leases: which have been agreed upon have been drawn up by legal representatives of the Union, the Sugar Producers' Association, and the Government, and I am sorry the Hon. Member has not seen a copy of them. What he is reading from is not relevant to this particular issue.)

Dr. Jagan: I am sorry I did not get a copy of that agreement of lease to be signed between the tenants and the Companies which will be giving out these lots. I can only act on the information I have, and my point in bringing this information to the notice of the Council was to show that under those conditions the tenants would be secure, and that they would be better off if Government acquired the lands and let them have house lots on a rental-purchase basis over a long period of years. I would have liked those Hon. Members who know so much about this matter to have spoken, so that those Members who are not members of the Committee would have been properly informed.

(The President: I am quite sure that Hon. Members who are members of the Sugar Welfare Committee do intend to speak on the measure, but because the Hon. Member preceded them they have not yet been able to do so. I am certainly looking forward to the explanations which they will be able to give with regard to these lands. I have myself read the draft of the lease which, to my mind, appears quite acceptable. The copy of the lease

from which the Hon. Member has read has nothing to do with the lease which it is proposed to make.)

Dr. Jagan: The reason why I got up to speak is because I found that no other Hon. Member was willing to do so, but if Hon. Members wish to speak I would take my seat and conclude my remarks after they have spoken.

(Dr. Singh: The draft lease went backward and forward several times before we reached finality. That is the final draft. We went into every phase of the matter, and I think the Hon. Member need not worry.)

Dr. Jagan: I shall not deal any more with that because, from the information at my disposal, I am satisfied that it would not be in the interest of the sugar estate workers to borrow money from the Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Fund, or any other source to build houses on land in respect of which they may not have tangible security. I feel that Government would do the people of this country, and the sugar estate workers particularly, a great service if it embarked on a project of purchasing these front lands for the purpose of selling lots to the sugar estate workers and cane-farmers who could then apply for the necessary loans from the Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Fund. In developing my argument along these lines I should like to read from the Papers relating to Development Planning No. at page 318 with reference to Rural Housing. It is a report submitted, on behalf of the sugar producers by Dr. Giglioli, in which he states:

“The Rural Housing and Land Settlement Sub-Committee of the Ten-year Plan Development Committee in its report issued on the 13th January, 1947, after dealing with the proposed housing schemes for Leguan, Wakenaam and the Essequibo Coast, recommends that similar Government financed resettlement schemes should be carried out on three sample sugar estates: Wales, Versailles and Port Mourant. This plan would involve the transfer from the estates to Government of 266 acres of drained land, valued at \$73,100, at the nominal cost of \$1.00 per acre, i.e. a total of \$266. The estates' contribution to these schemes would therefore be at \$72,834. The Government on its part should provide \$82,695 from Colony funds for the preparation of housing sites and the provision of water supply, in the aggregate 1,596 houses will be required at an estimated cost of \$866,666. Of this sum it is suggested that \$520,000 should be by way of loan, recoverable over 20 years, and \$346,666 by way of grant over a period of 3 years. The Sub-Committee points out that this scheme is complementary to that of the estates in relation to the nucleus population, and that to be most effective it should precede the latter. Execution of the scheme on these three plantations should illustrate the desirability of its extension to other estates where practicable.”

That is a matter which was gone into very fully by the Sub-Committee

on housing, and it was felt then that, apart from the nuclear housing which would be undertaken by the sugar estate authorities for their regular workers, a scheme should be embarked upon whereby the sugar producers would give lands to Government at a nominal sum. Those lands would then be prepared by Government at the cost estimated in this report, and grants or loans would be given to the workers to enable them to build their houses. Unfortunately, that scheme seems to have been abandoned—I do not know for what reason—and instead we now have the sugar estates' scheme for housing extra nuclear workers. They are now preparing the house lots, but I am not satisfied that it would be in the best interests of the people to build their houses on lands leased by the sugar estates. I think that, following on this report, Government should purchase outright the lands on which the workers are to build their houses, and give them out to the people on a rental-purchase system.

Today, Government is leasing to the Sugar proprietors nearly 90,000 acres of land and receiving a sum in the vicinity of \$4,000 annually. It is indeed an indirect subsidy to the sugar producers of this Colony. I therefore feel that the sugar producers should likewise be generous to the people of this Colony, by giving their front lands in lieu of the facilities now provided by Government in respect of the back lands.

(Capt. Coghlan: To a point of explanation. The 90,000 acres of land referred to by the Hon. Member are held by the sugar estates under licence of occupancy, and Government cannot dispose of those lands at will. The licence of occupancy relates to the second, third and extra depths, while the first depth is freehold. The second, third and extras depths, are also attached to the freehold, cannot be disposed of by Government at will. I tested that matter out with Government some years ago, and Government had to give me freehold title for the second and extra depths.)

Dr. Jagan: That point has been made more than a dozen times in this Council. The Hon. Member should have awaited his opportunity to speak. Whether it is licence of occupancy or not, my point is that the lands have been placed at the disposal of the sugar producers at a comparatively small figure. Those lands are very valuable to the sugar industry in the sense that they are lands which are producing sugar. On the other hand, there are front lands, not suitable for cane cultivation, on which houses are built. That is the reason why many front land areas have been abandoned and divided into house lots. It may, therefore, be said that so far as the sugar producers are concerned the back lands are more valuable than the front lands, and if Government has placed the back lands at the disposal of the sugar proprietors at a nominal figure, I feel that similar consideration should be given by the sugar producers to the workers and the Government of the Colony. Apparently, at one time the estate authorities were prepared to carry out the scheme, but I do not know what has happened. Until I am

fully satisfied about the lease, which I have not seen—in fact, even if it is satisfactory I would still urge upon Government that it should acquire these lands and resell them in lots to the cane-farmers and sugar workers on an easy payment basis over a long period of time.

It seems that the estate proprietors are quite prepared to sell these lands at a nominal figure. We must consider that the estates are going to charge a normal rental to the workers who build houses on their lands—one shilling per month I am told. If we assume that will be eight house lots per acre it would mean eight shillings per month as rental. I know that the sugar estate authorities will have to incur considerable expense in preparing the lots, and it can therefore be said that the rental to be charged is justifiable. That is why I feel that the sugar estate authorities would prepare to hand over these lands to Government at a nominal price, seeing that the income that would be derived would be really nominal. That is the view I hold, and the view held by the East Indian Association. I am not fully apprised of the conditions of the lease, and therefore cannot present any further argument at this moment. I think it is not too late for Government to intervene and enter into negotiations with the sugar producers with a view to acquiring these lands for distribution in house lots to cane-farmers and sugar workers.

Motion – Appointment of Dr. Ho

Dr. Jagan: There has been a great deal of confusion on this issue. Indeed the Hon. the Colonial Secretary remarked a moment ago that even the members of the Medical Advisory Committee seemed to have changed their minds in the matter, and it seems also that the Hon. Member for New Amsterdam (Mr. Kendall) wanted to reply, but, since he was not allowed, to do so I will take this opportunity to bring some clarification to this issue. The Hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Raatgever, has pointed out that it was only when he asked for information in the Advisory Committee that the D.M.S. raised the points which had been raised before. I do not know whether they were raised in Executive Council, or privately by the Director of Medical Services, or someone else. Members are aware that the function of an Advisory Committee is not to deal with questions of appointments but with questions of policy. It is true that if the D.M.S. knew that if a certain officer was about to go on holiday it was incumbent on him to inform the Advisory Committee so that its advice could be had in time. I recall the case of Dr. Yorke, the Radiologist, which I personally brought up on the Advisory Committee. I knew that his contract was about to expire and I asked the D.M.S. what was being done about it whether the post was to be filled or not. In this case the Advisory Committee was not told anything at all about Dr. Murray's going on vacation until it was a *fait accompli*. We were then told what arrangements were being made to fill the post, and that Government considered \$800 per month too much to pay Dr. Ho - what were our views on the matter? We have heard criticisms of Advisory Committees before, but on this occasion those criticisms are very valid, in the sense that the Advisory Committee was being used as a tool to rubber stamp what Government had already rejected. In many cases the Advisory Committee was not consulted in advance of the negotiations.

In order to make the position quite clear all the facts must be stated. When the matter was brought before the Advisory Committee the question was: "*Do you think the salary requested is too much? Government has considered it and thinks it too much.*" Even if the Advisory Committee had disagreed with Government's view it would not have affected the position in any way. It would merely have been the Committee's advice to Government. Let me make my position clear, lest it be said that I am a turncoat, because I am not used to that sort of thing. I considered then that the fee was very high, and I still think it is too high. I know that quite a lot has been published in the newspapers, and that Members have said that they are two different posts, and that since the salary for the post of Ear, Nose and Throat Specialist is \$400 per month for two hours work per day, the salary of the

post of Eye Specialist should be the same, whether the same individual does the two jobs or not. The question is: was it an equitable proposition when Government entered into a contract two years ago to pay \$400 per month for two hours service per day? When that contract was entered into two years ago it was I who championed the cause of the officer by suggesting that he be placed on the permanent establishment, because I felt that if he was to get \$400 per month for two hours work per day, five days per week, it would be better to appoint him as a full-time officer, pay him \$500 per month, and restore his pension rights, which I felt he was entitled to.

Do not let us argue that because Dr. Ho is receiving \$400 per month for two hours' work per day, the salary should be doubled if he is to do the work of Eye Specialist in addition. In my opinion the original contract was not in the best interests of the people, because Government should have employed him as a full-time officer and saved a lot of money. If that had been done we possibly would have had the same officer acting today for Dr. Murray while he is on leave. I still hold the view that \$400 per month is a very good salary for two hours' work per day for five days per week. It works out at approximately \$10 per hour, while Government's offer to Dr. Ho of a salary of \$600 per month for the combined posts is equivalent to \$7 or \$7.50 per hour. I am a dentist and I feel that by all professional standards \$7.50 per hour is indeed quite a good pay. On that ground I decided at the meeting of the Advisory committee that the salary offered by Government was adequate.

I would, however, like to explain what was operating in the minds of the members of the Advisory Committee. We knew that there was a medical officer, to whom the Hon. the Colonial Secretary referred, who was sent away for training. He was given two years full pay but, unfortunately, he has not qualified. Nevertheless, he was still at the Hospital and some of us felt that, having had two years practical training, he would have been able to carry on in the absence of Dr. Murray who would have dealt with the serious cases before he left, and that, if necessary, Government could, as it was done before, pay a private practitioner so many guineas per case for eye operations which needed specialist attention.

But while we had those things in our minds the members of the Advisory Committee felt that the salary offered by Government was quite adequate, and in view of the fact that there was an officer in the institution who had had two years training, we felt that everything would be o.k. That is the reason why we decided as we did. A few days after, however, I went to the Hospital where I saw in the Eye Ward Dr. Luck, who had just returned from the U.K., and not Dr. Gillette who had received the training. At the last meeting of the Advisory Committee held at the Victoria Law Courts I suggested that the officer should be made to treat minor eye cases, because I felt that Government had spent money in an endeavour to get him qualified, and whether he desired to be posted to a district or not (the D.M.S. told us he had asked to be transferred to a rural district where he

could earn more money) I suggested at the time that he should be made to work in the Ward and treat eye cases.

So it was not that members of the Advisory Committee were not aware that people were suffering, but we felt that there was provision for adequate attention to eye cases. On my visit to the Hospital I saw a man who told me he had been injured on a sugar estate and needed specialist attention. His eye was cut but he could not get attention. I was subsequently informed by the D.M.S. that he would allow him to seek treatment outside, because the workmen's Compensation Ordinance protected him, but when I talked with the other patients I found that they were not cases affected by the workmen's Compensation Ordinance. One man had a badly inflamed eye which required to be removed lest the other eye was affected, and the operation had to be done immediately. There was another man from the Dharam Sala who was also suffering with an inflamed eye. When I saw those cases I realised that everything was not well at the Hospital; that the cases I have mentioned had not been operated upon, and that the officer who has had some training was not serving that particular Ward. I therefore promised the patients that I would bring the matter up at the next meeting of the Advisory Committee.

To come back to the object of the Motion that some arrangement should be made to re-employ Dr. Ho. When one has heard the stories of patients (one was actually crying while he was talking with me) one realises that one cannot put a price on the service of a specialist officer. I am therefore supporting the Motion, because I intended to present a case at the next meeting of the Advisory Committee, as I told the D.M.S., for a reconsideration of the matter. This will not be the last occasion on which we will have such an emergency. I have referred on many occasions in this Council to the shortage of medical officers, and specialist officers, during criticisms of the Medical Department. In March last a statement was laid on the table in this Council showing the number of scholarships which had been awarded; but when one examines the list it will be seen that there will still be a shortage of medical officers for some years to come, unless we do something about it. The list shows that there are four medical scholarships awarded from C.D. & W. funds, and one Guiana Scholar studying medicine. There are 13 persons either on scholarship or as Guiana Scholars studying medicine at the present time. Eight are on C.D. & W. scholarships, one on a Nuffield Scholarship, one on a West Indies University Scholarship, and three Guiana Scholars. With respect to these thirteen scholars, only eight have any conditions attached. Some of these eight have already returned to this country and are working in the institutions. But I feel that that is not enough.

The reason why we cannot get specialist officers is, the Director of Medical Services has told us, that we have not enough officers to spare any to be sent for specialist training. Unless we get more officers, and many more, we will never be able to train specialist officers and we have a lot of spe-

cialist posts vacant. On the 21st February, 1951, the Director of Medical Services sent a letter to me showing the positions which had not been filled. I had asked him to supply the Members of the Advisory Committee with the number of medical districts, the number of local Doctors employed, the number of foreign Doctors employed, the number of officers on contract, and the dates of expiration of those contracts, the number of private practitioners and the position involved at present. I merely want to read to Members of this Council the last paragraph of that letter to show the necessity there is for immediate action in the interest of the people of this country. It states:

"Positions unfilled at present: -

- (a) An Anaesthetist;*
- (b) Medical Superintendent, Mental Hospital;*
- (c) Ear, Nose and Throat Officer;*
- (d) Senior Physician;*
- (e) Health Officer, Demerara, and Lady Health Officer;*
- (f) Medical Officers (six)."*

I know of nothing more urgent in the realm of medicine than the need for an Anaesthetist, because the whole success of an operation or the life of the patient depends on the Anaesthetist. If one goes through the Mental Hospital in Berbice and sees the patients sitting around one would very well appreciate the necessity of having a trained psycho - therapist to give special treatment to those individuals. Ear, Nose and Throat Officer - it is necessary to have such an officer to perform such services to members of the community, but we are not going to have this post filled as we have not been able to separate the Ear, Nose and Throat which Dr. Ho combines and is performing temporarily. As regards the post of Eye Specialist we do not know when Dr. Murray may decide to leave the Colony for good. This situation will always recur when officers have to go on leave, unless Government takes care to provide more scholarships to students to go away and study and return to the Colony to serve on either a five or a ten-year contract. I am no more for giving these scholarships, because I have seen several of those who had these scholarships at Government's expense came back here and use big-stick methods to get benefits at the expense of the people, as in the case of one officer in New Amsterdam. He has had experience at Government's expense, and now when he should utilise it for the benefit of the people he wants to go to a district where he can make more money. That is not satisfactory. In future, when any scholarship is given, it must be on a contract to either return or serve the people for a number of years, wherever such officer's services are required, or refund the money expended on him. That is the only way we are going to get a satisfactory

Medical Service in this country.

In view of these remarks I have nothing else to do but to support this Motion. It is not that we, the members of the Medical Advisory Committee, are turning coat on this particular issue. It is because we are not taken into the confidence of Government on all issues. Lots of times decisions are made by the Advisory Committee, the Hon. Nominated Member (Mr. Raatgever) could tell you, and are not acted upon. We have recommended that certain things be done but they are either not done then or when they are done the cost has gone up one or two times what it should have been. One Hon. Member mentioned the case of a Specialist at another institution. This matter will recur and recur in this Legislature, and from time to time we will be forced to deal with Motions like this one. I do not think that such a situation is satisfactory for this Colony. At the present time we have no alternative but to employ Dr. Ho. If Dr. Ho demands \$800 for his services - whether Members consider the figure too high or not, seems immaterial at the present moment - his services are necessary and must be provided. Therefore I am going to vote for the Motion.

Sugar Industry – Housing of Workers Bill

Dr. Jagan: I heard the argument yesterday and again today, that because 2,000 persons have applied for these leases it is obvious that everything is all right. A man who has had legal training is supposed to have studied logic, but it seems to me that certain Members who have had legal training have forgotten their logic. Because 2,000 persons have applied for leases it does not follow that they are quite content and happy. People have been living in ranges for nearly a century, but that does not mean that they were satisfied with those conditions. I should have expected that, as a prominent member of the Bar, the Hon. Member would have been sounder in his logic.

However, we have heard of all the benefits. One Member said that the people would only have to pay 24 cents per month and would have no other responsibility; that they would be provided with drainage, etc. It does not appear that some Members have ever been on a sugar estate or that they ever intend to go. Their only interest, apparently, is to own shares. Some of us who want to go on the estates are debarred, and no wonder there is clause 3 of the lease. We are supposed to be *“pestilential political parasites”*, but there are some other parasites in this Colony who have been sucking the blood out of those people for so many years that the people have come to realise that ignorance is no longer bliss. The Hon. Member seems to feel that because those people have been for centuries in their ignorant state they should remain in that blissful state. Clause 10 of the lease states:

“10. The lessor shall not be responsible or liable to the lessee for any damage caused during the period of this lease to any cultivation on the House Lot by cattle or other grazing stock, the burden of erecting and maintaining fences for the protection of such cultivation being on the lessee and not on the lessor.”

We heard yesterday of the advantages the workers would get when they paid their 24 cents, but I would like to remind the Hon. Member that when I visited Pln. Lusignan during the floods we found the section where the workers live under 2 ft. of water, while the section occupied by members of the staff was dry. I wonder whether the Hon. Member has ever visited sugar estates to see the conditions. I wonder if he would like to tell this Council who the parasites are; whether they are not the people who own shares but would not provide proper drainage for the house lots. I remember when I visited Lusignan, which is in my constituency, and saw how the workers were wallowing in filth the Manager called me and asked whether I knew

I was trespassing, These are days when we should not only be interested in legal technicalities about trespassing and what is normal in the form of leases. What may be applicable in one case is certainly not applicable in another. It is true that clauses like these are included in all leases, but we have different people to deal with. I know the people who are being dealt with, and that is why I suggest that this clause should be omitted from this lease.

The Hon. Member has spoken about "*pestilential political parasites*" but I would like to inform him that not only parasites will be included under paragraph (c) but any person, or any trade unionist. In these days the moment one fights for the workers' rights he is regarded as a political agitator.

(Mr. Wight: Communist.)

Dr. Jagan: Yes, a communist. I wonder what happened before the communists came on the scene- what were the conditions on the sugar estates before 1917 and the Russian Revolution? Do not let us throw dust in the eyes of the people. The troubles were there long before the seed of communism was ever sown anywhere in the world. Do not let this Council be fooled by red herrings drawn across the trail from time to time. I am satisfied that the people will not be content with a lease of this kind, and if Government is determined to let this be passed with a lease like this, it will mean that the interests of the people will not be protected in the future, and they will lose confidence in the Government. Members may agree to it but they will have to bear their share of responsibility in the future. Again I implore Government to consider the question of taking over these lands. We have had the experience during the floods and in rainy weather, that the people in the villages have better drainage than those who live on the sugar estates. That is why I am suggesting that in most cases it would be preferable that Government should acquire these lands and resell them in lots to the workers on easy payment terms.

To a point of correction! Communists do not say that everything must be owned by the State, but that production and distribution must be controlled by the State.

Clause 3 (2) refers directly to this lease, and it seems this lease should have been a schedule to this Bill. I do not know why it was not made so, as then it could have been discussed along with the Bill. But, as the Hon. the Attorney-General suggested a moment ago, I too appreciate the fact that the Government in introducing this Bill is merely trying to help the Colony and, as the Hon. Member for Georgetown Central (Mr. Fernandes) suggested, a while ago, we are only attempting to relieve the workers of certain financial responsibility. While we are doing that, it is no use giving the worker a few dollars all at the same time putting a rope around his neck. That is what will be the case with the lease. I am not convinced that in giving the worker a few cents it will not be to his disadvantage later on.

That is what it will come to.

If it is agreed on all sides that the worker should be protected, then I would agree that he should be relieved of this expense. In the same way when the original draft lease was made - I do not know if my copy was the Sugar Producers'; but it was a draft lease of the Ogle Company - there was a considerable amount of agitation. The people who were to sign the lease came to us for advice and we told them not to sign. That is why we have an improved lease now.

The sugar industry may be in the minority on that Committee, but we do know the Companies' Union are there represented. So do not let us go into the question of representation. The point I am making is, in the former instance a lease was made which was not satisfactory, and now that another one has been made, though better than the first, it is still not satisfactory. I am suggesting that the Government can give some concession. Clause 3 (2) relates to the lease, and I am suggesting that the lease be made a schedule to the clause so that when we agree to the Bill we agree to the lease as a whole. If that is not to be done, I do not see the purpose of introducing clause 3 at this time.

Amerindian Bill - Committee

Dr. Jagan: I agree with the arguments which have been put forward by the Hon. the Attorney-General, especially in view of the proposal to delete the penalty provisions in clauses 10 and 11. Those who wish to enjoy certain rights and privileges must also accept a certain amount of responsibility. Here we are trying to give Amerindians protection in the sense that they will be treated, not like other citizens, but like protected people, inasmuch as they will be allotted certain areas where other people will not be permitted to go and have the same freedom to exploit the resources of the country. It seems to me that as long as there is no penalty attached to registration it merely becomes an instrument by which an Amerindian can claim protection and his rights and privileges under the law. Consequently, I can see no valid objection to registration. Hon. Members have made the point that the word "*shall*" makes registration obligatory. While that may be so we must realise that unless there is some obligation on the part of the Amerindian to register, the whole machinery we are trying to set up would crumble.

Hon. Members have referred to certain individuals who they say may not want to register, but I think that point is covered by the proposed new clause 41 which gives such persons exemption from registration. There may be Amerindians who will not want to be associated with schemes such as timber grants and that sort of thing, but as provision is made in the Bill for District Councils and Village Councils, there will be elections to those Councils later on, and in view of that I think it is necessary to have the machinery set up now. I see no objection to the registration so long as no penalty is associated with the registration certificate. We know that we have to assume certain duties and responsibilities in order to claim our rights as citizens in this or any other country. I do not regard this registration as imposing an unnecessary burden on the individual, and I heartily agree with the Hon. the Attorney-General.

The Hon. Member has referred to the election of "*little governors*" of the districts. I see no objection to that at all. I think that democracy should start in the small areas so that eventually we may elect our Governor for the Central Government. I think that is only an indication as to what will happen in the future. I would like to move an amendment because I do not agree with the one which has been suggested. I remember that some time ago, when I was moving a Motion in this Council. I made the remark that the Governor should select a representative Committee, and the Hon. the Attorney - General chastised me for saying that, because he said that any Committee appointed by the Governor was a representative Committee. In

the same way any appointment made under this legislation must be made with due regard to the wishes of the people concerned. I move that the following be substituted for clause 14:-

“14. The Commissioner shall appoint in writing any Amerindian who has been elected as a captain of any District, Area or Village. Every such appointment shall be published in the Gazette.”

I do not entirely agree with the Hon. Member's argument which might also be used in the case of Judges who are elected.

I only gave that as an example. The Hon. Member has referred to corrupt practices in the Courts because juries are bribed, and some Members feel that it would be better if our Judges were elected. It does not necessarily follow that because Judges are elected and have to depend on the votes of the people, their decisions would be biased. If a man is upright and is a good citizen I do not think he would fail to carry out his duties as a humble rural constable, for the sake of a few votes to become a member of a Village Council.

There is another point to be considered. I think there is a recommendation by the Hector Josephs Committee for the establishment of County Councils in order to integrate the entire system of Local Government. That matter has been shelved for some time, but it will have to come before this Council very soon. Even though our system of local government is possibly a little more advanced than that in operation in West Indian territories, there are nevertheless many faults in it at the present time. If we are to set up a system of Local Government in the interior we should try to see that it conforms in some measure with the system on the coastlands, because I can foresee that in the very near future we must have a system of local government applicable to the whole Colony, and the interior must not be separated from the coastlands. It is true that we have a Department of the Interior, but at the same time it must be clear that, for the purposes of administration, the interior must be included in the whole system. When there is a general election the people of the interior do not have a different status.

This Bill certainly does not conform to our system of local government at the present time. It has been suggested that under Part V it is more or less in conformity with the Country Districts, but why should we model it on a system which is not very progressive on the coastland at the present time? The captains will be in the position of village overseers who are not even rural constables. They do not take part in Village Council discussions and are not members of those Councils. If we are to have some uniformity in our legislation I see no reason why we should not follow the setup we have at present on the coastlands as regards local government.

In all the reports we have read on this Amerindian question — those by the Commissioner of the Interior, Mr. Gregory Smith, and others -it has been stated that these people have to organise themselves along coopera-

tive lines for the working of timber and so on. It seems to be reasonable that if people are going to do things along cooperative lines there must be some measure of unanimity among them. These people have been satisfied from time immemorial to live as they like but the tendency today is that they must learn to adjust their own affairs and in these districts especially emphasis must be placed on cooperatives which would be to the ultimate benefit of all concerned. It seems to me that if these people are allowed to elect their own officers it would tend to bring forward the areas in which they live. One of the difficulties on the coastlands is that while we have an elected system there are at present certain individuals who are permitted to carry on their affairs as they like. In this new step which we are trying to take I feel that much greater benefit would be achieved if the people are given the opportunity to elect those who would be responsible for the administration of the whole area.

I do not agree with the statement made by the Colonial Secretary. It seems to me that we are now setting up a progressive venture to bring these people together in the districts and villages where schemes would be devised for their benefit. I feel that anything done for the benefit of these people should be done for the benefit of all concerned. While it may be true that they are illiterate in English we do know that they are capable of conducting their own simple affairs and I cannot foresee any difficulty in future so far as that is concerned. I do not see why provision should not be made here for these people to elect not only their own captains but "*such other persons*" as mentioned in clause 17 (2) (d). I think the time has come in the development of our country when we should permit people to have a direct say in the administration of their own affairs. I cannot conceive that these Amerindians are so stupid as not to be able to decide for themselves and for their own benefit these matters in which they would be given expert advice by Government. Consequently, I do not agree that the Commissioner should appoint captains and other persons as set out in this Bill. If these people are to progress in accordance with the tendencies of the present time then they should be allowed to take a share in the affairs of the Central Government. If we are to embark on this experiment I think we should give these people an opportunity to decide who should lead them, and I am sure that in the long run we are going to find persons from among them who are quite capable of dealing with the matters concerned. The Hon. Member for Western Berbice told us not so long ago that the Amerindians trained by the Missions are quite capable of managing their own affairs in those areas. We had contact with some of these people when we went into the interior some time ago and I am sure that if they are given an opportunity to elect their captains and constables with the advice of the Commissioner they would do so in a satisfactory manner. Consequently, I cannot agree with the attempt to deprive them of that opportunity.

In this clause, Sir, I notice that the same principle that has been accepted with regard to appointments has been carried through. In a Village council

the Captain appointed by the Commissioner will be the Chairman and the other members of the Council will be appointed by him. I must state again that I am not satisfied with this basis of representation. I have read very carefully some of the reports that have been written in relation to this matter, and I find that these people have been able to overcome the inroads made by the various persons who took advantage of them either economically or in their cultural activities or their mode of living. I should like, with your permission, Sir, to read a few extracts from Mr. Peberdy's "Report of a Survey of Amerindian Affairs in the Remote Interior." It states:—

"23. The desired improvement of Amerindian status and economic security cannot be achieved under the existing pattern of exploitation by the middleman industrialist-adventure"

Further, it states:—

"26. Euro-Guianese-American culture contacts have undoubtedly influenced adversely Amerindian life and customs resulting in drunkenness, sexual promiscuity, and general moral degeneracy. This unfortunate deterioration in Amerindian character is particularly noticeable in settlements adjacent to mining townships, in the North West District, and along the coastlands. Mr. A. W. B. Long, for many years Commissioner of the North West District, has reported in his able memorandum on Amerindian Protection that it is useless to disguise the fact that multitudes of Colonists have availed themselves of the Amerindian population to work their farms and help in other activities and to use their women as concubines—"

Then it goes on to say:—

"28. The Makusi people have been, brought into persistent contact and mental conflict over a considerable period of years with an originally impoverished rancher-industrialist-population struggling for establishment in Makusi country with more or less marked success. The limited benefits derived by the Makusi, mostly of an impermanent nature, from rancher occupation, have not sufficed to replace tribal customs of self-sufficiency based on tribal laws which constituted the very backbone of racial dignity and independence ..."

These are statements from a man —Mr. Peberdy— who has studied this matter very closely over a long period of time, and also by Mr. Long who has had a long experience among these people. We are told that these people gave tribal laws which give them every opportunity to decide how their villages should be run, but we are now attempting, more or less, to impose authority from the top. The Commissioner of the district will decide who should carry on the government and these people would have more Western contacts than the others. Consequently, I do not feel that it would

be in the best interest of the Amerindians to provide that settlers must not be given these posts. I remember that the case of the Rupununi savannahs Mr. Peberdy suggested that the ranch should be purchased and run as a cooperative by the Wapisianas, but the suggestion was turned down by Mr. Gregory-Smith (then Commissioner of the Interior) and also by His Excellency the Governor. It happened, however, that some severe impositions were carried out, whether the people liked them or not. Since these people are able to suggest what would be in their best interest, I think they should say whether they would work along cooperative lines and so on. With those remarks I beg to move that clause 18 (2) be amended to read as follows:—

“(2) A Village Council shall consist of the Captain of the village and two other persons as the Commissioner, with due regard to the wishes of the inhabitants of the village, may appoint and six other persons to be elected by the registered Amerindians resident in the Village.”

I agree with the views of the last speaker. I think the situation would be clear if we give certain benefits to registered Amerindians and then say that those not registered would also have certain benefits, otherwise, in the long run we might find persons employing unregistered Amerindians and getting away from the control of the District Commissioner. I think Hon. Members were wrong when they opposed the registration of all Amerindians because they would all be given cards when registered. In that case there would be no discrimination and we would not have any difficulty in interpreting this clause. If we give Amerindians the option of registering, we would find that those who do not register would enjoy some advantage later and that all of them would never register, I do not think that is a state of things we would like to see.

The Hon. Member for Western Berbice has stated that those Amerindians who live in the coastal areas have absorbed Western ideas and so on, but I do not feel he is entirely correct because one finds that Mr. Peberdy in his report arrives at the conclusion that those Amerindians who came into contact with Western civilisation were more exploited than those who live in the interior. It is not because they have come into contact with civilisation and are wearing Western clothes and so on that they do not need protection. I shall read with your permission, Sir, a portion of the report by Mr. Peberdy to show that the Amerindians on the coastlands need as much protection as the others. This extract was reprinted in the “P A C” (newspaper) in December, 1949, and it says:—

“171. In so far as the coastland Amerindians are concerned, a very large proportion of them engage in the woodcutting industry, but it is questionable whether they derive maximum monetary benefit by working for others; on the other hand, given opportunities to labour for themselves in this industry alone, it

would be the means of materially improving their economic circumstances, and providing funds for improving their general welfare."

Here is a point which I think Hon. Members are overlooking. It is true that those Amerindians who have had some contact with Western people have become more or less civilised, but I feel they must be protected in the same way as those who live in the very remote interior.

Under this clause, as drafted, I do not know how we would be able to remove these captains because they would be nominated members of the Council. What I would like to say is that the idea of having nominated members on this Council is wrong. This Ordinance seems to be putting the Amerindians on a similar footing to that which the Local Government Ordinance gives to the people in the rural districts and I do think that is satisfactory. We fear that in the very near future some difficulties are likely to arise; especially if we get adult suffrage for the next general elections. In that case these Amerindians would be entitled to vote and I see no reason why provision should not be made now for them to have the status of a village district instead of that of a country district—in which all the members of the council are nominated by Government. In view of present day trends I think that should be done, and therefore I move that the following be substituted for paragraph (d) in this clause :-

"(d). Such other persons to be elected by the registered Amerindians to the amount of twice the number of captains set out under paragraph (c)."

I have said *"twice the number of captains set out under paragraph (c)"* because I feel that in these Area and District Councils the captains from each village should be removed and it is my view that we should take two representatives from each village to put on them. In the same way as we have one captain from each village we should have two elected members from it.

I did not mention anything about ideal conditions or certainly would not have agreed to the inclusion of captains and rural constables in this clause. I am advocating a system which would do away with nominated members and which would entitle everyone to vote.

The Hon. Member speaks of progress under the Local Government Ordinance, but what progress have we made on the coastlands? When it comes to the Town Council he should remember that he said that people who pay a rental of \$3 a month should not vote, yet he is reporting progress all the time. Let us not make these comparisons at all because I realise that an ideal cannot be achieved overnight. As a matter of fact, the Hon. Member should not paint a very rosy picture of the Local Government Ordinance because Mr. Hector Josephs, a former Attorney General, examined that Ordinance and wrote a very strong report criticising it. When the Hon. Mem-

ber says that there are people who are satisfied with their rural status that is not the true state of affairs at all.

Those who administer their own affairs may be satisfied, but in those cases where Officers are nominated by Government to administer the people's affairs there is definite dissatisfaction. Even in the village districts today there is a hue and cry for the abolition of the nominated seats although they represent only one-third of the number on the Council. There is need for a revision of the Local Government Ordinance and I think that is recognised on all sides following the report by Mr. Hector Josephs.

Bakeries (Hours of Work) Amendment Bill

Dr. Jagan: I agree with the Hon. Member for Western Essequibo that there is no reason why this Ordinance should be taken away from the Police control and put under the Labour Department. There are many other Ordinances which are being administered by the Police at present, and I have in mind those dealing with rum-shops, barber shops and so on. I can see no necessity for amending the Ordinance in question so as to give the Labour Department the power to investigate work in bakeries—to see that it is carried on during the prescribed hours and so on. I know that this is a labour matter, but it is not so much a question of legislating for labourers as of seeing that what has been legislated for is observed, and that is really the work of the Police. There is another difficulty and that is if an operation is fixed to start at 5 a.m. we would not find a Labour Inspector getting up at that time to see whether the Ordinance is being contravened. It would be more or less a matter for the Police since they would have men in line at that time and could easily check up on the bakeries.

There is another point I would like to raise and that is in connection with the opening hours. I agree with the Bill in seeking to make all bakeries come within the same prescribed hours. In the past certain small proprietors were permitted to open their bakeries at any time since it was felt that they did not employ anyone, but this led to a great deal of difficulty because the large bakeries complained that those persons were sending their bread earlier into the street and therefore it was more or less unfair competition. I notice that provision is still being made in the Bill for sponge-setting to be done at bakeries before 5 a.m., and I know that a petition was circulated by the B.G. Labour Union which deals with many of these workers, protesting against this provision. Apparently there has been some abuse of the provision in the past since certain proprietors who claimed to be setting sponge were in fact making dough. I do not know the technical difference between making dough and setting sponge, but the E.G. Labour Union should know what it means since it has to do with the labourers. I would like Government to give some attention to this matter because if it is the object of this Bill to try and eliminate competition by making all bakeries start operations at the same time, then we should also see that provisions are placed in the Ordinance whereby unscrupulous persons would not be able to take advantage of the sponge-setting time and defeat the object of the Bill.

This whole question of hours of work certainly operates in two ways—in the interest of the employees and, perhaps in another way, against the interest of the employers, but one has to look at the issue very broadly. The

Hon. Member suggested, in moving his amendment that one has to give consideration to the public. I do not know whether the public is really experiencing any difficulty at the present time, because if you get your bread earlier in the afternoon it seems to me that it would be more stale on the following day. So far as I am concerned, I eat most of my bread in the morning so that if I get it earlier in the afternoon it would be more stale on the following day. When we speak about the public we have to consider what state the bread would be in—whether it would be fresh or otherwise—at a particular period. I think the whole object of the Ordinance is to protect the employees, and while I agree that they should be employed at any time they want we know that in these days legislation is often introduced to protect the people from themselves. It may be that it is a restriction of one's liberty, but in the same way as we have to stop at road signs in certain streets one has to create a certain amount of restriction on certain employees in the interest of other members of the community.

It has been suggested that only a few individuals would be affected if the facility is granted, but I think many obstacles would arise as regards the question of overtime pay and so on. I have not seen the original Ordinance and do not know if any provision would be made in that respect. We have been promised the Factories Ordinance Regulations but have not yet got them, and we do not know what rate of pay these workers would get for any work done before 5 a.m., or before 7 a.m., and so on.

At present I feel that we would be taking a retrograde step if we accept the amendment as moved by the Hon. Member for Eastern Demerara. I think it would be much better if we await the publication of the Regulations under the Factories Ordinance dealing with the question of overtime pay and so on. If we find that the employees would benefit by overtime pay if called to work during the early hours of the morning they could take advantage of the situation but the employers might suffer in the long run

(Mr. Debidin: Two things struck me as regards the speech made by the Hon. Member who has just taken his seat. The first is whether he is an advocate of the liberty of the subject or not, and secondly, whether he thinks bakeries should be defined as factories at some future time.)

Dr. Jagan: The Hon. Member is asking me to indulge in a very philosophical discussion at the moment. The liberty of the subject is a question which can take the whole afternoon and possibly the whole day tomorrow to be discussed. The question of liberty is very relative one; we have to regard the rights of others also. The liberty of one subject must not in any way interfere with the rights of another. In so far as bakeries are concerned, the Hon. Member should know that the definition of "*factory*" is any place where more than six persons are employed and there is machinery and so forth. Therefore, bakeries would come under the definition of factories.

Since more light has been thrown upon the subject I shall support the

amendment moved by the Hon. Member for Eastern Demerara.

Motion—Employment of Watchmen

Dr. Jagan: I have seen the Regulations but have not seen any rates.

(**The Colonial Secretary:** There are two sets of Regulations and perhaps the Hon. Member has only seen one set.)

Dr. Jagan: I am glad I have been corrected. If there are two sets of Regulations I do not see why it should be provided that one set of people should employ watchmen for a certain number of hours only, whereas clubs and private persons could employ them for an unlimited number of hours and for whatever pay they choose. The Hon. Member for Eastern Demerara has said that we should not curtail the privileges of private individuals who want to employ people as watchmen, but at the same time the rights of the persons so employed should be protected. The Hon. Member for Georgetown Central has stated that we should define the term "*watchman*", but I can see no objection to this Ordinance being made to apply to all categories of watchmen. If a person employed as a watchman is paid less than the statutory rate he should be able to go to a Magistrate and get him to determine whether he is a watchman or just a person who is looking after a garden, washing motor cars and so on. At the present time some of these people are being exploited. They are glad to stay on the premises of their employers because of the terrible housing situation and while we endeavour to protect the liberty of the subject we should see that these people are not exploited any longer.

I notice that the Hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Farnum, referred to the question of extending all these Regulations to the rural areas. He feels that if the Ordinance is applied to the rural areas it would create a certain number of anomalies. I would say, however, that because the Ordinance is not being applied to the rural areas one finds that a great deal of injustice is being meted out to these people by employers in commercial houses. I know that at McDoom Village—just a stone's throw from the City—some of these people are being employed as watchmen for sawmills but are not paid the prescribed rates of wages although they work the prescribed number of hours. It seems to me, therefore, that this Ordinance should be made to apply to the rural areas also. If that is not done Government should fix a rate of wages for watchmen in the rural areas as well as for those in Georgetown and New Amsterdam, because those in the rural areas especially need protection. I am going to move an amendment providing for the extension of the Regulations to the entire Colony.

Motion – Reduction of Price of Gasoline

Dr. Jagan: I can see that there could possibly be a great deal of difficulty in adjusting the price of gasoline to 50 cents per gallon because, with the original cost at 28.82 cents per gallon, it would mean that the other charges for handling and profit would have to total about 21 cents per gallon. If that 21 cents has to be shared between the Government and the people who are handling and selling gasoline it would mean that Government would possibly get 10 cents and the distributing companies 11 cents. The Hon. mover says he does not know in what proportion the reduction would be made, but what alarms me is the Hon. the Colonial Secretary's explanation of the tie-up of the distribution system, as it operates at the present time. Apparently the tie-up is so arranged that if we should try to fix the profit or the handling charges, so that instead of paying 15.32 cents per gallon we should pay 10 cents, the companies could readily say that the original cost of gasoline would be 30 cents per gallon, or some such figure.

As long as the supply and the distribution ends are all tied up I can foresee that we would be faced with great difficulties in trying to regulate the selling price. Oil is big business and is generally tied up with many of the large monopolies in the United States and Great Britain. It is a commodity over which a small country like British Guiana may not be able to fight on its own, but I do agree with the Hon. Member that some effort must definitely be made to reduce the selling price of gasoline from the present very high figure of 76 cents per gallon.

It is true that Government is getting a great deal of revenue from the very high duty on gasoline. In fact the duty is more than the original cost of the gasoline. It may be argued by Government that gasoline is consumed by motorists, and that motoring is a luxury. I believe that the Hon. Member who moved the Motion indicated that not only those people who motor for pleasure use gasoline, but other members of the community who run hire cars, buses, etc. So that in the long run the duty on gasoline is a very substantial form of indirect taxation on the people of the Colony. One would much prefer to see that taxation levied in other directions. The time will no doubt come when that can be done, but under present circumstances, with Government being run as it is, I do not see that we can make the necessary provision to tax those people who can very well afford to pay more.

I do not really know how it would be possible to reduce the price of gasoline to 50 cents per gallon. I am sorry the Hon. mover did not tell us what percentage of the 15.32 cents goes to handling as against profit. I think it is really a very high figure when we consider that the original cost of gasoline is only 28.82 cents per gallon. It is a pity the Hon. Member did not

give us the actual charges so that we might determine the total percentage of profit made by the distributors. I can see that the time will come when motorists will have to form a cooperative enterprise to deal with the handling of gasoline. It is not an easy matter but I am sure that those who are interested in the hire car service and the motor bus companies could make a substantial saving if a cooperative organisation could be set up to deal with the distribution of gasoline. In view of what the Hon. the Colonial Secretary pointed out a few moments ago I do not know whether it would be possible to venture on such an undertaking—whether the companies which control the supply of gasoline from Trinidad and elsewhere would be prepared to give adequate supplies to such a cooperative organisation.

This matter will have to be very carefully considered, and I do not know whether this Council is fully competent to vote on the Motion as it is worded, especially in view of the fact that it definitely fixes the price at 50 cents per gallon. I think it would have been more prudent not to fix any specific price in the Motion, and request Government to appoint a Committee to investigate this matter. It is essential that some reduction should be made, but I do not know whether, in view of the charges made for handling and profit, it would be possible to make any adjustment which would bring the price of gasoline within the vicinity of 50 cents per gallon.

Medical (Amendment) Bill

Dr. Jagan: May I ask whether the present *status quo* would be maintained? That is what the situation boils down to. There are certain individuals who have not got the necessary qualification. These persons would be selling illegally and I want to know whether in future they would be permitted to sell by law.

(The Attorney General: If they are selling illegally they should not be permitted to sell. That is the object of the whole Bill. Does the Hon. Member desire that we should perpetuate a system whereby the vendors of these medicines would continue an illegal course?)

Dr. Jagan: I am not suggesting that we should give *carte blanche* to these people who sell drugs which they are not qualified to sell. Certain Hon. Members made the point that if those persons who are selling illegally are taken out of the market a hardship would be created in the districts concerned. We have not got any statistics relating to the subject but in the Corentyne district, for instance, I believe there are only 7 or 8 persons registered there as chemists and druggists or dispensers who would be entitled to sell drugs under all the Schedules. I would like to know whether the Committee which would be appointed under the Ordinance would be competent to deal with applications from other persons (besides the seven or eight who are competent to sell the drugs listed. If the Committee would be competent, then what yardstick would it use to decide whether the other applicants should be granted licenses. I would like to have the situation clarified. I do know that at the present time unqualified persons are selling all the drugs listed in the Pharmacopoeia, while others are selling drugs outside their particular schedule. What is to be the effect of this clause if it is not to give the assurance which Hon. Members have requested?

I would like to get the situation made clear because there must be some yardstick to decide whether a person is entitled to sell drugs outside the particular category for which he holds qualification and whether because of long experience or otherwise he would be permitted to do so. Unless we get this question clearly determined we would not be certain whether we are maintaining the original situation or *status quo*, or whether we are getting a complete grasp of the whole situation. I am not saying that I am for the complete maintenance of the *status quo* at the present moment, but I am saying that there should be some definite yardstick for determining who and who are qualified. As I have already stated, if a Committee is to be appointed to consider applications it must have some yardstick in order to

determine whether persons without qualification should be given the right to practice the dispensing of drugs outside the licence which they hold. This Committee would not deal really with those persons who are qualified because they would be automatically registered under the law. That is why I am saying that the situation must be made clear.

(The Attorney-General: The Hon. Member has been able to walk very adroitly along the tightrope, because I am not quite sure what he is driving at. If the Hon. Member is trying to find out who are the persons that would be eligible for licences under this provision, I do not think that is a question he should address to me.)

Dr. Jagan: To a point of order: I have mentioned this question, over and over to the Medical Advisory Committee, so I do not wish it to be said that this is the first time I am raising it.

It seems to me that I have raised a hornet's nest, but those Hon. Members who are members of the Advisory Committee to the Medical Department will recall that I wanted this matter clarified long ago but up to now it has not been done. The Hon. Member has referred to statistics, but it is not a question of protection at all; it is a question of whether a licence in the ordinary way would be given to an individual when he is not qualified to hold it. At present a person can practice as a chemist and druggist or as a dispenser and get a licence to sell drugs in accordance with the qualification he holds. If he is supposed to sell under Schedule II and he sells under Schedule I he can be prosecuted.

The point is that due consideration has to be given to the whole situation as it exists at present. Why appoint a Committee which is not going to give consideration to people who have no particular qualifications to practise outside these rules implied here. That is the practice which obtains today and to which the Director of Medical Services and many other persons have objected. That is why we find certain drug stores putting up the name of a registered chemist and druggist and proceeding to sell all the drugs listed in the Schedules, while the man whose name has been put up might not be there at all during the day or might be there for just a fleeting moment.

How would Government determine whether a particular drug store would have such a part-time man, and how would the Committee determine how long such a man spends at a drug store at which his name has been put up, and so on? These things are not specified and that is what I am trying to get at. If it is felt that they should be left elastic, then I agree that the Committee should deal with them. One should be able to say, however, that we are stamping out the practice which obtains at the present time; that is, to allow a man to put up his name at more than one drug store at the same time. I don't know how the Committee is going to evaluate these matters. It is not that I am against the Bill at the present moment, but

I want to prevent certain persons from breaking the law as they are doing now. We have to give consideration to the position of the registered people. Because of unfair competition we find that these people cannot enlarge their numbers; since many others are not endeavouring to qualify at the moment. I would therefore ask the Committee to give special consideration to the question whether an individual should be given a special licence so that he could practice outside the Schedule to which he is assigned.

The Hon. Member always speaks with the infallibility of the Pope, but on this occasion he is wrong. He was not on the Medical Advisory Committee to know what happened there. The whole Object of the Bill is to protect the public from people who sell drugs without having the qualification to do so. At the present time licenses are issued to everybody to sell drugs and, as the Hon. Member rightly said, they can sell under Schedule III so long as they have the qualification. The whole object in bringing this Bill, I repeat, is to prevent illicit trading in drugs by unqualified persons. When the Bill was first introduced, I opposed it and pointed out that if a person was selling outside his qualification it was for the Police to stop him. On the other hand, he would not be able to sell if the drugs are locked up. We know that in many cases when the druggist is out with one of them somebody else can sell with the other.

The Director of Medical Services has stated that the only way to stop this illicit trading is to issue a suitable license and to make it clear that a man who has the right to sell under a particular Schedule would not be given any other license. That is why the appointment of this Committee was suggested by the Director of Medical Services. Any member of the Committee would be able to enter a drug store or other premises and determine whether the vendor was selling under the specific type of license he held. The general licenses are being issued by the District Commissioners at their offices, but if that was the only purpose there would be no object in this Bill at all. I think the Hon. the Attorney General will agree that I am right in saying that the intention of Government is to issue particular types of licences so that they could be easily checked. Why I said that the Committee would be embarrassed is because it seems to me that the members are taking it upon themselves to determine whether a man's license should be taken away from him simply because he has broken the law. For instance, if I have a license to sell under schedule III and I break the law six times under schedule I or II, it would not be for the Committee to deprive me from my license I hold under schedule III; it would be better for the police to charge me and for the magistrate to fine me every time I am convicted. It would not be for the Committee to usurp the powers of the Police and the Magistrate by taking away my license.

Motion - Institution for Young Offenders

Dr. Jagan: I too would like to commend the mover of this Motion for bringing it before this Council, and I must say he should be congratulated for presenting it in such an admirable way—fully illustrated by facts and figures. Unfortunately, whilst he was reading out those valuable figures I was not able to get them down and comprehend them fully. I would have been grateful if we had an opportunity of going into those figures carefully and drawing our conclusions. I know that the Hon. Member has given us his conclusions, and there is no doubt about it that this is an admirable way of helping to solve the very serious and tragic problem which faces us at the present time. I have been told that when Mr. Standard (British Council representative) was here some time ago he referred to the Onderneeming Boys' School as the only such school in British Guiana. Possibly that was done because of the all-round and inclusive training which the boys receive there. Unfortunately, many of our primary schools are not so biased in their curriculum as to give the industrial and technical training which is so desirable at the present time for the majority of our school population.

Whilst the Hon. mover of the Motion laid emphasis on the fact that a Borstal institution should be established because first-time offenders and young persons are being contaminated by those who are regular offenders and have been in prison on several occasions, this Council must not lose sight of the fact that in British Guiana today we have a very grave and urgent unemployment problem. Recently some of us were sitting at a meeting of the Family Allowances Committee and the fact was disclosed that more than half of our population today is below the age of 14 years. We can readily appreciate what would happen in the very near future when these children who are now between 10 and 14 years of age grow up and begin to look for jobs. They will find that there are no jobs available and they will resort to stealing. I myself have been exposed very recently to the receiving end of this stealing and I know that it is assuming great proportions. The other day my car was parked near my office and although it was locked two shirts were stolen from it. The other day also an attempt was made to break into my surgery, and only this morning I had to call the Police on account of something similar. The youths of this Colony are looking around and breaking their heads to find employment, but cannot find any. While this is a reform measure, I think we must do everything possible to see that opportunities are given to the young people in this Colony to obtain full employment.

I can see great deal of good to be derived from an institution such as this, where industrial and, technical training would be received by these

first offenders. I have visited the Onderneeming Boys' School myself and have seen the very admirable training that the boys are getting there. I do hope Government would give serious attention to this matter and to adopt either of the two suggestions put forward by the mover of this Motion. I can see that it would not involve a great deal of expenditure, and in the long run it would save us a great deal of money since we would have to pay for the upkeep of these individuals in prison—not only for the first time, but for the repeated occasions that they find themselves there. I have great pleasure in supporting the Motion.

Motion – Abolition of Rice Marketing Board

Dr. Jagan: I seconded the Motion because I felt that the implementation of the idea of converting the Rice Marketing Board into a cooperative is a very urgent matter. Unfortunately Government moves so slowly that one wonders whether it is a deliberate policy to continue this most extreme type of monopoly, to use the words of the Financial Secretary, under the guise of converting the Board into a cooperative. In the course of this debate I have heard a lot about monopolies, communism, and such like. On the one hand we are told that the Rice Marketing Board is a monopoly of monopolies, and that it savours of communism. That was said by the mover of the Motion. Then the last speaker, who is the chairman of the board and in a position to know better, said that communism means expropriation. I suppose I have to go back to school to learn the various definition of communism, nationalisation and so on. There appears to be a great deal of confusion about these ideological terms, and perhaps a little time should be taken to explain what the true position is. I cannot agree that the control of the Rice Marketing Board is either socialism or communism. I suppose that in saying that it was not communism the last speaker was inferring that it was socialism.

Nobody seems to want to accept any responsibility, but I say that if any term can be applied to the Board the true term would be fascism. It is the type of socialism which is known as National Socialism - the Nazi type - and it is far removed from any socialism or communism I know about communism means control of the interests of the people by the people, but when we study the setup of the Rice Marketing Board and its predecessors we find that the control was not in the interests of the people but a most diabolical plot to shackle hands and feet of the thousands of people who came here as indentured labourers.

I would like to get a complete picture of the whole situation, and the more I look at it the more I feel that the control of the rice industry by means of a single-selling organisation has definitely done a great deal of good. The Hon. Member who spoke last remarked that there were many parasites in the form of middlemen who were living on the rice producers before the inception of the Rice Marketing Board, but he did not name them. I wonder whether the Hon. Member would carry his socialism a little further by suggesting that Government should control our foreign trade, in which there are many middlemen and a lot of black-marketeers who control our exports and imports under a Government monopoly such as the Rice Marketing Board? We hear it proclaimed from the housetops that we must have control like this which eliminates the parasites, but we do not take our socialist tendencies and consciences any further.

I have been reading Prof. Arthur Lewis's booklet on "*Industrialisation of the British West Indies*", and in doing so one comes to the conclusion that the problem of overpopulation is a very urgent one so far as the Caribbean area is concerned. But when one reads between the lines of that booklet one finds that Prof. Lewis finds that in the Caribbean Colonies, excluding British Guiana, the population problem is more acute because of the limited area of land available in the rocky islands. Consequently, to improve the situation industrialisation must proceed in those Colonies more rapidly than in a place like British Guiana where there is more room for expansion. Perhaps that policy is being carried out, because I observe that some of the West Indian Colonies are advancing towards industrialisation much more rapidly than we are in British Guiana. But if we accept that policy then surely we must get adequate prices for our raw materials and the food we have to supply to the people of the West Indies. If there is to come within the immediate future an era in which industrialisation is to be speeded up while we expand our food resources so as to be able to feed the people in those Colonies, by all means we must be given a square deal, because we know that people who are industrialised are usually better off than those who have to produce the raw materials and the food.

We have been told that we could not abrogate our rice contracts with the West Indian Colonies because it would have spoiled the good name of British Guiana. In Persia today a good name is being tossed around all over the world. In that country the Government — not a communist Government — is nationalising the oil industry, and it may be said that no mention is made of compensation, but perhaps the Government of Persia is taking steps to find out how much the oil installations are worth, and how much wealth has been drained out of the country during what its Prime Minister referred to as "*50 years of imperialism.*" It is good to talk about compensation, but it is always good to find out how much robbery has taken place before.

In speaking about the rice contracts we must keep the whole situation in mind: who made the contracts and on whose behalf they were made. The Rice Marketing Board as a single- selling organisation is a good idea. Going through the reports on the files I find that the idea of a single - selling organisation was mooted long before the war, but one becomes very suspicious when one finds that it was not until the advent of the war that the Board Was created. One feels that opportunity was taken then to put the rice industry into a straight-jacket, to stifle it perhaps in the interest of other concerns in this Colony - vested interests.

I also observe that the Ordinance was specifically framed to preserve certain vested interests. It is difficult to put these things together, but one can see in the broad aspect how it all works. Had there not been any control instituted at the beginning of the war with respect to the rice industry one wonders whether the Colony would have been worse off or better off today taking everything into consideration. However, this is not the time to go back into the past, because we cannot turn the hands of the clock

back. We cannot say that in 1939 we should not have instituted control but should have left the farmers to sell their rice to whoever wanted to pay world prices from year to year, because we do know that at that time there was a world shortage of food due to the war situation, and farmers usually benefit in such circumstances.

But then, there came this single-seller organisation to replace the middleman and the parasites. My information is that the Board guaranteed these people their profits for a number of years, but I do not know whether that statement is true in all its aspects. My Hon. friend, the Deputy President, says that it is true. If we are to go along in any regional setup with the West Indian territories - and I feel that that must be done - we must, at the same time, see to it that conditions are so made that the producers would get a fair return for their labour. The farmers, particularly in this Colony, have to produce their rice, ground provisions and so on, under very adverse conditions. While the Hon. Member can compare rice with charcoal, he should take into consideration the various factors such as drainage and irrigation, and the difficulty as regards land availability to the peasants in this Colony, which conditions are not the same so far as charcoal is concerned. Year by year in this Colony the people suffer from floods. Aren't these factors to be taken into consideration in deciding whether a contract made five years ago should be valid; let alone who made it, because it was not the people's representatives who did so?

In this Colony we have a very serious situation. Our records have shown that the average farmer only has $3\frac{3}{4}$ acres of land at his disposal. I was sent as a delegate from this Colony to the Curacao conference where all the experts told us that if a farmer is to earn a decent livelihood he would need about 15 to 24 acres of land. In this Colony, however, he has only $3\frac{3}{4}$ acres and when we take into consideration the fact that some of the sugar estates have such large areas under their control, I think something more should be done for the benefit of these farmers. Let us make a rough average of what it takes to produce an acre of rice, and let us take a yield of 20 bags of paddy from an acre of land, and we shall see what the farmers are deriving from the rice industry. Apart from the shortage of land, there is the perpetual problem of drainage and irrigation, and we find that when the farmers have produced their crops they come up against the unsatisfactory operations of the Rice Marketing Board.

There would be no objection to the Board's helping the people to produce rice and saying at what price it should be sold and to whom it should be sold. Those are usual conditions and we should implement that policy. Like the last speaker, I realise the advantages of cooperatives. When Government started the Cooperative Department and wanted to expend a large sum of money to set it up, I said that if it was going to proceed at a snail's pace it would be better not to have it at all. The Department has been set up about three or four years now, but what are the officers doing? Why should we have to appoint another Committee? It was agreed that there should be

a Rice Marketing Board and a Rice Producers' Association working for a cooperative industry, and if the Cooperative Department is there why haven't all these people attempted to find out the ramifications and the needs of the industry and got down to solving this problem?

I am always skeptical when I see names such as Seaford, D'Aguiar, Raatgever and others figuring in the rice marketing setup, because these people have no direct interest in the rice industry. Every time I see an indirect influence in anything, I cannot help recalling the words of the P. W. King Committee which reported in 1944 (on labour disputes on sugar estates) and stated that the reason why people were working only two or three days a week on the sugar estates was because they were finding it more profitable to work on their own farms and rice fields. As a result of that report, nearly 2,000 acres of land were taken away from the people by the sugar estate authorities. I cannot help thinking that there must be some people somewhere endeavouring to put a strangle hold on development in this Colony. There is the drainage and irrigation problem to be faced and, of course, everywhere the farmer goes he finds himself up against a brick wall. Yet we are always talking about producing more.

I have never seen any country in this world adopting policies such as we adopt here for the improvement of production. The United States of America can outsell any other country so far as industrial goods are concerned. They have introduced mechanisation into the rice industry, but their prices are far greater than ours. If they can outbid and outsell other countries with respect to industrial goods and they are selling their rice at perhaps the world's highest prices, they should certainly know what is happening, taking into consideration other factors such as the price of machinery and so on. Why then should we in British Guiana continue to sell our rice at the past low prices? It is true that we have made a contract with some of the West Indian Colonies and the Hon. Member for Georgetown Central has spoken about damaging the fair name of British Guiana - but that is no reason why we should continue to sell at uneconomic prices.

I remember that this Government made a printing contract with the Argosy Company at a certain figure, and yet Hon. Members of this Council recommended subsequently that we should give them a 25 per cent increase because of the rise in the cost of labour and certain articles. This year, I am sorry to say, our contract figure has jumped from \$70,000 to \$200,000. It is all well and good to talk about the inviolability of a contract, but due consideration must be taken of all the circumstances. I see nothing that should prolong this debate unduly, and I do feel that the setup relating to the Rice Marketing Board must be changed, and changed very quickly. There are certain people who can give ideas as to how this matter should be gone into. I feel that the Motion is straightforward and would not involve the immediate abolition of the Board. I cannot see that any good would be done under present conditions especially when we find that simultaneous with the setting up of the Rice Marketing Board Government was en-

acted the Rice Producers' Association Ordinance. Whether that was the correct thing or not, it seems to me that Government should have, at least, embraced what was set up there in principle.

The Hon. Member who spoke last supported very strongly Government's action in choosing five out of eight persons for membership of the Rice Producers' Association, saying that the Ordinance provided for it and therefore Government had a right to do so. If Government intended to make a cooperative set up of the Rice Marketing Board, however, action such as that should not have been taken, because it does not in any way show that Government believes in the cooperative principle which is definitely based on the principle of election. The basic principle of cooperatives is that each man has a right to vote; one man one vote, regardless of position. It is the truest form of democracy, yet when the Rice Producers' Association, acting under their ordinance, selected eight members to sit on the Rice Marketing Board.

Government saw fit to accept only five of them and to nominate three others themselves. While it is true, as the Hon. Member stated, that the three others came from the panel of the Rice Producers' Council, one finds that in many such Councils a great number of elected members become stooges in any case. In this case, the provisions of the Rice Producers' Association themselves cry to high heaven for revision.

The Hon. Member for Georgetown Central has stated that the three members chosen by Government were representatives of the people, but when one considers that a rice producer choosing his delegate has to do so by a show of hands in the presence of the moneylenders, the landlords and the miners, one can understand how careful he has to be. Those are bad practices which do not, in the long run, lead to any democratic setup, and I would urge upon Government to tackle this issue immediately - the issue of the people's representation on the Rice Producers' Association so as to make that body a democratic body of rice producers only. I am thinking of producing rice, soon, myself. I used to grow rice at one time and I am thinking of doing so, again, because it looks as if only a person like me would get on with the Rice Producers' Association and the Rice Marketing Board. If farming in general is to improve in this Colony, then the producer must get a fair return, having to brave the weather and the difficult conditions including floods and so on, and having to deal with the merciless landlords in this Colony.

That is the only way in which we are going to solve our problem here. Right now we have a shortage in coconuts and as a result, the copra as well as the pig industry has been affected. We are not getting good prices for our produce because the farmers have not the money to do otherwise. Whatever they produce they have to sell in a straitjacket under controlled prices. A better policy is needed. We should stop the importation of a lot of things from abroad, since they are killing production in this Colony. Unless Government endeavours to tackle the situation I am afraid it will only go from

bad to worse, and we would never make any progress in this Colony. It is said that handsome profits have been made by some of these rice producers, but I do not think that is so at all. I am saying that unless Government puts forward a sound policy there would never be a genuine desire on the part of the people to produce more in this Colony. I have great pleasure in supporting this Motion and I do hope that after it has been accepted Government would not pigeonhole it and possibly wait another two or three years before taking any action. This matter is urgent and I think a deadline should be fixed for action, and that it should be dealt with before the end of the year.

Motion—Decontrol of Crude Oil & Coconuts

Dr. Jagan: This matter of coconut and coconut oil shortage is a problem which has been recurring over a long number of years. I remember that a few years ago very precious hard currency had to be spent on soya bean oil from Canada. Last year we were supposed to have had a surplus of crude oil and refined oil and supplies were shipped to the West Indies as surplus oil. I recall that at the time when that matter was being discussed someone queried whether it would affect the oil situation in this Colony, and we were told it would not. We were told that the export of oil last year would not in any way affect the quantities available this year. I do not know why the oil was exported last year. Perhaps one reason may have been that we did not have enough containers for the crude oil and refined oil being produced in the Colony. While we are running from one place to another attempting to solve this recurrent problem of oil shortage we never get down to the root of the problem. We will never be able to solve it - it is a question of production of an adequate supply of coconuts. I know that a few weeks ago a campaign was launched to grow more coconuts, but I do not know whether that campaign will be successful in view of the nature of land holdings in this Colony.

In the report on the coconut situation which was written by the Agricultural Economist some time ago we find that most of the coconuts produced in this Colony are grown on large estates, and we have to depend upon the owners of those estates for supplies of copra or coconuts from which crude oil is made. The result is that if at any time those individuals holding those large estates decide to demand excessive prices, all they have to do is simply to refrain from picking the nuts, and there is a shortage of copra and oil in the Colony. That has been happening all the time. In Mr. Ferrer's report on the coconut situation it is clearly stated that if all the coconuts were gathered from the trees in this Colony we would have enough nuts to supply us with all the oil we need. Apparently, the large coconut producers in this Colony, for one reason or another, are not picking the nuts. Some of them are saying that it is too costly—labour costs have gone up very greatly—and consequently they are not worrying with the nuts; they prefer to leave the estates abandoned.

We are in this desperate plight of having to depend on these large producers simply because in this Colony, as a whole, we do not find the small peasants producing any appreciable quantity of coconuts. If we make a tour of this Colony we would find, generally speaking, that people do not go in for coconut cultivation because they are afraid that if they put coconut trees on land of which they are tenants on short-term leases, when the

time comes for giving up their tenancy they would also have to give up the coconut trees they planted on the land. It is unfortunate, I think, that we have not got legislation in this Colony to give compensation for improvement of the land. I think I am correct in saying that English legislation provides for such compensation, and I think Government should consider that question very seriously because nobody would plant coconuts unless they are certain that they would not have to give up the land shortly afterwards or that they would be properly compensated for the trees.

As I see it, the question of land reform is a matter of vital necessity in this Colony. Until we can get farmers owning their own land or getting such long-term leases as would more or less guarantee them holdings in perpetuity, we would not be able to solve this coconut oil shortage. I do hope Government would look into this matter very shortly—the whole question of landholding in this Colony. If anyone visits the Essequibo Coast he would find that in such a big area of the Colony with the exception of Pomeroon where there are some large estates, nearly all the peasant farmers plant rice and the reason why they do not go in for coconut cultivation is because they do not have any real security as regards the land.

I have listened to the remarks of the Financial Secretary and Treasurer and there is no doubt that a great deal of what he has said is true. I myself have sat on the Committee which was examining the copra situation, and it is true that more oil can be extracted from copra and in the long run we would get not only more oil if it went through proper extraction in the large mills, but we would also get what is known as copra meal which would help to give pig rearers a more balanced diet for their pigs. That argument sounds very good on paper, but when we examine the situation as it stands today we still have to ask why is it that we cannot get enough refined oil and are also not getting copra meal.

If the people are not purchasing the copra to produce enough refined oil or copra meal, then it means that they are producing crude oil. But there again there is a bottleneck, since they are not even producing the crude oil properly. Some solution has to be found for this problem, however.

I can see some difficulty arising from this Motion as it stands, because the Hon. the Financial Secretary and Treasurer might say that if we do control the price of crude oil then no-one would want to make any copra, but if we follow the argument a little further we would find that the percentage which is now allowed on copra—making is still very high so that those people who want to produce it can still do so at a profit. But, looking at the picture completely, it does appear that the coconut producers do not want to sell their nuts or to make either crude oil or copra. That, apparently, is the situation at the present time. If they were giving their nuts for the making of either crude oil or copra, we would not have had this oil shortage at the present time. How are we to meet this urgent and pressing problem? There are two ways; one is to produce more coconuts, but we

cannot do so overnight. Can we go and pick the coconuts from the trees? I do not know if Government would want to requisition the plantations, telling the owners that they want the nuts and would pay for picking them because we want crude oil. I do not think Government would do anything like that in this Colony; they would prefer to let the nuts stay on the trees.

There seems to be only one solution to this problem and that is to de-control the price of crude oil and let the people pay what they want for it. Government would have to give the producer a higher price or take over the estates and pay for the picking of the nuts. That is a possible solution also, but I know of the way Government operates in this Colony that this latter course would not be adopted and if we have to import we would, no doubt, have to pay hard currency for it—soya bean oil from Canada:

Reference has been made to the poor extraction of copra meal and of refined oil from copra, and that is the reason why it is being felt that the coconut producers should convert their nuts into copra. It is also being said that the people who are making crude oil now are making it not so much for the profit which they derive from the oil as such, but for the remains which are left and which are used for feeding pigs. In other words, the argument was put forward that it is not profitable to make crude oil, but that the profit is in the by-products which are used for feeding pigs since the profit is really in the pigs. It has also been said that the by-products have too great an oil content and, consequently, do not form a balanced food for the pigs. On the other hand, it is said the copra, when mixed with other foods, makes a balanced diet for the pigs if it can be had.

I have had to go to the Controller of Supplies recently and make representations on behalf of some people at Beterverwagting and Plaisance. These people have to leave their homes at 4 o'clock in the morning and travel to the City and get in a queue in order to buy feed for their pigs. The situation has resolved itself into one of survival of the fittest—the strongest remain in line and the weakest fall by the wayside. Even then, those who remain in line can only get a quarter bag per week. If we are to look at the economics of the pig rearer, we must ask ourselves whether in the long run it is not more profitable for him to convert his nuts or copra into pig feed rather than having to leave his home at 4 a.m. and come to the Control Board and waste a whole day in order to get a quarter bag of stuff to go back and feed his pigs.

Many of the suggestions made appear to be quite feasible, but when we examine the practical side and see in what way these controls and these policies are going to operate we find all kinds of difficulties. I know that this problem is a very difficult one but, as I have said before, I think the Hon. Member's Motion seeks to find a solution to it and I feel that it is going to help in some measure. I do hope that Hon. Members will support this Motion as it stands.

Motion - Freehold Titles on Sugar Estates

Dr. Jagan: The Motion deals with the question of land holdings on sugar estates and also the question of house lots owned by sugar estates. From time to time in this Council I have advocated that the people of this Colony should be provided with lands and I suppose I have made that statement so many times that Members are tired of hearing it. Nevertheless the problem does exist in spite of the fact that the statement may appear to be redundant, and it is indeed an acute one. As the first preamble of my Motion indicates the sugar estates control a total of 171,078 acres of land, 82,205 acres of which are freehold and 88,873 acres are leasehold, at a yearly rental of \$4,222.75, or less than 5 cents per acre. This is indeed a very large holding, but when one considers that only a certain portion of the total area is cultivated one appreciates the fact that this large holding of uncultivated land is in some measure responsible for the lack of production in this Colony.

A study of the Venn Commission Report shows that sugar estates occupy about 60,000 acres of land for cane cultivation in any one year, apart from which there are about 20,000 acres under flood fallow, making a total of approximately 80,000 acres. That is more or less equivalent to the area which they have under freehold, but there is an enormous area of land, nearly 90,000 acres, most of which is uncultivated. I have with me the acreage tax returns for 1950, and with your permission, Sir, I would like to give the Council some of those figures so that Members may get a true picture of the situation.

With regard to the total of 171,073 acres mentioned in my Motion, I observe that the figures of the Department of Lands and Mines are different - 159,149 acres. I do not know the reason for the discrepancy, because the figures in my Motion were given to me in answer to questions which I asked in this Council. There must be some slip somewhere. Let us assume that the total given in the preamble of my Motion is correct. We find from the acreage tax returns for 1950, from January to June, that there were 70,771 acres of land under cane cultivation. I take it that that excludes flood fallowed areas. Possibly there has been an increase of a few acres since this report of the Venn Commission was written. The acreage tax returns also show that for the period January to June there were 11,859 acres under mixed cultivation, while 76,519 acres were uncultivated. Why such a large area - approximately 50% should remain uncultivated on the coastlands where there is definite land hunger today? A moment ago we were discussing the question of coconuts. At Turkeyen there are coconut estates which were originally planted by peasants and, subsequently taken away by the estates. Where there is no security of tenure people will not go in for

coconut cultivation or the planting of permanent crops. That is one reason why we have the problem of production in this country.

Every now and then we listen to messages from the Throne or from the Financial Secretary's Budget Statement, that the solution of our economic problem in this country is more production, but I have always contended that the people cannot produce more unless land is placed at their disposal. There is a tremendous acreage uncultivated, but what is being done about it? I submit that the reason why such a large acreage remains uncultivated is because land rentals are too low. In reply to a question tabled by me Government stated that the annual rentals from 88,873 acres of land amounted to approximately \$4,222.75 - approximately 5 cents per acre. If sugar estates have at their disposal large areas of land leased from Government at the small sum of 5 cents per acre one can very well appreciate that such land can be withheld from the farmers on sugar estates and adjoining estates, if the estate authorities so desire. I have come to the conclusion that there must be some deliberate plan somewhere to withhold those areas of land from the farmers.

Not long ago I quoted in this Council from the report of the Committee which was set up in 1943 to study piece work and other related matters on sugar estates. Mr. P. W. King was the chairman of that Committee which found that resident workers were working only 2.1 days per week, and nonresident workers not more than 3 days per week on sugar estates. The Committee's report was published in 1944. When the Venn Commission visited this Colony I submitted to them figures which I culled from the annual reports of the Labour Department, which showed that from 1943 to 1947 approximately 26 acres of rice lands were taken away from people who had been given those lands for cultivation on sugar estates, and approximately 1,000 acres of land for the cultivation of ground provisions.

It may be asked; what was the reason for taking away those lands from the people on sugar estates within that period of four years? I say that the answer is given in the report of Mr. King's Committee in which it is stated that the resident workers on sugar estates were finding it more profitable to work on their own rice fields, and that the nonresident workers were also finding it more profitable to seek employment outside the sugar estates and consequently only worked approximately three days per week on sugar estates. In order to maintain sugar production by getting the people to work more than two or three days per week on the estates, the sugar proprietors decided to take away the lands which they had placed at the workers disposal for the cultivation of rice and ground provisions. That seems to be the obvious conclusion: that the sugar estates were deliberately withholding their lands so as to force the people to work in the cane fields.

My contention is that if the sugar estate proprietors were paying \$2 or \$3 per acre for land leased from Government they would not find it so profitable to keep nearly 50% of those leased lands unoccupied, or to take

away from the estate workers lands which they had placed at their disposal for the cultivation of rice and ground provisions. A few days ago we had the privilege of seeing in this Council a copy of the lease in respect of lots to be provided for workers on sugar estates for the building of houses. In the terms of that lease there are many objectionable features. For instance a worker must not grow coconut trees or any fruit trees on the plot of land. Right now Government is trying to get school children to plant coconut trees in their yards and everywhere else, while at the same time thousands of house lots are to be leased to sugar estate workers on the condition that they are not to plant coconut trees or fruit trees on those lots. Another condition of the lease is that the occupiers of the house lots are not to keep cows, sheep or goats. It is true that it is said that this is being done in the interest of sanitation, but we know that sanitary gangs are still working in the villages, and that the Public Health Authorities see to it that the sanitary regulations are carried out. Yet there is no attempt to prevent the villagers from growing coconut trees or fruit trees.

What is the object of all those conditions in the lease? One cannot help coming to the conclusion, the inescapable conclusion that the motive behind this lease, with all those objectionable features and the withholding of sugar estate land for the cultivation of rice and ground provisions, is to deprive the workers on sugar estates and nonresident workers of economic self-sufficiency to starve them and force them to work on the sugar estates. If there is any brake against production in this Colony, that is the greatest brake. When I hear reference to increased production and all that airy talk I smile, because I know that Government has no serious plans as far as land reform is concerned. This Motion seeks to solve that problem of huge land holdings of lands being held in an uncultivated condition to force the economy of this country into the straitjacket in which it has been held for many years.

The time has come when we must give the people the freedom to choose whether they would grow coconuts, plant rice or cultivate ground provisions. Every now and then we have to go "*hat in hand*" and beg the United Kingdom Government to pay higher prices for our sugar and to give us long-term agreements, but one does not find the same solicitous representation being made on behalf of copra, rice and such other products. I hope the time will come when we will make the same vigorous representations on behalf of other products as we do in the case of sugar. We must not let ourselves be used in such a way as to deprive this Colony of the opportunity to develop a free economy simply because large areas of land are being held and kept idle with such conditions attached to them that people are restricted in cultivating what they would like.

I had to suggest an amendment to the second reserve clause of the Motion and I am glad to see that the Hon. the Colonial Secretary appended it to the Motion. I should like to read it now for the information of Hon. Members. It says:-

“Be it Further Resolved that this Council recommended that Government enter negotiations with the Sugar Producers’ Association with the view of obtaining freehold title to estate-owned lands on which extranuclear houses are to be built in exchange for absolute grants of equivalent areas of land now leased.”

I feel that the majority of Hon. Members will agree with me when I say that the leases which these people have to sign at present for house lots contain many features which are objectionable. I recall one of them which says that no person other than members of the family is allowed to visit or stay within the house lot or the house. I do not know whether we are introducing South African legislation in this Colony, or whether this is aimed at people like myself. To aim at people like me is one thing, but to put it in black and white is really a horse of a different colour. That is really coming down to the South African legislation which peoples all over the world are deploring so very much at present.

I remember that when this matter was previously discussed Members or this Council expressed agreement with the idea that the people should own the land on which their houses are built. That is not anything new, because when one examines the first report on the Ten-Year Development Plan he will find that even the sugar estates were willing to cede to Government at a very nominal price some 200 acres of land. There was what is known in the report as a four estate scheme, the estates being Schoon Ord, Versailles, and I think Wales, and another estate. The land was to be given to Government for as little as \$1 per acre and Government was to provide the other necessities - roads and sanitation - in order that the people might carry out house building.

Since the sugar producers were prepared to enter into such an agreement with Government, I feel that this Motion would not raise any serious obstacle so far as they are concerned. I do not remember the total number of acres of land they were prepared to hand over, but I do recall that over 9,000 house lots were provided for in the report prepared by Dr. Giglioli and they were of various sizes. I took the trouble to add up all these small areas in order to find out the total involved, and if I remember rightly, I submitted to the Venn Commission a total in the vicinity of 12,000 acres.

This Motion seeks to ask Government to enter into negotiations with the Sugar Producers’ Associations and see whether it is possible to give in return for freehold title on those lands which they are now preparing for house lots - lands which are being leased to the sugar producers - so that the people who build houses on them would have the right either to purchase outright from Government or to be given the lots as a grant by Government. I believe that is a satisfactory way in which this matter can be solved. I may add that so far as the sugar producers are concerned, it is admitted that most of the front lands in which the houses are to be built are not as valuable as the backlands. If a concern is interested in the cultivation

of sugar cane, naturally it would be interested in the fertility of the soil and it is an accepted fact that the front lands on which the houses are to be built, because of their nearness to salt water and so on, are not as valuable as the back lands now being leased from Government. Therefore, if this exchange is made, the sugar producers are likely to benefit in the long run.

I feel that the people also are likely to benefit by getting better security of tenure than the objectionable features in the leases as they exist at present. They would be able to get from Government, either as a grant or through a loan, these areas of land which would be given to them in due course as freehold.

The other resolve clause deals with a point I have already covered. It requests the Council to -

“recommend to Government that either the leases for lands not beneficially occupied be withdrawn or the rental be increased to a figure commensurate with the rate levied for other Government lands.”

That also is nothing new because time and time again we have had reports in this Colony stating that lands which are unoccupied should not be so held.

The Governor in Council which has already investigated this problem suggested that one of the possible ways by which these large holdings of uncultivated lands can be prevented is to introduce a land tax which would force the holders of these areas either to give them up or to occupy them usefully.

At the conference I attended in Curacao recently, a resolution arising out of a report by Dr. Newmerk of the Food and Agriculture Organisation was passed, providing for a similar land tax on uncultivated lands. I have stated in the preamble to this Motion that people on Government estates such as Anna Regina, Cane Grove and Vergenoegen have to pay as much as \$7.20 per acre for land there, and in addition they have to pay for “*breaking*” the land and so on. It is true that drainage costs are included in these sums, and so I have stated in the preamble that the price of 5c per acre is too low, and that this figure must be increased, taking into consideration what it costs the sugar producers for drainage and so on. That might prevent people from holding these huge areas of uncultivated land, and in the long run others would be able to get them and bring about that increased production of rice which we are all clamouring so much to get. I feel that I need not speak any more on this Motion, because the arguments which I have put forward are self-evident. I do hope Members will approve the Motion as it stands on the Order Paper.

Some of the Hon. Members who spoke and offered criticism to this Motion seemed to suggest that I was trying to be unfair, particularly to one set of people who occupy lands belonging to Government - that I wanted to penalise them and leave out others. Attempts were made to give figures

and to show that other lands which are paying small rentals of only 3c to 5c per acre and, consequently, if there is to be any increase of rent these people would have to bear their fair share of it. I have no objection to that argument at all, but I would like Hon. Members to bear in mind the substantial wording of the first resolution. It requests this Council to "*recommend to Government that either the leases for lands not beneficially occupied be withdrawn or the rental be increased to a figure commensurate with the rate levied for other Government lands.*" The emphasis is on the words "*beneficially occupied*" and I am saying that the rental for all lands occupied by the sugar estates should be increased to 7c or 10c per acre, or to whatever figure Government chooses to charge.

What I am also saying is that all lands not beneficially occupied should be taxed, so that the estates would have to bring them back into cultivation or hand them back to Government. That is an entirely different proposition from the one suggested by those who spoke on the Motion. The Hon. the Sixth Nominated Member (Mr. Macnie) read from the Report of the Venn Commission showing the ways in which the various acreages of land are held - some under housing, some under cane cultivation, and so on - but I would like to point out to this Council that much of what the Venn Commission has written is merely what was given to them when they made their investigations. The Commission accepted figures, but some of them were probably obsolete figures. I also submitted figures to the Commission, and to give one example I would like to quote from a report on the evidence I gave to show that I dealt with this question of an acreage tax for lands that are not beneficially occupied.

It is bad logic for the Commission to take the acreage tax returns submitted by the Lands and Mines Department and put them in the Report which has been submitted. When we see that at Plantation Ogle alone no less than 2,000 acres of land are being rented, we need to find out what the returns are and whether these lands are being beneficially occupied. I am not even satisfied with the explanation given by the Hon. the Sixth Nominated Member (Mr. Macnie) as to these land holdings. He says that in order to get a clear picture we must not compare 1943 with 1947, but should compare 1939 with 1947. He also went on to suggest that the 1939 figures were almost the same as the 1947 figures as regards acres - approximately 7,000 acres.

The Hon. The Sixth Nominated Member (Mr. Macnie) also makes the point that the reason why rice and provision lands were taken away from the workers was because the sugar estates which had to curtail production in 1943 needed those lands to increase production in 1947 and 1948. The Hon. Member also said that in 1943 the lands were not being occupied because of shipping difficulties - sugar could not be taken out of the country. But what I would like to explain to this Council is that while cane was not being planted in 1949 the estates were going in for extensive cultivation of peas, beans and so on. In one of their reports the sugar companies

stated that at the end of the war period they gave up the cultivation of peas and beans because it was not a paying proposition. I would like to know what happened to all the lands they occupied for the cultivation of peas, beans and so on.

When we consider that 3,000 acres of land were taken away from the people to be put under cane cultivation, we would like to find out what happened to the land that was used for the cultivation of peas and beans. The Hon. Member further suggested that too much importance or emphasis must not be given to the Report of the P.W. King Committee which found that the reason why available work was not always taken up on the sugar estates was because some of the workers found the working of their own rice or provision farms to be a more profitable occupation. Here is an instance where we find that the estate workers considered it more profitable to work on their own farms or rice fields than on the estates, while at the same time, the estate proprietors could not find it profitable to work on provision farms. They preferred to do cane farming, naturally, because the exploitation profits from cane farming are very high. I have already said so in this Council; almost 50% of a man's daily labour is given for nothing on the sugar estates. That is the reason why, I suggest, the lands were taken away from these people.

The Hon. Member for Western Essequibo wants sugar estates to go back to that county but I remember that when I went to Essequibo sometime ago I heard the people say that the county was not in its present economic plight because the sugar estates had gone out of operation there, but because the sugar industry has a strangle hold on the economy of this Colony and has no interest in matters such as land reform, if there is anything at all in land reform, prices and so forth. That is why I suggested on several occasions that unless the economy of this country is allowed to have natural expansion without any obstruction and possible knocks the people in Essequibo, as in other areas, would never be in a prosperous condition.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary has pointed out that, according to the Lands and Mines Department, there are thousands of acres of land on the banks of the rivers and that these lands are available to the people, but let us look at the situation realistically. In the rural areas today, with the possible exception of Essequibo where the majority of the people plant rice, we find that the bulk of the population is centred around the sugar estates and if that factor is taken into consideration, there is a fight to give these people full employment. When they are not employed on the sugar estates they would need other employment so that they could be fully occupied. The only means of helping these people to secure full employment is to give them the lands which are uncultivated and lying idle in the areas.

It is not that I am trying to single out the sugar industry for the imposition of any penalty, but because these people are concentrated in such large numbers around the sugar estates that we must try to find ways and means to provide them with full employment. They are not getting full

employment at present, and if they are we must be sure that they are not doing so with wages and other conditions that are unsatisfactory. We must not force or exploit these people. It is said that there is no forced labour on the sugar estates, but forced labour could be employed in several ways. Slavery has been abolished for a long period and the system of indenture has ceased, but nevertheless the old practice of keeping people running around the sugar estates still exists. That is another reason, sir, why I want these lands which are being wilfully held and left to lie idle by the sugar estates to be taxed so that they might come into full occupation. That does not mean that lands which are being allowed to lie idle in other parts of the Colony and which are being rented at 3c and 5c per acre should not be taxed. If that is the view held by Hon. Members I should like to correct it.

I use the word "tax" in place of "increased rental" which means, more or less, the same thing. It might not be exactly the same wording, but that is what I mean. The term land tax in reality means a rental. Another argument raised in the course of this debate is that the proprietor of the sugar estates have spent their capital for the improvement of these lands and so on; but I submit, sir, that that does not hold much water because we know that there is no concern—no capitalist concern which keeps pouring money into any setup year after year without balancing its books at some time or other. What has been spent on these lands has been amply repaid in profits and other returns to the industry over a long number of years. One must remember also that a great deal of the work that has been put into the sugar industry - the digging of canals and so on -was done in the time of slavery when the cost of labour was dirt cheap.

The wording of my Motion has, apparently, not been studied very carefully by Hon. Members of this Council.

I have said in the first resolution "*that either the leases for lands not beneficially occupied are withdrawn or the rental be increased to a figure commensurate with the rate levied for other Government lands.*" That certainly does not mean that we must impose a rental of \$7.20 per acre immediately on lands not being usefully occupied by the sugar estates, as some Hon. Members have pointed out, in cases where the rental is \$7.20 per acre - at Anna Regina, Vergenoegen and so on - -other facilities are provided—drainage and irrigation particularly, apart from a hidden subsidy. So it might be said that in the case where these lands are rented at about \$12 per acre, consideration was given to the drainage and irrigation costs and also to the hidden subsidies. I am merely implying that Government should take into consideration what it costs the sugar producers to drain the lands and deduct the amount from the increased rental so that in the end the sugar producers will pay more or less the same thing that the people on Government estates are paying. I can see nothing wrong with that proposition at all.

With regard to the second resolution dealing with the question of exchanging leasehold for freehold lands - I feel that much has been said which is not on good or solid ground. The Hon. the Sixth Nominated Mem-

ber referred to the Kingston area in Skeldon and to the slum conditions existing there, but I would like to point out not only to this Hon. Member but to all Hon. Members of this Council, that people live in slums not because of their own choice but because of economic circumstances. The Hon. Member spoke as if it is humiliating to live in slums unless you force the people to improve their own conditions. I certainly do not feel so. I feel that it is due to the housing problem on the sugar estates that the people, in their poor economic circumstances, have been forced to rent out part of their houses to others.

We must remember that on many of these estates there are what is called migratory labour - people who move from one place to another seeking employment and when they go to look for work they do not move back and forth every day. Some of them do not want to stay in the common lodges provided for the known resident workers and they possibly bunk with other families who may have their own houses. That is the situation which may have created the slum conditions at Kingston. One should not say that because there are slum conditions in Georgetown the people should stay in the same way as these in this Kingston area are supposed to be doing. Until those conditions are improved can we say that we have been able to solve this problem of slum clearance and housing?

I am going to suggest that the way to solve this problem is not to shackle the people with leases which seem to suggest that they are not to keep anyone in their houses except members of the family. If that is the way it is going to be done, I suggest that it is a very wrong way. The Motion asks that this land exchange should take place immediately, whether the sugar estates are prepared to do it now or not. If they are do not do it now, then it must be done within the next few years. The lands could be sold to Government and Government, if it chooses, could sell to the residents, but we do not want to find another Campbellville situation facing us. We have had a long debate in this Council already about Campbellville. We know how much it was worth and that when it was sold to Government the price was increased some nine or ten times. I hope, however, that when this matter is settled it will be settled amicably and to the satisfaction of all concerned.

With regard to the question that these people will not be allowed to create slum conditions on the sugar estates, I see no reason why the estates cannot sell the lands immediately to Government and let Government, in turn, sell to the people, and introducing sanitary measures directly on them. The suggestion has been made that I should substitute the word "*values*" for the word "*areas*" in the second resolution, but I do not think I should agree to that because the sugar producers are spending money for building roads and so on in these areas whatever money they are now spending to put down these roads and so on, however, should be the subject of a different arrangement with Government.