

**LINDEN FORBES SAMPSON
BURNHAM, O.E., S.C.**

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SPEECHES

VOLUME 1

September 1957 - November 1958

Linden Forbes Sampson Burnham, O.E., S.C.
National Assembly Speeches Volume 1
With a Preface by Hon. Raphael G.C.Trotman, M.P.
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PREFACE

The Hon. Linden Forbes Sampson Burnham, O.E. S.C., M.P., L.L.B., had a long and illustrious legislative career which began in 1957 when he served as Leader of the Opposition and as leader of the People's National Congress, and ended in 1980 when he metamorphosed from Prime Minister into Guyana's first Executive President. His speeches, interventions and statements in the Legislative Assembly, and later the National Assembly of the Parliament of Guyana, are as many as they are legendary. In reading these speeches the reader will immediately identify the following: that Forbes Burnham was an extraordinary orator and debater; that he revelled in his role as a legislator; and that he treated his parliamentary colleagues, and especially his political opponents, with respect and dignity deserving of their offices. I highlight these qualities because they are important traits and characteristics that every elected Member of Parliament, and those aspiring to be, should possess.

Reading the spoken words of the fathers and mothers of our nation inevitably causes one to imagine the life of those times and to want to rekindle their dreams. So it was for me as I read and thoroughly enjoyed, speeches and presentations made by Mr. Linden Forbes Sampson Burnham, O.E., S.C. in the Legislative Assembly of British Guiana.

In the Legislative Assembly, Forbes Burnham deploys every literary and emotive device to masterfully drive home his points like a skilled swordsman; dissecting, cutting and parrying, lunging, attacking and counterattacking; all of which is done without the ridicule, rancour, or the rigmarole that sometimes characterises the debates in the National Assembly; more frequently than is desired.

In reading these "manuscripts" many thoughts entered my mind as was revealed by the words themselves. Firstly, there was a high degree of respect and camaraderie between political opponents Forbes Burnham and Dr. Cheddi Jagan. Secondly, the passion and zeal to put the country and its people first, was very evident.

Thirdly, the sittings and deliberations with the Legislative Assembly were not only of an extraordinary high standard, they were relevant to the happenings of the day. This can be seen in the debates on the provision and distribution of Government lands and housing for the poor and needy; the regulation of private schools; the care and welfare of housekeepers leaving for Canada; or the protection of hire purchasers. Fourthly, and lastly, the Members of the Legislative Assembly so obviously recognised and relished the privilege bestowed on them as elected custodians of the people's trust, that they approached their work with remarkable dignity; respected the instruction of the Legislative Assembly; and understood the importance of

the vocation of parliamentarians. I implore the readers of these fine speeches therefore not to read them for entertainment only, but for learning and edification.

The great civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., famously, and rightly proclaimed many years ago that *"We are not makers of history. We are made by history."* This history being unveiled of the political lives and works of Dr. Cheddi Jagan and Mr. Linden Forbes Sampson Burnham must be used to shape our lives and destinies so that we may pass on a rich legacy to our inheritors. The interwoven, and interdependent lives of these two men must be revisited; not individually and in isolation of each other, but rather together. Theirs' was a symbiotic relationship on which the nation's hopes and aspirations of a united and free Guyana rested. But alas, became imperilled on the rocks of misfortune, mistrust and mistakes. Is it too simplistic to ask whether the dream can be sewn together and restarted? I think not.

In Burnham's eloquent speeches much is revealed, and contextualised, about the man and his politics. His presentations cover a wide gamut of subjects and issues; many of which are still extant today. Forbes Burnham was fiercely independent of mind and patriotic of spirit, as could be clearly seen in his words expressed during the debate on the Federal Supreme Court (Appeals) Bill on the 15th April, 1958, or in his celebrated Motion on Federation with the West Indies in August, when a marathon and epic debate ensued over many days on the benefits and potential pitfalls of political independence and federation. Burnham implored his colleagues of the day quite emphatically thus: *"Do we want the doubtful reputation of being independent and unknown...Therefore if it is the ambition of British Guiana to enjoy independence similar to that of those places and to be unknown or perhaps to be independent and be the recipients of charity from Britain or elsewhere, let us say that and let us be prepared in this 20th century to be a parasitical nation."* Of course the West Indies Federation failed, but what remains a subject for argument and debate is whether Guyana became, and remains, a parasitic state given its heavy dependence on donor and institutional support and aid.

Another sterling characteristic of Mr. Burnham's was his willingness and sincerity to embrace worthwhile suggestions and proposals of the then Minister of Trade and Industry, the indefatigable Dr. Cheddi Jagan, his political opponent. Many examples of this can be seen as when he stated during the debate on the West Indian Court of Appeal: *"I am not in the habit of opposing for opposition sake. This one measure of the Government which commends itself to me, and for which I commend the Government"*, or when during the debate on a Motion on the Delegation travelling to the United Kingdom to discuss constitutional reform, nationalism trumped partisan politics in these words: *"There are some subjects which are above the pettiness of party differences, and there are some Motions which are so momentous, so far as our country is concerned, that to bandy words across the table is so sacrilegious. Such a debate,*

such a Motion is the present one."

Again, on the occasion of a debate of a Motion on racial disturbances in the United Kingdom (September, 1958), Mr. Burnham began his contribution by saying: *"I beg to second the Motion moved by the Hon. Minister of Trade and Industry, and I desire to congratulate him on having moved it."* Magnanimous gestures such as this have become all too rare in our present political construct, and my sanguine wish is that they do not disappear altogether.

It is a great honour for me to be able to express my thoughts on the publication of the outstanding speeches of one of Guyana's national heroes, and it is my earnest desire that every reader, every student of history, and every practitioner of statecraft, will find knowledge and experience, immense feelings of joy, admiration, and patriotism as I have, as one word flows into another.

Hon. Raphael G.C. Trotman, M.P.
Speaker of the National Assembly of the 10th Parliament of Guyana

Biographical Summary

Scholar :

Linden Forbes Sampson Burnham was born to a Headmaster father and a devout Christian mother on February 20, 1923. His scholastic career is one of the outstanding features of his life. He went from Kitty Methodist School to Central High School and then to Queen's College in 1935 and one year later gained the Centenary Exhibition as well as a Government Junior Scholarship. In 1937, he won the Percival Exhibition Award and in 1942 he won the coveted Guyana scholarship. The war prevented him from proceeding to University overseas and he therefore read externally for a degree from London University. After the war, he proceeded to read Law at Gray's Inn, winning the best speaker's cup in the process. But the Law could not hold him. Politics was in his blood. Several Caribbean Leaders, especially Errol Barrow of Barbados have testified how Burnham and others "*tired the sun with talking*" on all subjects political. The destiny of Guyana and the Caribbean region claimed his attention. Left wing politics attracted him and soon Burnham was involved with the youth arm of the Communist party of Britain and the politics of the Caribbean students.

Brilliant Lawyer:

In 1944, he was awarded the Bachelor of Arts Degree at the External Examination of the University of London. In 1947 he gained with honours, the Bachelor of Laws Degree from the same University. In 1948, at the age of 25, he was admitted to the Bar of the Honourable Society of Gray's Inn, London. In 1949 he returned home and was admitted to the local Bar. By 1959 he had so established himself as a brilliant lawyer, that he was elected President of the Guyana Bar Association.

Politics:

While a student in London, his keen interest in politics earned him the presidency of the West Indian Students' Union in 1947 and participation as a delegate to the Students' Congresses in Prague in 1947 and Paris in 1948. Upon his return to Guyana he became a co-founder and Chairman of the People's Progressive Party. In 1952, he was elected to the Georgetown City Council where he served as Mayor on two occasions, in 1959 and 1964.

First Executive President:

In 1957, he founded the People's National Congress and served as Leader of the Opposition within the Legislature until 1964 when he became Premier at the head of the People's National Congress / United Force Coalition Government. When Guyana became independent in 1966, he became Prime Minister and with the advent of a new Constitution, he was elected the

First Executive President on December 15, 1980, remaining in that position until his death on August 6, 1985.

International Respect:

He earned for his country international recognition and the respect of friends and foes alike for his articulation of commitment to the practice of Non-Alignment. He made it clear that he was not prepared to sacrifice Guyana's right to determine its own path of political, economic and social and cultural development. He was also an indefatigable foe of apartheid and was repeatedly praised for the strong support to the liberation struggles in Southern Africa.

Carifta/Caricom/Carifesta:

Within the Region, he was a Founding Father of both Carifta and Caricom and was regarded as *"a regional Leader of utmost importance and highest esteem."* His was the vision of an integrated Caribbean Community of independent people and he worked hard towards making that vision a reality. In the quest for cultural independence, under his leadership, Guyana hosted the first Caribbean Festival of Creative Arts (Carifesta).

Women's Rights:

He ensured the passing of legislation which gave children born out of wedlock equal rights with those born of wedlock. A State Paper on Women in 1976 gave birth to three laws - The Equal Rights Act; The Family and Dependents Provision Act and the Married Persons (Property) Amendment Act. These Acts ensured for women equal rights in all spheres of political, economic and social life.

Concern for Youth:

His concern for youth was manifested in the establishment of the Guyana National Service which was meant to give early school-leavers additional opportunities and to build in young people a spirit of nationalism and engender a zeal for service to the nation.

Awards:

He received Guyana's highest award, the Order of Excellence (O.E.) in 1973. His work as an internationalist earned him the grand Cordan Dh'orde du Mil award from the Government of Egypt, the Jose Marti award from the Government of Cuba in 1975 and an honorary Doctorate of Law from Dalhousie University of Canada. Three countries awarded him their highest awards - in October 1983, Brazil honoured him with the Cruzeiro DoSol, in 1984, Bulgaria with the Star of Planinay and in 1985, Yugoslavia with the 'Order of the Red Star'.

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Motion on the Second Reading of the Town and Country Planning (Amendment) Bill: 26th September, 1957

Mr. Burnham: It seems difficult to appreciate the urgency of this particular Bill. The history seems to be that consequent upon a decision of the learned Chief Justice in the case of Barclays Bank D.C.O. vs. The Central Housing and Planning Authority, it was discovered after many years that the plans had not been properly put into operation. One would rather have expected to be given some time to study a Bill of this type. A Bill which seeks to have retroactive effect is something that has to be carefully considered. One can imagine a number of fortuitous results flowing from the retroactivity of this Bill.

For instance, since the decision in the case of Barclays Bank and the Central Housing and Planning Authority, The Georgetown Town Council – this is public knowledge – has decided to ignore the advice of the Central Housing and Planning Authority. What is to be the effect of this Bill?

It follows, therefore, that by virtue of the validation of the Plan and this retroactivity, the decisions made by the Georgetown Town Council, subsequent to the decision of the court, will now become enacted on the decisions of the Georgetown Town Council and thereby inconvenienced and subject to the consequence of disobeying the law.

The Georgetown Town Council, I know, is particularly anxious about this Bill, both the Principal Ordinance and this amending Bill, and the Georgetown Town Council has been in correspondence with the Government asking that the wishes of the corporation be consulted and its opinions canvassed. Instead of that, however, we see that there is this Bill *cum* certificate of urgency.

Why cannot it take the usual course? Perhaps, it is not for me to question, but I shall seek to press upon the Hon. Minister of Labour, Health and Housing, the possible implications of rushing through this Bill without careful thought. It is not for me to say that the Hon. Minister has not carefully thought out the consequences, but it is rather for me to state that the consequences are more multitudinous than first anticipated and certainly more obvious after you have had an opportunity of studying the Bill. I think five days are prescribed by the Standing orders for the Second Reading after the First Reading.

I see and appreciate the necessity for some action but I do not see nor appreciate the necessity for precipitate action. Something has to be done about the Plan. But, certainly, one would have expected that, in view of the lengthy correspondence that has been going on between the Georgetown Town Council and the Government, there would have been some consultation between the parties concerned prior to this attempt to rush this Bill through all its stages today.

(In Committee)

The amendment moved by the Hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Gajraj, seems to me to be a compromise and an attempt to get the most out of what the majority may be inclined to concede. But we have heard no good reason for the proposed retroactivity of this bit of legislation. One would have expected to hear the Hon. Minister, who seeks to move this Bill, explaining the untoward events, disadvantages and inconveniences that would flow from this Bill not being made retrospective. Is there anything on which the Central Housing and Planning Authority is likely to find itself before the Court?

For myself I cannot anticipate such circumstances because the Central Housing and Planning Authority merely in the past refused to grant permission for certain alterations and extensions to buildings or certain plans for developing certain properties. The persons who earned those refusals did not proceed with what they had intended.

If perchance this Bill comes into force from the day it is passed as an Ordinance, those persons still will not be able to get permission because the plan would then be law. In such circumstances, I cannot see any great action or suit, or criminal proceedings flowing from the Bill taking effect from the date on which it receives assent.

It seems to me that this attempt to make retroactive this Ordinance is an attempt to cover up not a slight error but a palpable error. Subsection 8(6) of the Town and Country Planning Ordinance states that "*the plan has to be published in the Gazette in order to become law,*" but, through an oversight on the part of someone, or through a certain amount of negligence which cannot be described as small or minute, the plan has not been published in the *Gazette*. Why must we try to do this sort of thing today without going into it carefully?

I reiterate that in the absence of some persuasive argument from a Member of the Government or perhaps the Minister of Labour, Health and Housing as to the disadvantages which would flow if this Bill were not passed today, I do not see why it should be rushed through at this meeting. I am forced to oppose clause 3 – not to seek an amendment; but to have the clause deleted entirely.

The Hon. the Attorney-General has merely been able to tell us that because this plan was published in 1951, let us, therefore, pass this Bill and have everything validated from 1951, but he has in a previous breath admitted that no consequences harmful to the Central Housing and Planning Authority will flow if this were not done.

He is Her Majesty's Attorney-General of the colony of British Guiana and he is of the opinion that he cannot foresee any possibility of a lawsuit. Therefore why should we indulge in this attempt to make the Ordinance retroactive from 1951? On the other hand the retroactive effect of the Ordinance might have serious effects on people who have already had

permission from the Georgetown Town Council to build.

I am a bit alarmed at what the Hon. Member for Central Demerara has said about people wanting to take advantage of a technical breach of the law. The law says that the plan must be published in the *Gazette*. Any school boy knows that if the law is "A" and you do "B" you are not breaking the law. The Georgetown Town Council is acting within its rights – the mistake was due to an error on the part of Her Majesty's Attorney-General of British Guiana.

It is no technical breaking of the law. This is not Income Tax law. The Plan has no validity and if you attempt to validate it from 1951, what is going to happen? Will some people be asked to pull down their houses? Will we get an undertaking from the Government? If so, let us have it in the deletion of clause 3.

The Hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Gajraj, seeks to permit this in his amendment – may I suggest to him that he put in the date, 29th August, 1957? The 29th August is the date on which decision was given by the learned Chief Justice. In that way there should be no vagueness about it.

Mr. Chairman, the Attorney-General has virtually admitted the validity of the arguments of the Council that this Bill ought not to have been rushed today. However skilful a draughtsman the Attorney-General may be, we should permit him to spend more time, in the cool and comfort of his Chambers, over the amendment which the Government now accepts.

The Hon. the Attorney-General must know his physical and mental capacities, but he does seem to anticipate making inquiries and consulting with the Georgetown Town Council between now and tomorrow to fix what period of exemption will be necessary – a heavy task. Further, the Hon. the Attorney-General, who appears to be the spokesman for the Government on this Bill at this stage, may be reminded that the Georgetown Town Council does not grant permission other than at statutory meetings. According to its Regulations the Georgetown Town Council will not be meeting again until the 14th of October and so it will not be possible or likely for any permission to be granted between now and the next seven days.

Do I understand from the Hon. the Attorney-General that he requires to make certain inquiries in connection with this Bill? If he requires to make inquiries before drafting the amendment which seems to be acceptable to Government, may I inquire from him, Mr. Chairman, how he hopes in the next few minutes to prosecute those inquiries and draft a proper amendment?

Are we sure, Sir, there were no applications granted by the Central Board of Health which will not call for the same provisions?

The Hon. the Attorney-General misunderstood me. I meant that the Central Board of Health is another statutory body that is competent to grant applications for building, erections and extensions.

It is the duty of people who propose a measure like this to ensure all this

for us. It is not for the Attorney-General to seek to get information from me. The information I have put forward is just fortuitous because of my being a Member of the Town Council. But sitting here as legislators we must not merely consider what affects Georgetown but what affects the entire country, and we must consider the possibility of the same circumstances arising with the Central Board of Health as have arisen with the Georgetown Town Council, unless the Attorney-General wishes to have another bite at the cherry.

Mr. Chairman, it seems to me there should be the word "*of*" after "*contravention*."

May I crave your indulgence, Sir? "*Of*" there relates to the "*requirements of*," and it is not the preposition that should follow "*contravention*."

Yes, if you put in the word "*of*".

Motion on the Second Reading of the Continuance of Medical Practitioners Ordinance: 21st November, 1957

Mr. Burnham: I support this Motion but I should desire to make certain comments. There is a sort of makeshift system by which from year to year we extend the life of this Ordinance. I feel what has been good enough for the past Government is certainly not so popular for an elected government. You would expect the latter to grasp the reality of the situation.

What is the situation? Certain medical practitioners from Europe, displaced persons and so on, obtain employment here. They are not registered, but are regarded as competent medical officers for the government service at the hospitals. It should be that so long as the competent authority in British Guiana regards them as being competent medical practitioners for one purpose, then they should be competent medical practitioners for all purposes.

I appreciate the possible difficulty facing the Government in that these persons whose degrees were not automatically registrable came here to practice after the war at a time when we were suffering from a shortage of doctors. In the circumstances could not Government have thought, (1) of establishing a State Board examination similar to that existing in Jamaica, (2) providing, perhaps, that certain doctors will not be allowed to go into practice until they have sat the State Board examination and obtained a certificate, meanwhile they would serve in the government service for a specified time after that, like the internship system obtaining in the United Kingdom since 1953.

So, while I support this Motion, I should hope to see the Government regularizing this situation instead of bringing forward this Motion from year to year, wasting stationery and wasting time.

Barbados and Jamaica: Internal Self-Government: 21st November, 1957

Mr. Burnham: Mr. Speaker, my Party and I are very happy over the attainment of internal self-government by our sister territories, Jamaica and Barbados. While we offer them our congratulations there is no need for us to indulge in self-pity. Rather, I think we should tell ourselves as Cassius told Brutus: "*The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars, but in ourselves that we are underlings.*"

Never have I seen a better argument for British Guiana entering the Caribbean Federation than the recent attainment of self-government by Jamaica and Barbados. I have learnt from my discussions with certain West Indian leaders that it is impossible to have the Federation running smoothly if some of the Governments are responsible and others are Crown Colony Governments or Interim governments such as ours in British Guiana.

Those who believe that self-government is something that can be attained by grant will be forced to accept that Her Majesty's government will have to grant constitutional advances to the stage of self-government, if British Guiana were to opt for Federation. What excuse would there be for having us a number of "*interimers*" and our colleagues a number of self-governing units? Furthermore I contend, and this contention, Mr. Speaker, is based on experience and knowledge gathered from discussions with persons concerned, that we would have the fullest possible support from our Caribbean sister territories, and not the type of support found in fine Motions from time to time without the implementation by action.

In congratulating Barbados and Jamaica upon their achievement and upon what has been often thought in other times and by other persons as impossible, I think we in this Legislature, we in this country should take stock and instead of indulging in wishful thinking of attaining Dominion status as British Guiana, see how quickly we can join our Caribbean sisters in their progress forward and be part of a wider Dominion of the Caribbean.

Motion on the Adjournment: West Indies Federation: 30th December, 1957

Mr. Burnham: Mr. Speaker, having obtained your earlier approval, there is a question I desire to raise on the Motion for Adjournment. I believe it is now common knowledge, Sir, that on the 3rd January, 1958, the Governor General of the proposed West Indies Federation will arrive in Trinidad and will be sworn in on that day. If my information is accurate, the Standing Closer Association Committee will automatically become the Advisory Council to the Governor General until the formalities of the elections are gone through sometime in April and the Council of State as proposed under the Constitution is appointed.

I should imagine that there is no inaccuracy in the press reports that invitations have been sent to the two British Guiana delegates who represented this country ably, I understand as recently as October of this year, on the Standing Closer Association Committee.

I can hardly expect the West Indies Federation to be so indelicate and discourteous as not to have extended an invitation to the delegates from British Guiana and I also hope that our Government will not be so indelicate or discourteous as to turn down the invitation or invitations. It seems to me and I believe that there are many other persons in and out of this Council who think the same way, that our acceptance of such an invitation is not conditional upon British Guiana's entering into the proposed West Indies Federation. We have, since that Committee was set up years ago, always sent delegates and as I remarked earlier even as recently as October of this year.

I recall, Your Honour, that a few weeks ago in this Council there was unanimously passed a Motion for sending a congratulatory message to the Government of Jamaica and one also to the Government of Barbados upon those two countries achieving what is referred to as an Internal Self-Government. I would have thought that after it was so clear – I recall very clearly that Members of the Government (the Officials and the participating Ministers) did vote in favour of that Motion – that if it were only for the sake of continuity, our Government would have accepted invitations to be present on that historic occasion which takes place in a few days in Trinidad.

Perhaps, however, on deeper and more serious consideration I should not have been surprised at the failure of our Government to accept an opportunity of being represented on Friday, 3rd January, 1958, in Port of Spain for we have not in this Council been treated with the courtesy of a report from Government, or either of the two delegates who were in Trinidad in October.

Perhaps an oversight – I should prefer to be tolerant and say an oversight on one occasion has caused them now to be guilty of another over-

sight. The time is not far; it is just a matter of four days, but Trinidad is not far. It is a matter, I believe from my personal experience of forty-five minutes or half an hour if you travel by Viscount. There is still enough time left during which the Government can consult officials and participants and decide not to give British Guiana an unjustifiable reputation of being uncooperative and to decide that the least we can do in the circumstances to assure our Caribbean sisters of our goodwill and our hope that they will make a success of the new Federation.

In the same way as our attendance via delegates at previous Conferences was not dependent upon our being committed to the Federation, then our attendance by way of delegates on Friday should not be dependent upon what we think of the Constitution of the Federation.

The majority of us feel that the new Constitution of the Federation is not one which offers full self-government to the territories, but I am sure that most of us hope that those who are going to work that Constitution will so work it or twist it, perhaps as to make self-government for the West Indies and the Federation something in the very near and immediate future.

I seriously commend to our good Government their acceptance of the invitation to have British Guiana present at the swearing-in of the Governor General on Friday, which swearing-in marks the beginning of the West Indies Federation.

Budget Debate: 29th January, 1958

Mr. Burnham: Mr. Speaker, the Hon. the Financial Secretary when he delivered his Budget Speech on the 6th December, 1957, bemoaned the fact that he was no Gladstone to hold the interest of his audience through the arid desert of the Budget. He, however, is to be congratulated upon taking us through this desert and giving us a few gleams, a few cases which have turned out in the event to be nothing but mirages.

It is no reflection on the competence of the Hon. the Financial Secretary, for I assume since there is joint responsibility as between the Officials and the participating Ministers that the Hon. the Financial Secretary must of course be subject to the policies of his Government and if in certain parts of this Budget there appears an absence of imagination that, Mr. Speaker, it appears to me, must be laid at the feet of the entire Government.

A most significant feature of this Budget which the Hon. the Financial Secretary alluded to on more than one occasion, apparently with some satisfaction, is that it is not new – that there are no stunts and that it is in the tradition of the previous Budgets. Perhaps had there not been an Election during last year, perhaps had there not been elected Ministers, that would be cause enough for congratulations, but while one can appreciate the Financial Secretary's desire to stick to tradition, one cannot help deprecating the fact that an elected Government whose promises were legion, whose blueprints ran into thousands, whose leaders threw the gauntlet down to other politicians of this country to frame a Development Programme as well as their Party's; accepts such a stultifying tradition, one cannot but deprecate the fact that the Financial Secretary when he speaks, is speaking for our elected Government.

The duty on this side of the Chamber is not to indulge in platitudes and promises to support the Government when any measure for the benefit of the country comes up; that goes without saying. It is the main duty of the "*Opposition*", as I see it, in spite of the paranoiac tendencies of the present Government, to expose every flaw of Government and to show to the people where the Government has fallen down.

In the particular circumstances that task is not particularly difficult. There has been reference already made to the absence of a policy. It is not for me to pour salt into that wound which has been opened by Hon. Members of the "*Opposition*". Indeed I believe that the Government has accepted the accuracy of that criticism for – if I should borrow your words, Mr. Speaker – they have shown agreement by their acquiescence.

This is a most strange Budget Debate – the age of miracles is not past. There sit the Members of the Government: some smiling attractively, others rather darkly, others rather worried, their worries being reflected in their grey hairs and not once have we heard them say anything save when

the Financial Secretary gets up to make a few corrections. Pardon me, one member of the Majority Party did make an excursion into the debate this afternoon but only for a few fleeting moments. Is that an admission on the part of the Government that the criticism from this side of the Council is justified? Or is their conduct, their silence indicative of their cynicism and disregard for other opinions, assured as they are that the Appropriation Bill will be carried at least by a majority?

When I come to deal with certain specific Heads in the Budget I shall be more specific in what, I submit, seems to be the lethargy – I do not want to use a stronger term like incompetence – of the present Government. Let me before I go further assure them that I do not regard them as being responsible for all the ills now existing in our native land. I, too, would be inclined to agree with them that they inherited 150 years of neglect, but certainly men of learning should have been able to give us some idea of how they are going to tackle this legacy of neglect.

They have outlived their 133 days – I think it should be 150 days now – but what have they got to show for those 150 days? The greater part has been spent carrying out the work of the Interim Government. Sir Alfred Savage said that the period of the Interim Government was a period of marking time and now we have an elected Government; they too are content to mark time – or, rather, to march backwards, because where the Interim Government found work for people, they the Elected Government, have now been retrenching. This same Government had the temerity to say, if they had to do it they would do it over and over again. Such a statement, it cannot be denied, must issue from youth and I do not see many youths on the Government Benches – or some sinister motives. I do not want to suggest for a moment this Government is wedded to relieving only certain sections of the community.

I should like to believe that our country's Government is much bigger than that. I should prefer to put a more favourable construction on some of the statements they have been making recently – not those about rebounding stones and bricks. The more favourable imputation or construction I should give would be that some of them do not fully appreciate the results of some of the policies which they are carrying out. I said they were marching backwards. Indeed, they are.

For instance, we are told that it was necessary to retrench the 600 odd workers in the Housing Department because the funds were exhausted, or to quote the Minister of Community Development and Education "*money had been misspent and there was some suspicion of corruption*".

May I digress for a moment to say that that is a most unparliamentary type of behaviour on the part of a Minister? If Government feels there has been theft or corruption, I should have thought the usual procedure would have been for them to come to the Bar of this Council and announce that they were going to have an investigation into the Housing Department, and appoint a Committee to carry out that investigation. Such a state-

ment about corruption made by a Minister as has been made reflects discredit on a Government. Certainly, we were entitled as a Legislature to have learnt of it and to be satisfied by the Government that there was every intention not merely of investigating the corruption, the robbery and the theft, but also of bringing the culprits to justice.

But I was referring, for instance, to one of the backward steps unconvincingly explained by the present Government – how the money was spent and why it is finished. Indeed, the present Elected Government has shown a very great genius in copying the usual official cliché “*I have no money*” – the same cliché which I had “*admired*” in the past.

There is no money for houses; but \$11,829,000 is allocated for the years 1956 to 1960. The total expenditure up to the end of 1957 is \$9,808,225 and the total estimated expenditure for 1958 is \$2,002,775. Are we to understand that in December, 1957 the \$2,000,000 odd set aside for housing had already been spent or misspent? If that is so, it would mean that the Development Estimates given to us by the Hon. the Financial Secretary were inaccurate and whatever you may say about the Hon. the Financial Secretary, you cannot accuse him of inaccuracy where figures are concerned. Therefore it appears to me that it is nothing more than callousness on the part of Government to say in December that they have no money for housing when a sum of \$2,000,000 odd had been allocated for housing for the year 1958. Or, perchance, gifted with some mystic foresight the Government knew in December that the \$2,000,000 would be misspent, stolen or perhaps might have taken wings and flown.

Earlier I referred to the cases in this Budget which kept vanishing – the mirages. The Hon. the Financial Secretary in this Budget spoke of the large Capital Development Programme financed by external loans and grants and private investments being made from overseas. When first I heard that statement (Your Honour will remember that we did not have a copy of the Speech) I said that this sounded particularly good. It gave one the impression that the credit of British Guiana was so high that while the Town Council could not raise a loan we were still able to attract foreign investors. But I can see no further details as to the private investors; what they are investing in, and how much they propose to invest.

Then, I thought perhaps the Hon. the Financial Secretary was going to condescend to particulars later in his Budget Speech when he referred to the Manganese Company and another company. Perhaps, it is the same company we've heard of that is looking for oil – the same company which, it is reported, seems to have given up any intention of looking for oil, because if reports are accurate, the solomonic Minister of Natural Resources was asking the Company to give an undertaking to put down a refinery even before oil was found.

If the newspaper report is inaccurate I am prepared to sit or stand corrected. But if we on this side of the House have to accept presumably inaccurate reports in the press and the Government is rattled sometimes

by the repetition of these press reports, it has only itself to blame for certainly on these matters of policy in these cases where there are going to be large investments – these cases where there is going to be something new happening – there should be statements made in this Council. I believe that there is some provision for such cases in the Order Paper of the Legislative Council, for announcements by the Members of the Government. Then, we should have no need to resort to the daily press, which has been criticized in certain respects and I think justifiably so.

I referred to the absence of anything new in this Budget and the Hon. the Financial Secretary is not to be blamed. The Hon. the Financial Secretary is but one of eight. The Hon. the Financial Secretary is merely the Minister of Finance in our elected Government. Our elected Government can seek to convince only the ignorant and the semi-literate when they talk about “*participating*” in the Government. I do not think that the system of reckoning has changed since last I was at school. In the Executive Council there are His Excellency the Governor, three Officials – that is one and three, which are equal to four – and five elected Ministers. Mere head counting will show that the elected Ministers are capable of carrying out their policies. But, if they state that the checks and balances in the Constitution are such that they have to accept what His Excellency the Governor or the officials say, even if they agree with it or not, then I say they are not men but mice and, therefore, so long as their participation continues they have to accept criticism that this Budget, which is their Budget, is nothing but the old story, admittedly prepared in fine language and delivered with great facility.

Now, the Hon. the Financial Secretary refers to the fact that there has been a short fall in revenue from housing. I wonder whether the present Government is emulating private enterprise or a grocery shop in the Legislative Council. One must use choice language. Because there is a short fall of revenue under housing you are going to retrench the housing staff? But there is more to it than that. The Hon. the Financial Secretary bemoans the fact – and we join him in his sorrow – that the people in the housing estates have not been paying their rents, but I should have thought that the Elected Government, which has always said that housing for the working class must be subsidised, would not merely have bemoaned that fact, but bemoaned the economic conditions which made that fact a fact, and brought a proposal to the Council to subsidise working class housing at a realistic level.

I know that the last Member for Labour, Health and Housing used to argue that it is reasonable for a worker to pay 20 percent of his wages for house rent. I am no statistician. I am no economist. The economists are over there. I assume that they are over there, because if they were realistic about their job they would at least have copied one of the first things Mr. Norman Manley did - obtain an economic adviser. I assume that they are experts in the field. I am not going to question it because I am no economist.

But this I know, that 20 percent of \$52 per month is over \$10, and this I know that the minimum wage which, in the majority of cases turns out to be the maximum wage, is \$52 per month for the unskilled worker and when you take away over \$10 – let us leave it at \$10 – from \$52 you are left with \$42 to provide food, clothing and the other necessities – a drink, a little sip of the wine of our country which becomes more expensive, thanks to our Government. How can it be done unless the worker is a reincarnation of Houdini?

I remember so clearly the promises of the Majority Party. Nothing was too much to grant to the people of Guiana. Stars for their crown were there for the asking. But, what do we hear now? Retrenchment here, retrenchment there. If they object to the word “*crown*” may I say “*tiara*”? But, today, we hear the people are not paying the money under the housing scheme. I am not accusing the Government of discrimination against Georgetown. It is true that the leader of the participating Government had reminded one elector of Georgetown that he did not put him in. He could not be serious.

We had been promised an old age pension at 55. We had been promised abolition of the means test. But now the Hon. the Financial Secretary, putting it, I think, more nicely than some of his colleagues, said “*the pattern of the social services is largely settled.*” What does that mean? That, when translated, means this: that no more money is going to be spent on these services. I apologise to the Hon. the Financial Secretary. He did say that there had been a substantial increase necessary in the social services and that substantial increase is the enormous amount of \$55,538:

I sympathize with the Government because they have found that it is one thing to promise and another thing to fulfill. But, had they come to this Council honestly and sincerely and said, “*These are the difficulties in the way of implementing our policies as appear on our Manifesto*” they would have had the sympathy of all of us on this side of the Council, I have no doubt, and we would have joined with them in seeking to find out what real benefits could have been obtained in the circumstances of British Guiana. There is no money to keep 600 working men with wives and families in employment. This is all they say and they are satisfied.

You have a Budget surplus of \$1,600,000 and a Development Scheme for \$91,000,000. With a little saving here and there, says the Majority Party, we are executing economies so as to be able to transfer something to the Development Programme. To the simple all things are simple.

Our Development Programme with which it will be possible to deal at great length when the Motion tabled by the Hon. the Financial Secretary earlier today comes up for debate, is also admitted by the Hon. Financial Secretary to be nothing new and it is part of the same pattern. It is merely a continuation of the pattern set by the Interim Government.

Sir, while everything remains substantially the same; while this poor impecunious Government has to dismiss workers; while the Government

turns a deaf ear to the pleas of the workers for higher minimum wages because of the rising cost of living, there is enough money to appoint political cronies at the Ministerial Offices. There is enough money and there is the temerity on the part of this Government to come to this Council and vote \$400 a month for perhaps 5, 4, 3, 2, certainly not less than one Parliamentary Secretary.

If we are to have economies; if we are to have retrenchment, I should have thought that the socialist or neo-socialist nationalist Government over there would have been true to their convictions and started from the top. If they had started with Ministerial salaries and car allowances I would have been with them. I would support coming from them, a suggestion that the Ministers' salaries and those of legislators be cut in the interest of the Colony.

I do not shed tears; that crocodile-like behaviour I leave to my colleagues – my good friends who shed tears over the workers they retrench, and act like a crocodile which eats its prey while it bemoans the fact that it has to eat it.

I thought that at one time there was an expert in this country who said a lot about how to raise more taxes. I believe that the electors have elevated that expert to the Legislature and I believe that His Excellency the Governor has elevated that expert from the Legislature to the Executive Council and that he holds the portfolio of Minister of Trade and Industry.

We were told a lot about how to raise more taxes from the bauxite industry. This Budget is ominously silent on that point. Is the bauxite industry no longer taxable? We, on this side of the table, would not know. If Government has found out that the bauxite industry is no longer taxable it should be fair and tell the people of British Guiana that the Members of Government are like school children who get their sums wrong – they have got the wrong answers. But no, this ominous silence – a silence which is inexplicable.

However, the sitting duck is made the target; the poor man's drink is further taxed. The tax on rum is not a moral tax. If I thought the Members of Government sitting across the table were teetotalers and felt that the people of British Guiana should not drink rum; if I thought that they imagined that it would interfere with the people's health and welfare and that they should be prevented from drinking rum, I might have supported the tax on rum. The Hon. the Financial Secretary, however, admits that it is not a moral tax; it is not an attempt to prevent people from drinking rum; it is an attempt to get about \$425,000 to \$450,000. In a Budget of \$47M that is a mere bagatelle, a mere pittance, but in the budget of the poor man who works for \$13 a week and in the budget of the retrenched worker, 10 cents more on a bottle of rum is an imposition.

I have heard the Leader of the Majority Party, in the days when he was more solicitous about the welfare of the worker, saying that if a worker could not afford to make two ends meet he had to resort to drinking a little

rum at least. I have heard it, Mr. Speaker, in fact I have sat near his platform while he repeated that truth. But, today, the poor worker has to pay more for his rum because the Members of the present Government here have become very respectable and afraid to touch the things they used to talk about at street corners. They have joined the old brigade and are ready to put a heavier tax on the poor man's drink.

It may be said in answer to my criticism that whisky is also taxed. If it were intended to raise the tax on whisky alone that would have had my support and the support of this side of the Council.

Now, the second feature of the relationship which the Hon. the Financial Secretary wishes to describe between the Recurrent Estimates and the Development Estimates is that our Development Schemes are going to be financed by short term borrowings from the Joint Consolidated Fund – the revenue surplus which may be overestimated and may eventually turn out to be illusory. In other words, the Development Schemes are to be financed by short-term borrowings!

The Hon. the Financial Secretary was very honest when at page 16 of his speech he said: "*But the fact remains that financing the programme is not going to be at all easy.*"

Where is the money coming from? That seems to be the difficulty. Sometimes when I look at the Hon. the Financial Secretary I am quite sure that his countenance, which is normally a much more pleasant countenance than the others, is showing signs of worry. I am quite sure he is probably worried over the fact that there is no money available to further finance the Development Programme. He says so nicely and circuitously.

Mr. Speaker, why is money not available? Is it that we cannot get money to borrow? I am not saying so, Mr. Speaker, but let us know. Is there not money available in the London market? Is it impossible to raise a loan in the United States or Canada?

Certainly this Government has all the qualities which would give the assurance to would-be lenders which those would-be lenders desire. Is there no imagination on the part of the Government? Is its score so low in British Guiana that it cannot raise money locally? It is not enough to come here and say, "*financing the development schemes will not be easy.*" They must tell us what the difficulties are. They as the Government must offer an alternative.

I used to hear the Majority Party talking about premium bonds. Why talk about premium bonds. Why not do something about premium bonds? Have the trappings of office robbed the Majority of any originality or is it too much to expect of them in the present circumstances, moving, as they are in the company in which they know more?

This Budget Speech, from stem to stern, could have been written, save for the language, by any schoolboy who had listened to any of the previous Budget Speeches. We are asked to vote \$45 million to this very "*competent*" Government. Forty-five million dollars for what? To do what with?

This is a Government that has at its disposal \$646,360 for the reconstruction of the Georgetown hospital. So says page 37 of the Development Estimates - the estimate for 1958.

Blank, blank, blank. Do we understand they will not spend this \$600,000? What is the Government policy with respect to hospitals, or the Public Hospital, Georgetown?

I am dealing in the absence of any fresh policy under particular Heads, and I am asking what they are going to do with the money under this Head. They have over \$600,000 to spend on the Hospital. They refuse to spend it. Certainly the Majority Party should confess their incompetence. Everyone would sympathise with them because in British Guiana we are a very sympathetic people. They have not been in office long enough to implement the promises they made, but with respect to a thing like the Hospital, Mr. Speaker, they must know what is their policy. Are they going to be digging their nails and scratching their heads at this stage, not saying whether they are going to have the Hospital or not? If I remember Dr. Clarke's Report alright, it is not a question of spending on the building of the Hospital at one time, but in units. There was a report about this matter in the press but the Legislature, though it met several times was not treated with the courtesy of being told whether the report was accurate or inaccurate or what was actually decided on.

Operating conditions at the Public Hospital, Georgetown are primitive. If the casualty unit were rebuilt the theatre units for operating can then be improved. Let Government make no mistake about it. As far as I am concerned I am not necessarily saying that the whole \$12 million must be spent on the Georgetown Hospital, but there are certain necessities - a proper operating theatre, a proper casualty section - which can be started and which can be carried through. If the Government said, "*We feel, rather than spending \$12 million over so many years on the Georgetown Hospital, that sum should be distributed in raising the standard of medical services pari passu throughout the country,*" I would be inclined to agree with that, or even support that, but up to now we do not know what they are doing about the Hospital. Their public information service, the Press, stated that they were thinking of spending it on drainage and irrigation. Things have come to a sorry pass. To be spent on drainage and irrigation -

[The Minister of Labour, Health and Housing (Mrs. Jagan): To a point of order: spending what? May I inquire what is to be spent?]

[Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member -]

Mr. Burnham: Mr. Speaker, I would never in my life recognise that as a point of order. I will proceed.

[Mrs. Jagan: Sir, may I rise on a point of correction? The Hon. Gentle-

man was speaking about expenditure of some money allocated for housing. Then he turned to drainage and irrigation. I was not aware that money was being spent -]

Mr. Burnham: Mr. Speaker, it is already late and I can pardon the Hon. Lady for sleeping. I was not speaking about housing. I was speaking about the Hospital. I take it that this is a convenient point at which to adjourn. In fact, may I so ask? I intend to make another point which I could not possibly finish now.

Budget Debate: 30th January, 1958

Mr. Burnham: Your Honour, before Morpheus had touched and dulled the senses of some Members of Government last night, I was dealing with the question of the erection of a new hospital in Georgetown. My solicitude for the Public Hospital, Georgetown, has nothing to do with the fact that the constituency which I represent is a Georgetown constituency, but because I think it is an incontrovertible fact that the Public Hospital in Georgetown is the main hospital of the Colony, and if the conditions in the Public Hospital were to continue to be as primitive as they are now, if the difficulties under which physicians and surgeons have to operate were to continue, it is difficult to foresee what improvements there can be in the health of the people of British Guiana.

At the risk of being repetitious, I would seek to remind the Government of the \$600,000 odd which it should have at its disposal in the Development Programme for at least starting the work on the Public Hospital, Georgetown, looking after the Casualty Unit which will include the operating theatres, and to remind the Government that my plea is not that \$12,000,000 be spent immediately, because I know as well as anyone else, that that money is not available; nor, is my plea that a great deal of money be spent on making a palace of the Public Hospital, Georgetown, to the exclusion of medical services in other parts of the country. I urge upon them to look after the essentials which are in crying need of being provided for.

When the adjournment was taken last evening, I had merely dealt in generalities. I had condescended to particulars only as far as the Public Hospital, Georgetown, is concerned, and it is my desire and my duty, Your Honour, today to show that the generalities in which I indulged can be deduced from the particulars of incompetence which one will discover after a perusal of the various departments. I am not dealing with the amount of money spent; I shall deal rather with the policy or absence of policy with respect to each department or groups of departments, and I shall crave Your Honour's indulgence to refer from time to time to a document which was published sometime in August, 1957, or rather, July, to wit, "*The People's Progressive party's Manifesto, Programme and Policy.*"

The reason for asking Your Honour such leave is to show that the present Government purported to have a policy, purported to have a blue print and it is a little difficult to appreciate how ignorance could have intervened in so short a time. It is a little difficult to understand why the Council must be entertained from time to time with the outworn cliché: "*The matter is under consideration, and you will hear our policy later*"; nor, can the Government expect that any of us in this Council today are sufficiently gullible as to accept as an excuse for their failure at least to adumbrate a

policy, the fact that they are merely participating and are but instruments, perhaps, or slaves of a hidebound Constitution, because the document from which I asked Your Honour leave to quote –

[Mr. Speaker: What is the document about?]

Mr. Burnham: A document of the People's Progressive Party. A Manifesto to show that it had a policy.

I did not, Your Honour, say that it was an historical document.

[Mr. Speaker: Are you going to read the whole of it?]

Mr. Burnham: No, I have no intention doing so. I have never read my speeches in my life, let alone culling my speeches from such a document.

[Mr. Speaker: You can adopt that as you go on.]

Mr. Burnham: Well, I have heard Your Honour state in another place that when you adopt a point of view it becomes your own. I have absolutely no intention of adopting everything I have seen in this document, but, Your Honour the point is this – that the present participating Ministers told the electorate and told the country whose franchise they sought, that if they were given a majority, I quote:

"We would also demand the right to appoint sufficient nominated Members on the Legislative Council to provide us with a working majority. It is only in this way the Renison Constitution can be made to work in favour of the people."

Well, Your Honour, the electorate gave the participating Ministers the majority. His Excellency the Governor was kind enough not even to nominate anyone else to the Executive Council and, therefore, gave them a majority in the Executive Council. From what we have seen of the voting here recently and from what every schoolboy in British Guiana knows, the Majority Party has a majority in the Legislative Council; hence, the Renison Constitution can be made to work in favour of the people and then, in that context, Your Honour, we have to consider why it is that some of the promises made are honoured in the breach, when one considers the Budget and reviews the Estimates.

There can be no question of the Constitution not being such as can be worked in favour of the people and I quote from the highest authority, the Leader of the Majority Party. The first thing that strikes one about this Government or the first skittle we shall have to knock over is this excuse that this Budget is not theirs. Has the Budget of the Elected Government been a Budget which was found when they assumed office? So far as I can recall, the Estimates were prepared subsequent to the coming into office of

the new Government and certainly if they felt that the time was too short within which to alter the structure and change the fabric of the Budget, I am sure they would have got the indulgence from this Council which would have waited a little longer for the presentation of the Budget and the Estimates – September, October, November, December – four months within which to change the sorry scheme which they, and we, too, on this side had attacked in the past. If that were not enough we would have given them more time.

But, it is not merely a failure to change the structure and the fabric. It seems, Your Honour, that it is also a question of the present Government's refusing on some occasions to honour the promises made. From time to time our ears have been tired with the talk about Guianisation: "*wherever there is a suitable Guianese candidate for any senior post, he will be given preference.*" The Majority Party has sat there and has voted against the principle of Guianisation, to wit, on the question of the appointment of a Deputy Director of Public Works, to encourage an importee for which post the Hon. the Financial Secretary persuaded them to vote an extra \$100 per month. What is the purpose of an extra \$100 per month when there are Guianese here capable of holding the post and carrying out the duties as well as anyone whom you could get from abroad for \$760 per month? When the Appropriation Bill is being considered in Committee at a later stage, we shall hear more of this.

The Government has consistently voted against Guianisation. One sometimes wonders who is scratching whose back, and what is the consideration passing from one side to the other when it comes to the Majority Party's failing to honour the basic promises made at the hustings. Certainly one must assume that when the Leader of the Majority Party called upon His Excellency the Governor to consider the question of participating, he must have made his premises clear. The two contracting parties entered into an agreement and one party cannot now say, *non est factum*. One party cannot now discover that the agreement which was entered into was not the agreement he intended. Even if that were so, there is a remedy – repudiation of contract – Mr. Speaker, perhaps, the Hon. Member was thinking that he is in another forum. I made no mistake, Your Honour. He who keeps me in order here has kept me in order in another place; but sometimes analogies in one forum are useful in another.

Let us for instance observe; let us consider the Head, Labour and I make reference to that particular Head because admittedly the Majority Party showed the greatest solicitude for the toiling masses of this country, at least in talk. The Majority Party is supposed to be the vanguard of the proletariat and as such is most vocal in espousing the cause of the workers. May I quote:

"The Party sees the necessity for minimum wage laws in all industries as a needed protection for working people. These minimum wage laws must bear close relation to

the cost of living index. Further it is the duty of the Government to enforce such minimum wage law and not leave the burden to the workers whose only reward for seeking the implementation of such laws is victimisation."

What have we heard of minimum wages for all classes and categories of workers? Exactly nothing. I do not for one moment overlook the human and physical limitations of this Government, as of any other Government; I did not expect them to wave a wand and introduce all the necessary legislation, but, at least, this Legislature could have been done the courtesy of being told that the Government proposed to do something about minimum wages for all categories of workers – minimum wages that would take into account the cost of living.

Recently, certain unions made representations about cost of living allowances and these unions merely earned a rejection of their plea from the Government. It is true that the particular Member of the Executive who replied to the unions was the Hon. the Chief Secretary, but, Your Honour, they are all one. They are indivisible, they are inseparable, they are all Members of Her Majesty's Executive Council in and for the Colony of British Guiana, and one recognises that every time they vote in this Council they vote together. They cannot be separated for one purpose and act as one for another:

"The 1956 Essential Services Ordinance makes it illegal for workers in 11 services to strike without giving 30 days notice to the Governor. It provides for the establishment of an Arbitration Tribunal by the Governor thereby denying these workers their legitimate rights and places into the hands of the Governor's dictatorial powers."

So, says the manifesto. It undertakes to have it changed. What does one find the Hon. Minister of Labour, Health and Housing saying in this Council? *"We are looking into the Schedule."* It was the rationale of the enactment that was attacked, I can say quite rightly, by the Majority Party, not the schedule; it was not whether A, B, C, D, E or F category of workers should be subjected to the limitation of their normal right to arbitration with respect to trade disputes; or to go on strike; it was whether or not the principle behind the Ordinance is the correct one, especially when one remembers that the Ordinance merely replaces the Essential Services Ordinance of 1942, during the debate on which the undertaking was given by the Attorney-General, Mr. Pretheroe, that it was entirely a war-time measure. The reason for the attack on the Essential Services Ordinance by the Majority Party when it was out of office was stated thus:

"It provides for the establishment of an arbitration tribunal by the Government thereby denying those workers their legitimate rights and places into the hand of the Governor's dictatorial powers."

Perhaps, my friends on the other side will say that the “*dialectics*” of the situation demanded, that when other persons are Members of the Executive Council and advise the Governor, the powers which the Governor has are dictatorial, but when “*champions of the people*” are there, those powers become democratic, liberal and in the best interests of the workers.

But, let us assume the interest of the present Government is the workers. Let us assume that the present Government is the embodiment of all that is good for the workers. Unless we are going to have a guarantee that no other combination of Executive Council Members is possible – we should at least make sure that never again those “*dictatorial powers*,” I quote, will be given to any one individual.

“*The Venn Commission Report to be implemented; Wages Councils established by the Interim Government vests too much power in the hands of the Governor and restricts the rights of working people.*”: What have we heard about it? It does not take a year and a day to tell us your policy with respect to them. The Commission’s recommendation with respect to contributory pension schemes for workers was to be implemented. So, we want to hear something from the Government about their desire, their intention of implementing these particular promises.

“*The principle of compulsory arbitration whereby employers and trade unions, when resolved in a deadlock, must go to arbitration is one which offers the fullest protection to workers under a friendly Government.*”

They are in favour of the principle of arbitration. In other words, when there are any deadlocks there should be a resort to arbitration, but this miserly Government proposes a sum of \$1,000 for the entire year of 1958 for arbitration. In other words, they do not anticipate any necessity for arbitration – something they favour. Is it that employers have become so loving that there would be no necessity for arbitration? Or is it that this Government hopes to tell workers, “*You must not indulge in trade disputes, you must never let the need for arbitration arise.*” Even if it is possible that only a few occasions will arise for arbitration, doesn’t it show a lack of imagination to vote only \$1,000? It took strong argument in the Finance Committee to get this unimaginative Government to increase the sum from \$1,000 to \$5,000.

Those are the people who said, “*Compulsory arbitration is a good thing provided that the Government is not controlled by the Chamber of Commerce and vested interests*”. But, it is the Party that made that statement that is now the Government, and we are to assume that the present Government is not controlled by the Chamber of Commerce.

Maybe it means that the Chamber of Commerce and vested interest are still in control and have decided that there is no need for arbitration. What can they- what can the present Government expect of the workers of this country with the rising cost of living as reported by Miss Paro? A worker’s average expenditure is \$28.77 per week, while his minimum wage is \$2.52

per day. How can the present Government not see and anticipate a certain amount of restlessness amongst the workers? No one wants the worker to indulge in wildcat strikes, but one has to be realistic. A worker is earning \$2.52 per day and the cost of living is \$28.77 per week. I cannot see how one can expect that man to be other than discontented and expect him not to make representations in the usual way. If, as often happens, the employer is not prepared to give him relief, a dispute is bound to arise and that is a question for arbitration.

Now for Trade and Industry – the portfolio of the Leader of the Majority Party. The party feels that:

“...in our present state of development there is no need to nationalise private industries. Like the Governments of India and Ghana, we reserve the right to nationalise, and will pay just and adequate...”

One can have no quarrel with the Majority Party for having that point of view, but one can quarrel with the Majority Party for not telling us what they are doing about the Electric Company. Are they buying the Electric Company? But one hears at the street corners or sees published in the press the statement alleged to have been made by the Hon. Minister of Community Development and Education to the effect that to buy the Electric Company is to buy a “dead.” That may or may not be true.

Your Honour, I did not say that it is what the Hon. Minister said. The Minister is reported to have said that. If the Ministers of the Government are mis-reported they have only themselves to blame. If they would only make these world-shaking declarations in the proper place – the Legislative Council – they would not be mis-reported in the columns of the newspapers. The whole of British Guiana is concerned about Government’s ownership or control of the Demerara Electric Company, and it is not a difficult matter. The details may take some time for working out, but the policy should be clear: are you or are you not going to take over the Demerara Electric Company? You cannot say that the Government can’t say whether it has given up the idea of nationalisation, unless its Ministers fear that they will be considered “bad boys” and extreme leftists; unless they fear that one may imagine that they are going east of democracy. Let me assure them that Government ownership of public utilities, such as electricity is accepted in all parts of the world, including the most conservative parts. Let us pass on; we shall hear more from the Government, hitherto so silent. It seems, Your Honour, that I have goaded them into at least mental activity. I hope that it will lead them into physical activity to defend their policies.

On the question of taxation the Majority Party says:

“We will raise and collect more by way of direct taxation from those who are able to pay and reduce the very high incidence of indirect taxation which falls heavily on the

poor. We feel that greater deductions should be allowed for wives and dependents under the Income Tax Ordinance. We will hang the emphasis from indirect taxation to direct taxation."

What does this Budget say? That indirect taxation still accounts for over 50% of our revenue.

This Budget or rather the Hon. the Financial Secretary says that this Budget contains nothing new. That means the old pattern of taxation remains. There is a slight concession given in respect of wives and children but there is increased taxation on bachelors. It is true that we should like to see our population proliferating within the bonds of marriage, but, certainly, one cannot agree that a poor bachelor must pay for the fact that he has not been able to marry a wife.

This is what this Government does to the poor bachelor – squeezes him and reduces his allowance. Your Honour, one cannot acquire a wife in British Guiana. I was not so fortunate. A wife has to be courted and won. But since this Majority Party had planned to establish a Ministry of Culture, perhaps they can tell us whether the new culture they preach and spread over this country will open the possibility of acquiring wives as distinct from courting them. I quote again from the Majority Party:

"Due to a reduction of taxes in the sugar industry before the ending of the 4th Legislative Council in 1953, the Government revenue derived from that industry was considerably reduced. At that time the export, acreage and distilleries tax were eradicated, thus robbing the Government of nearly a quarter million dollars."

It seems as if the Majority Party when out of office has many schemes for the raising of revenue. Perhaps one can understand that what was spoken in the past now turns out to be wrong. Let us know where we stand. We need money. Couldn't the Hon. the Financial Secretary be advised by his economic expert on his right?

You're the Majority Party.

Your Honour, I will seek to curb the sensitiveness of my ear. But, that is to be expected; it is easy to whisper across the well of this Chamber. Is it not the behaviour of cowards, instead of standing on their legs, to be whispering across the table? The exchange, however, is not always in favour of the Government. Your Honour, the point is this: we need money, we need money very badly. We have heard that we can get some from this source – so I understand from this Manifesto and that is what the public was told – we can get more by direct taxation; we can get more by the introduction of certain taxes which the sugar industry used to pay before. We on this side know nothing about these taxes – how much they used to be, how much Government hopes to gain by these taxes. But certainly, if Government has been robbed of these taxes it was the duty of the Majority Party, who are educating the people of British Guiana, to expose the robbery and

to see that those responsible pay their due and thus have this revenue to find its way into the coffers of our pauperised Government.

Labour, Health and Housing:

"We shall (i) Accelerate the rental purchase of housing scheme so that it will afford more security in housing for the middle and lower income groups which are presently suffering from the acute housing shortage.

(ii) Extend and accelerate Government rural housing schemes."

That is a most commendable aim. Better than that, in the circumstances, one cannot imagine. But what do we find? The housing programme will come to a stop though there is the sum of \$2,000,000 still left, and lands on the East Bank given to Government by the Demerara Company or the Sugar Producers' Association for housing will be returned to them. "*Bribery and corruption,*" says the Minister of Community Development and Education.

"We have to investigate the Housing Department to see how this money has been spent."

"We shall encourage prefabrication and standardised building construction material for the purpose of stimulating low cost housing."

Your Honour, there are lots of lovely plans for housing in British Guiana, but when we come to the Budget there is nothing about these plans. If perchance the participating Ministers were to say that this Budget is not of their making, the scheme is not theirs, and then a greater spate of congratulations should be handed to the Hon. the Financial Secretary who alone has been able to impress his personality and his own way of thinking on five persons who were elected by the electors of British Guiana.

I did not mention with any particularity the policy we were promised with respect to Health which included modernising the hospital, which apparently, has been forgotten. I have already alluded to the state of the Public Hospital, Georgetown, and I am looking forward and hoping that this "*energetic*" Government which I understand from my recent reading, is digging in and buckling down to the problems, will soon be opening the Port Mourant Hospital making more beds available for the sick and suffering of Eastern Berbice, which is the constituency of the Minister of Trade and Industry.

One almost confesses that before its preferment to office the policy of the Majority Party for the development of Agriculture was attractive. There was an elaborate land policy. But, Your Honour, will you believe that today, when we sit in the Finance Committee and we ask the Hon. Minister of Natural Resources, within whose portfolio the subject falls, about the policy,

he says, "*It is under consideration*". I think I used to be told when I was at school about something called a cliché – "*It is under consideration*" – that is all we hear. When the question is posed to the Hon. Minister of Natural Resources: "*Does your Government favour individual occupation as distinct from community or group occupation of crown lands which are to be divided among the people?*" he replies, "*Government has not yet decided*".

That is a simple matter – a matter which ought to have been decided prior to 12th August. What could have caused the confusion? What is the difficulty? Is it that those to whom they would rather give the land are in favour of a different type of occupation from that promised in their Manifesto in July, 1957? If that is not the reason, I should hope that this Council will be told something before the close of this debate. What is the reason for the present Government's inability to state clearly what type of occupation it favours?

Reports have been made that the present Government is partial in its allocation of lands. Your Honour, I have not sat here as a judge in this matter; I have not heard the sworn evidence of both sides and I am not in a position to say categorically that these reports are true. But I should ask Government to attend to this matter of land distribution; especially in such vicinities as Ithaca and be like Caesar's wife, above suspicion. I am not saying that the Government is being partial; I do not accept what some of its detractors say: that it is offering lands to those who supported the Majority Party. I would not believe that; I cannot believe that, but I would ask Government to emulate Caesar's conception of what his wife should have been.

On the question of Social Services, Government has failed to live up to the promises and policies we have heard of before. It is true that there has been an increase in the vote for Social Welfare, but the money is not for other social services. Sir, \$53,000 out of a budget of \$1,648,000 is neither here nor there. There are the aged people of this country to look after. Everyone knows how quickly people get old in this country, especially those who have been subjected to the rigours of very hard work in an enervating climate and I would have agreed with the Majority Party when it said it would pass legislation to reduce the pensionable age limit to 55 years. It had also promised to abolish the means test and pay the same pension to old age pensioners in the country and in the town.

Sir, this is one piece of legislation that is easy to pass. It is a simple amendment to certain figures in certain clauses. It is not difficult for our Government to get a Certificate of Urgency from His Excellency the Governor, as we have experienced when we were making retroactive the validation of the Greater Georgetown Plan. This is something that could have been done months ago. This legislation could have been passed in a few seconds because there would have been no opposition from this side of the table.

This Government no longer intends to give people old age pension at the age of 55, and it intends to continue to discriminate between town and country old age pensioners. Government is determined still to have the means test.

With regard to the question of Local Government, Your Honour, I have searched in vain for a Head in these Estimates on which I could commend the Majority Party. I have always agreed with the contention of the Majority Party that Local Government Councils, whether Municipal, Village or Country should be wholly elected on the basis of universal adult suffrage. The Majority Party has my support on that. The Party said so in its Manifesto. Why has nothing been done yet? Is it so difficult?

Let us assume, Your Honour, that there are difficulties which prevent the Party from implementing its promise. Let us assume that there are difficulties in working out the details of converting country districts, which are entirely nominated, into elected Councils. There are only two Municipalities and a few Village Councils where there is an elected element. What has prevented the passage of a Bill merely to change the voting qualifications from property and/or rental to mere residence? There may, however, be difficulties. It may be that, as has happened in certain Village Councils where the Majority Party did not contest, or having contested failed, the Party would prefer to see the retention of the nominated system – in places like Buxton, for instance.

It would appear that it is for that reason that the Majority Party has been unable to give us a policy or a programme. Maybe the Party has learnt the practice of imperialism. In my opinion it intends to keep the nominated system so that it can put its cronies in the nominated seats. Is it that the Party fears it will not get a majority in these councils? I certainly do not think the minds of Members of the Party should be so narrow.

Meanwhile when the poor farmers cannot pay the Local Authorities their taxes in time, they are called upon to pay 5 percent more. We have a solution offered to us by the very learned Minister of Agriculture and Natural Resources: If you cannot afford to pay your rates by a certain time, says he, go to a money lender and borrow the money. That is reported in the *Hansard*. Go to a money lender, borrow the money and pay your taxes, and be forever indebted to some money lender.

I would hardly ever have expected to find this Government degenerating to a money lender's Government, or to a Government which prods its people into getting into the hands of money lenders. Not only is the Government condoning the evil started by the Interim Government, but it continues to suggest a way out which is, to say the least, very disappointing coming from such high quarters.

One would have expected that the present Government would have recognized the difficulties of the various Local Authorities, and that if it were going to insist on the payment of interest after the date due for the

payment of taxes or rates as the case may be it would have given these Local Authorities the power to borrow, or to overdraw their accounts at the Commercial Banks.

Anyone who, like myself, was born and bred in a village knows that if there is no money the works stop. Therefore there can be no question of the 5 percent which has been imposed on this ratepayer being used to offset any interest which the Local Authorities have to pay on any loan because any loans that are taken are provided for at the time of budgeting and the interest on these loans is passed on *via* taxes to those who pay taxes or rates.

Let us assume that 5 percent has to be paid, why have not the Local Authorities been given the power to borrow from Commercial Banks and to overdraw their accounts at those Banks against the security of their rates and taxes? You merely impose a 5 percent penalty, but you do not trouble yourselves with the question of giving the Local Authorities power to raise loans to carry on the works when the rates have not been paid.

It was some years ago that one Dr. Marshall came here at considerable expense to this country and reported on Local Government.

Then Dr. Marshall was followed by three gentlemen, all of whose names I do not recall, but one was Dr. Hill. As I understood it, the three men who are here – I think they still are here – were working out plans and details for the implementation of the Marshall Report. I remember Dr. Hill in particular speaking to the Georgetown Town Council during early 1957 or late 1956 and telling us that the Government at the time would have introduced the necessary legislation for the implementation of the Marshall Report. But we hear nothing now about the Marshall Report. Of course, the Majority Party did promise it would set up a Commission of Inquiry to ascertain the measure of acceptance by representative opinion in the country.

As for me, the Marshall Report, with certain changes is acceptable but the Majority Party has got the right to have its own opinion. We believe in diversity of opinion, but why is it that this Commission of Inquiry is not yet appointed? Does it take so much red tape to appoint a Commission of Inquiry, or is the Majority Party afraid that certain people who in the past did not have to pay taxes would now have to pay taxes, and their political support would diminish?

I prefer not to think so, and if that reason that I have mentioned *en passant* is wrong, then I shall retract it, provided they, on the other side of the table, say so. It is sheer incompetence. The Report is there, the advisers are here. Is Government so incompetent that it cannot proceed? Is Government like a coy maiden who cannot make up her mind over her choice?

We pass on to Education. Undoubtedly the Minister who holds that portfolio has heavy duties: education, community development, local government. It must be confessed that the Government has done something about increasing the number of scholarships from the primary to the sec-

ondary schools. The devil I will give his due, let alone the Majority Party. But what else? I remember that the Leader of the Majority Party said in London in April last that this Government was not doing enough to assist the teaching of Hindi in schools and here it is – and this is gospel truth, I heard it with these ears – this new Government has done nothing about increasing the grant for the teaching of Hindi. Yesterday he complained that the Interim Government was not doing enough; today, when he has the opportunity, he is not doing anything.

But I remember there was a time when my colleagues were other than they are now, when I used to be accused of showing too much interest in education. I wonder whether this is the reason for their showing slight attention to the question of education. There is no one now to prod, there is no one now to urge. Or perhaps we have an indication of what it is all about when we read the Financial Secretary's speech, in which he says that concentration will have to be on economic projects rather than social services. But it is one thing to talk about spending your money on economic projects. Everyone agrees, but what is going to be the use of that if you make no provision for the improvement of your educational system?

We have so far elicited from the Government one statement of policy – that every school built in future with Government funds will be a Government school. I desire to take this opportunity to congratulate the Minister of Education for being the first Minister who has clearly stated the policy of his Government on any subject whatsoever.

But apart from that, what do we have? Oh, yes: \$150,000 allocated for aid to secondary schools. We cannot hear yet which are the schools? What about the curricula with respect to schools? We cannot hear yet. Someone, not a Member of the Government but of the Majority Party, said that local history should be taught in schools. Excellent idea! But it will be written by a historian, I hope and not by politicians. I did suggest someone the last time, but a competent person: not a neophyte, not a distorter of history.

What is this Government doing; what does this Government propose to do about courses in higher education? Too many newspaper reports lie. I do not believe all these reports because in the majority of cases they are inaccurate, but sometimes I mention them merely out of a desire to see that the Government does not fall into traps or make mistakes. There was once a report that this, our Government, proposed no longer to make any contribution to the University College of the West Indies. I cannot believe it. I would not believe it! But I should ask the Minister of Education to be a little more careful as to his press relations and statements to the press, or perhaps tell us why this Government proposes no longer to make a contribution to the University College of the West Indies.

But this Government should not be satisfied with continuing its contribution to the University College of the West Indies. I contend that it should go further. We have heard that recently there has been an allocation of the sum of \$1 million by Trinidad towards the setting up of an Engineering

Faculty at the University College of the West Indies. I appreciate that the Government here is poorer, the country is poorer, but still I would have imagined – I would have hoped that this Government would also have made a token contribution to the setting up of an Engineering Faculty at the University College of the West Indies, because every day the complaint is, “*you cannot get a sufficient number of trained men as technologists.*” The faculties of various schools where we sometimes get entry for our students are filled, and this is one of the reasons for having to depend on persons from abroad, who on many occasions cannot be spared from their respective countries. I would commend to Government’s serious consideration – not the serious consideration one is assured when one asks embarrassing questions of the Government in the Finance Committee, but really serious consideration – of the matter and that it should make an allocation proportionate to the percentage which it pays of the total grant by all the Caribbean territories to the University College of the West Indies.

There is one Department, under another Head, I shall deal with at this stage and that is, the Public Works Department. I deal with that Department not because there is any antipathy towards the Department or its officers, but because in that Department one finds two significant things: one incompetence; two, the honouring of the principle of Guianisation in the breach.

Some time ago, as the Hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Gajraj, mentioned yesterday, the top storey of part of the Technical Institute building fell down. Early in 1956 there was a report, once which we, Members of the Legislative Council, have not been able to lay our hands or eyes. Perhaps the Hon. Member for New Amsterdam can here assist us, if he is not bound by the Official Secrets Act. Can it be that that report did say that those who were reporting were surprised that the drawings and plans for the Technical Institute could have been passed by a qualified engineer like the Director of Public Works?

Why is it that the contents of this report have not been shown to us? Why is it that the Majority Party has not got it out and shown the incompetence which it always suspected existed in the Department of Public Works? It reminds me of recent events in Venezuela. Voters were given two cards, each of a different colour, and one allocated to Jimenez. You voted, and when you came out you handed back one of the cards. If you showed Jimenez’s colour it meant you had not voted for him; if you did not show it then it meant that you had voted for him. If you failed to show any card it meant that you had not voted for him and were afraid and were hiding.

Similarly, by hiding the report from the people of British Guiana it shows there must be some incompetence in the Public Works Department which Government is afraid of disclosing and we are told we have to vote \$100 per month more for a Deputy Director because we cannot get a Guianese. The latter could not have been more incompetent. Let us emulate the Gov-

ernment; let us follow the Executive's economics, be parsimonious: at least a Guianese there would have cost less than \$760 per month; and to keep to the puerile theories of the Government, more money would have been available for development.

It does appear to me that we have a sufficient number of Guianese holding executive posts in the Public Works Department, one of whom could have been preferred to this particular post. I am convinced of that. While I hold to Guianisation as a strong principle, I conceive that there are many posts in the Service for which we shall have to get persons from abroad: that I do not deny at all and we shall have to pay for them as well, that I grant. But what incentive is there for the local Guianese who qualifies in engineering and for a senior post if Government is prepared to pay more for someone from abroad than whom he could never be more incompetent? I am going to deal with relative schemes and degrees of incompetence because there is no doubt about the incompetence of that Department.

Sometimes engineers come from abroad with their university qualifications but not with their professional qualifications. And what happens? As soon as they get their professional qualifications, they go off. Should it not be therefore the policy of this Government with respect to the P.W.D. to offer some incentive to Guianese? But all is not black, I confess, and I desire to congratulate the present Government upon the preferment of a Guianese in another Department, notably the Drainage and Irrigation Department should be good enough for the Public Works Department. Of course, it is an interesting Department; men are appointed as architects who are just 37 years of age with 23 years experience – men whose experience started when they were 14, as office boys perhaps.

While on the question of architects in the Public Works Department, Your Honour, I should like to bring to the attention of the Government that there are posts for architects in other places, such as in the Education Department and in the Housing Department, and not in all cases were advertisements made locally. It means, therefore, that the local would-be applicant is not put in a position of knowing that a vacancy exists. That to my mind, is a deliberate attempt to keep out local applicants. I would grant the Majority Party this – I will grant that the Civil Service does not come under their purview and that appointments to these high posts are not part of their patronage. Their patronage is limited to private secretaries. But, I should hope that they would seek to impress upon the Government the way Guianese feel about the disregard for the preferment of Guianese to senior posts when those Guianese are properly and fully qualified.

Now let us turn to the Head on the Budget Estimates "*Miscellaneous – Subventions, etc., other than Municipal.*" There we will find that \$4,800 for the Inter-Caribbean Shipping Service has been voted or proposed to be voted by our Government; \$84,674 for contribution to Regional Trade Commis-

sioner, Student and Migrant Services; \$303,108 for the University College of the West Indies – annual Contribution; \$150,000 in anticipation of a review with respect to the University College of the West Indies; \$13,500 for exhibitions to the University College of the West Indies and \$5,760 for allowances to Student at Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture – a grand total of \$561,942, which are all contributions to regional services. Of course, the present Government is entitled to say that it does not favour federation, but it seems to me that there must be some consistency. Why are you going to expend this amount of money annually with respect to regional services – West Indian services – as distinct from solely Guianese services, when the bulk of those funds are going to be annexed? The Agencies concerned will be controlled by West Indian Ministers – Ministers of the West Indian Federation. Are we going to have absolutely no voice with regard to the spending of our money?

Look at what has happened recently to a number of colonial students, including a Guianese, in England. They were badly treated. Our Government did nothing about it. Our Government apparently accepted the official explanation. Time was when this Government was the champion of the worker and the dismissed employee. Now it stands quiet. But even if this Government wants to do anything it can do nothing, because the administration of the Immigrant Students Service Commission comes within the portfolio of the Prime Minister of the West Indies Federation.

For the time being it is under the Advisory Council. We can do nothing but make pious representations and equally pious suggestions, neither of which need be listened to or acted upon by those who administer the office and control that Department. It seems to me that either we put ourselves in a position where we can have a voice, as of right, in the spending of these thousands of dollars which we vote, or on the other hand set up for ourselves these service which we cannot afford. But, say the Government, we can go on our own and we can do it on our own.

It seems to me that the conclusion to be drawn from our payment of this large sum of money which our Government has had to vote for those regional services, is that we either get out of or get into the Federation, otherwise we shall be paying the piper without being able to call the tune. Of course, the Government is faced with the fact that it cannot set up a University of its own; it cannot set up an agricultural school of its own. We could not afford a High Commissioner in London, and in any case we are not entitled to one now, as we are still a Crown Colony in status. I'll leave that to the Government to think about. I am not debating Federation now. I shall leave the debate on Federation for another time when it comes up on a Substantive Motion. But may I just observe that the Government is not being fair to the people – using their funds for these services in the control of which they have no part or lot.

The Administration must be carefully looked into. As the Majority Party has just got into power they need time to look into it, but while they

are looking into it, I should like them to remember a certain anomaly which exists in the emoluments paid to Members of the Public Services.

When one looks at the Estimates under the head "*Police*" one sees that the Commissioner of Police is to get a total salary of \$760. This Majority Party, the champions of the people of British Guiana, agreed to vote that amount of money because it was impossible, in their judgment, for a gentleman with his ability to be easily obtained, but Her Majesty's judges can be obtained for less. Is not that indicative of the turn of mind of the whole of the Government? The blame does not attach to one official or elected Member, but to the whole Government. Her Majesty's judges who have to administer justice are less competent and cheaper than a Commissioner of Police. What have we sunk to in this country? We talk about justice; we talk about the administration of justice; we speak also of British justice broadening down from precedent to precedent, and the judges are paid less than a Commissioner of Police! I mean no ill against the gentleman, and I do not want to indulge in personalities. I merely want to point out that something has gone wrong with the salary structure of the Administration. Someone suggested, but I would not like to entertain that suggestion seriously, that because the judiciary is drawn from The West Indies and Guianese, its members are easily obtainable and can, therefore, be paid less.

My final point, Your Honour. I see in these Estimates that this pauperized country is going to pay the sum of \$375,000 to provide hospitality for troops – not native Guianese in the British Guiana Volunteer Force. It is at page 108, "*Military Expenditure, - \$375,000*". This, Your Honour, is where the elected section of the Government has been false to its principles, has been false to its ideals, and accepted the game of other persons. When the troops were brought here in 1953 –

[A voice: You ran.]

Mr. Burnham: So far as I remember I continued to live in British Guiana throughout that period and took no holidays. But, Your Honour, to be serious for a moment.

When the British troops were brought here – the Black Watch I think – this country was assured by the then Governor, Sir Alfred Savage, that these troops were going to be brought here at no cost to our exchequer. I was here. Those who shake their heads across the table were not here in person. I heard those words from His Excellency the Governor who was then Sir Alfred Savage. Then what happened? We keep a Police force which costs us \$498,971. We keep a Volunteer Force which costs \$111,338, and yet we have to spend \$375,000 showing hospitality to these troops. We are a hospitable people. Since the Emergency Order has been lifted there have been free elections. There are the freely elected Ministers participating in the Government. Why should we be burdened with this sum of \$375,000

for the upkeep of troops in British Guiana?

Let us assume, for the sake of argument that their invitation to British Guiana was justified – a mere assumption not an acceptance. Why must they remain here at considerable cost to the taxpayers of this country? We are a poor country, we don't need soldiers. We don't have a revolution here. I am sure the Leader of the Majority Party could have given that undertaking that there would be no revolutions here. Why this \$375,000? The elected Executive Council and this Legislative Council have the guts to support this unfair expenditure of the poor people's money.

Are we so keen on showing to the world that we are so hospitable that we are prepared to pay this money? Or have the Members of the Majority Party had their minds so turned that they now would sit across the table and smilingly vote \$375,000 for troops whom we did not ask to come here, whom we would have come here as tourists but not as troops? The loyalty of the Police Force cannot be questioned; the loyalty of the Volunteer Force cannot be questioned. Cannot those two forces take care of law and order in British Guiana? The Police Force has had its vote for security work increased to a sum in the vicinity of \$30,000.

We have the Security Police to snoop around to see who is doing this or that, and we have the Police to carry out operations that may be considered necessary against the peaceful people in British Guiana. When we come to the Committee stage, I propose to move the deletion of this item, and I hope to see the Majority Party accept the reason for deleting the sum. I hope that they will see that \$375,000 can make a better contribution, a greater contribution, – or shall I put it this way? – a less small contribution to our Development Programme than about \$50,000 saved by retrenching 600 people from the Housing Department.

Whether we like it or not, these Estimates are going to be passed – sheer head-counting can tell us that. Whether we like it or not the structure of the Budget will remain, but in all seriousness I would commend to the Majority Party – because after all, they are responsible to the people – a careful reconsideration and re-examination of what they published in their Manifesto, some of which we grant them as being good and I would recommend to them that they immediately set about giving this Council some idea of what they intend to implement. Let us have the blueprints. Let us have the policies. There may be ideological differences between the Majority Party and some of us of the "*Opposition*," but, basically, we are all Guianese. Basically, we cannot allow them to behave like ostriches and attempt to tell us that they cannot do this or that because they are merely "*participating*" in the Government.

If, perchance, the Majority Party finds it difficult or impossible, because of the checks and balances of our Constitution, to carry out a policy or programme in keeping with what was promised the electorate, let the Majority Party acquit themselves like men and let them resign.

Federal Supreme Court (Appeals) Bill: 15th April, 1958

Mr. Burnham: I am in entire agreement with the Federal Supreme Court of the West Indies becoming the Appellate Tribunal for us in British Guiana. As a matter of fact I recall that during the Budget Debate I had asked Government why a Bill like this could not have been introduced at that time, or earlier, so as to give us an opportunity, both as Members of this Legislature and Members of the two branches of the legal profession particularly of studying the provisions of the law.

Though I do not share the inability of the Hon. Member for South Georgetown to study the Bill over a period of 10 days, I still think that some further opportunity might have been given to the two branches of the legal profession to study the provisions of the law and to make their comments or recommendations. Since we have been assured today by the Hon. The Attorney-General that it is not proposed to take the Bill through Committee stage, I can see that an opportunity will be given to those persons interested, of submitting recommendations.

I favour the principle of an Appellate Tribunal – I would not say independent of the Courts in the first instance, because according to the philosophy of British jurisprudence, each judge is independent of the other judge even if their respective jurisdictions may be concurrent. The principle in favour of this is that the Appellate Tribunal is separate and distinct from the Courts of first instance.

I make no quarrel about the administration of justice in British Guiana by the judges, but, on the other hand, I can see no objection to our having a Federal Supreme Court superseding the court of Criminal Appeal. I may say that I have had an opportunity of discussing this matter with the Hon. the Attorney-General outside of this Council, and from what I have been able to glean from our discussions it does appear that it would be possible for a Federal Supreme court to come here as frequently as four times per year, or even more frequently. In the circumstances, and provided we are assured of the quality of the Federal Judiciary, I can have no objection to Part III of this Ordinance being proclaimed by His Excellency the Governor.

However, I see a possible hitch in that unless places like Trinidad, Jamaica and other territories were to use the Federal Supreme Court as an Appellate Tribunal in criminal matters. It may not be practical for us in British Guiana to use it for that purpose. Unless we are assured not merely of the quality of the Judiciary – that we assume will be satisfactory – but also that more than the present number of judges are appointed, there might be some difficulties. They were to have only three judges in addition to the Chief Justice of the Federation. It may well be that these four judges may find themselves too busy to come here sufficiently frequently

to allow justice to be done with expedition with respect to those who have appealed from sentences at the Assizes.

It may be possible for temporary judges to be appointed, but with such appointments I cannot agree and I do not agree that there should be any but a permanent Appellate Tribunal. To my mind these difficulties that I foresee and to which I have referred are not difficulties that arise from any disagreement with the Bill in principle. I hope that we can rely upon our Government to see that we are not committed to the use of the Federal Supreme Court as an Appellate Tribunal in criminal matters until these difficulties have been sorted out and overcome, for it is my contention that expedition is the essence of the matter so far as criminal cases are concerned.

I cannot join with those who lamely and unimaginatively point to the fact that the United Kingdom Criminal Court of Appeal consists of judges of the King's Bench sitting specially in the Court of Criminal Appeal. That system which obtains in England at the moment has been under severe fire recently. I can see no reason for making ourselves blind copyists of whatever we find existing in the United Kingdom. In fact I am led to believe that those who seek to rely upon the analogy of the Criminal Court of Appeal in the United Kingdom are only seeking to veil their own inability to understand this Bill or their opposition to this Bill for political reasons because it has something to do with Federation. It may well be that we have just heard the first anti-Federation speech this afternoon veiled behind a pretence at seeking to copy from the United Kingdom the type of Court of Criminal Appeal which consists of judges of first-instance.

So far as the Civil Jurisdiction and Appellate Jurisdiction of this Court are concerned, I think what has got to be admitted is that it does give a greater right of appeal than exists at the moment – a greater right. I should say in many respects, for there may still, perhaps, be a criticism of the Bill in this respect. There are certain cases where I do not agree that sufficient right is given, as for instance, in the case of an appeal from the order of a judge in the Supreme Court made in Chambers, or any summary proceedings.

I do not agree with that, because as I have had reason to point out in another place, there are some very important matters in Chambers which are of a final nature and which are decided by a judge in Chambers and on which one would at times like to have the opinion of an appellate Jurisdiction. But these are matters that can be dealt with in Committee stage, or, perhaps, some of the Amendments which are being considered now by the Federal Attorney-General may cover such objections and such points.

I am not concerned about the expense which it will mean to the people concerned to establish this Federal Supreme Court as our appellate Tribunal, because I feel that justice is so important that we must not consider it from the point of view of how much it would cost the Government. It seems to me that we are going to get it very cheaply, for we will be getting

it at \$23,000 or thereabout.

I know that the Hon. mover of this Bill is not the Financial Secretary. I know he is not a wizard at figures. But I know he is well informed when he says the cost will be only \$23,000, but I want to make this observation: that this Government of British Guiana must be prepared to spend more than \$23,000, because the two Heads under which it falls – one \$13,000 and the other \$10,000 – do not include provision for increased staff in the Deeds Registry or in the Registry of the Supreme Court here. I myself have reason to observe at the moment that the present staff is insufficient and inadequate, and if we were to bring in the Federal Supreme Court it would force the judges of our Supreme Court to write their decisions, which would have to be typed and collated. That would mean that more staff would be required. I would urge upon this Government not to be parsimonious in its expenditure and seek to cut down the expenditure on that court to \$23,000. It is a good thing, and because it is a good thing people should be prepared not to keep the expenses so low as to make the administration of justice a burden in its operation. The attention of Government has been already drawn to the state of the Deeds Registry, and I hope a proper note is now being taken of what is said on this point.

I have heard some Member say that we should have an Appeal Court of our own. Those who are advertising the obvious fact that they are Guianese to the backbone – one born in British Guiana is a Guianese to the backbone – must be reminded of the Scriptural message “*Not everyone that crieth ‘Lord, Lord’, shall enter into the Kingdom*”. It is nonsensical to say “*Let us have our own Appeal Court in British Guiana*”. Have we got in British Guiana a sufficient amount of litigation to engage throughout the year the sitting of an Appeal Court of British Guiana? Furthermore, as a lawyer I should rather prefer to have an Appeal Court which has a wider jurisdiction than British Guiana, because I think in those circumstances the members of such a Court would bring to their task a wider experience, an experience accumulated over a wider field, both in so far as population is concerned and also the combination of facts and incidents.

Those who now say that we should have our own Court of Appeal in British Guiana should also have objected to the West Indian Court of Appeal which is not our own Court of Appeal, although we were fortunate on one occasion to have three Guianese judges sitting in the same Court. They did not sit there as Guianese, but as the Chief Justices of territories outside British Guiana. Those who do not want to come under the jurisdiction of the Federal Supreme Court should have raised their voices when we came under the jurisdiction of the West Indian Court of Appeal. I am not in the habit of opposing for opposition sake. This is one measure of the Government which commends itself to me, and for which I commend the Government. I hope, however, that when we reach the Committee stage the Government and I will continue to agree, and on the Third Reading I shall be in a position to vote for the passing of this Bill.

Motion on Government Housing Estates and the Rents Charged: 7th May, 1958

Mr. Burnham: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move:

"That this Council recommends to Government that there be an immediate investigation into the conditions existing on Government Housing Estates and the rents charged."

I hardly believe that it is necessary to set up myself as an historian by going into the long debates and arguments which took place in 1946 when the Housing Ordinance which is now Chapter 182 of the Laws of British Guiana was debated and passed. Most of the remarks I desire to make, most of the arguments I desire to adduce in favour of my resolution are taken from the present rather than the past. Since, however, the present does not exist independent of the past, it may be necessary to point to certain facts, statements and observations which were made in 1946, which observations and statements should have given us some idea of Government's policy with respect to housing, but also we see this policy being dishonoured in actual practice.

May I, Mr. Speaker, with your permission, refer to a quotation made by the Hon. the Attorney-General which appears in the *Hansard* for the years 1946-47 at col. 768, Vol. 19? I think the learned Attorney-General was quoting from the report of the West India Royal Commission in connection with a statement made by Major Orde Browne in his report (Cmd. 6070). The quotation is as follows:

"We agree therefore with the view expressed by Major Orde Browne in his recent Report (Cmd. 6070) on Labour Conditions in the West Indies that it should be frankly recognised that any slum clearance scheme should be under taken as an essential social service rather than an economic proposition."

Perhaps that is the board from which I may jump, because as one regards the conditions obtaining on the Government Estates, one is inclined to believe that this Government, and past Governments, to be fair to the present Government, have regarded the housing of the working-class as an economic proposition, or, rather to put it this way, that Government in its charging of rents and its collection of rents has been as concerned over collecting rents at all costs, if not as rapacious, as some of the worst private landlords that one can find in British Guiana.

I am not suggesting that the epithet rapacious goes automatically with the term landlord, but there are rapacious landlords. It appears to me that Government's policy for the housing estates is one of trying to get back as much money as possible by way of rents from the persons who occupy the

premises on Government Estates.

I am grateful to you, Mr. Speaker, for stating publicly that there are two sides of the shilling in the relationship of landlord and tenant. As far as Government is concerned, it is contended that its policy should be in consonance with the observations of Major Orde Browne.

The rental charged for the various premises range from \$5 to \$13, \$17 and \$18 per month. The Hon. the Financial Secretary in his Budget Speech did refer to the amount of money that was still owing by tenants. If I remember correctly, he hoped for better collections of rents in the future from Government estates.

What is particularly unnerving in the circumstances is that the present Government has not seen fit to investigate the case of tenants being in arrears on the housing estates – not even within recent months. The fact that so many tenants have been distrained on is something to which I will refer later. So many tenants have been thrown out of premises because unfortunately, in their wisdom our predecessors in this Council thought fit to make the Rent Restriction Ordinance inapplicable to Government Housing Estates.

I remember one Member of the Government, at least by inference in another debate, suggesting that those who do not pay their taxes and their rates must be bad. I should have thought that in the 20th Century, regardless of our political ideologies – I refer to the debate regarding the charge of 5 percent on rates in arrears in rural areas – when imprisonment for debt has been abolished, that it should be recognised by all that one's failure to pay one's rent, or to pay one's taxes does not necessarily spring from any wickedness or satanic inclination.

It is interesting to note, first of all, if one refers to the Paro Report – which I crave Your Honour's indulgence to refer to – that Table 21, page 61, states that in the urban areas the average wage of the working class family – the working class is defined in Chapter 182 as "*someone who is working for not more than \$15 a week*" – is \$22.72 per week. I should have said "*earnings*" and not "*wages*", because of that \$22.72, \$15.21 really represents actual liquid cash or wages brought in by the chief wage earner.

The majority of the houses on the Government Estates in and around Georgetown are \$17 per month houses. My mathematics may have fled me since I have begun to grow old, but I believe that \$17 on the finding of the Paro Report represent 30 percent of the wages of the wage earner.

The I.L.O., contrary to what was told to some of us by the previous Minister of Labour, Health and Housing, has fixed the average percentage of earnings which should go to rent or housing at 13 percent. One, therefore, sees that, for the average worker, too big a percentage of his wages on the Government Estates has to be allocated for rent.

If, perchance, our health services were good; if we had a good, decent hospital; if our preventative medicine were at its best; if all the other social services were at their peak, one may have said that things were not so bad.

If the worker has to pay such a large part of his wages for housing and rent, he has to neglect other necessities such as food, etc.

I appreciate very much that it is impossible to ask private landlords to subsidise their rentals. The landlords in this community, as in any other are individuals who are interested in earning profits, and we cannot and should not ask them to be benefactors. It is the Government's duty to provide these social services, such as housing, and it is no answer to say "*We have not enough money to build houses.*" We are accepting for argument's sake, but with a big question mark behind it, the statement that there is not enough money. I still contend that the houses provided by Government should be rented at such a figure as to bear relation, not to accommodation, not to the conveniences provided, but to the earnings and legitimate liabilities of the occupier. One finds, for instance, one group more prolific than another, but an employer does not pay a man more because he has more children than another man. Though they both earn the same amount, while one finds ample accommodation in a \$13 a month house, the other man with children has to be accommodated in a \$17 a month house.

If Government were like the ordinary landlord doing business one could understand its attitude. But certainly, in the circumstances, Government must realise that the houses for the working class must be subsidised. It is no answer to say that the \$18 a month houses are subsidised. If there is a subsidy, which I question, then that subsidy must be in relation to the income and commitments of the occupiers, and not in relation to the accommodation offered. This discussion is not about the private landlords, but the big landlord – Government.

This Government so far seems to be void of any sense of responsibility. In 1956 the Interim Government accepted its responsibility in respect of housing, and in 1957 the present Government accepted that responsibility, but has neglected its duty. Government has put up handsome houses in the urban areas, but what social services do we find for the people who live there? No church, no recreation field, no market place. There is no community life, and this Government shelters behind the statement that there is not enough money for that. First of all, I doubt whether there is no money to provide these social services.

Secondly, I would say that at the least Government should give us some indication that it is doing its very best for the people as a Government. The condition of the roads is the worst possible. One complaint has been made to me which I refuse to believe, because I cannot believe that such things are possible. In one instance, when the Tenants' Association of the La Penitence Housing Scheme called upon the good Minister and pointed out that there was a dust nuisance and suggested that the roads should be asphalted, the Minister told them "*That is nothing; the people in the country areas suffer a much greater dust nuisance*". I do not believe that any elected Minister is capable of such a thing. I still do not believe it. It reminds me of

the days when I was a struggling civil servant and the Head of my Department told me that I was well paid at \$70 per month, because others were paid less. That is the sort of attitude you expect from the old school of administration – unmindful of the people, unmindful of its responsibilities to the people. I would expect that from an immoral Government. Since you say your Government is representative of the people, we are surprised and shocked. That is why I do not believe that such a thing came from the fair lips of the Hon. Minister of Labour, Health and Housing.

It was originally envisaged that the La Penitence Housing Scheme should be a Decanting Centre. Having left school some years ago, I had recourse to the dictionary, and there I found out that a decanting centre is a place where you put people temporarily until you find permanent accommodation for them. But what have successive Governments done? Laing Avenue has become the permanent residence of a number of people. What is happening? A, B and C are put in the decanting centre. It is understood that it is temporary. But D, E and F, who, it is alleged, have direct contact, get permanent accommodation, while A, B and C remain in temporary accommodation. Representations have been made, I know, by the Tenants' Association, on behalf of those tenants who occupy premises in the Decanting Centre, and who have priority when permanent accommodation is available. When the previous Commissioner of Housing accepted the principle of priority for the Laing Avenue tenants such an arrangement did not amount to discrimination, because it was assumed that those who got into the Decanting Centre had gone there on account of the circumstances of their situation. There can be no greater priority than that of such persons and they should be given the first opportunity to get permanent accommodation.

Under the law with respect to Government Housing Estates, there is no security of tenure for the tenants. Section 3 of Chapter 186 expressly exempts these estates from the operation of the Rent Restriction Ordinance. Because the Tenants' Association made representations to the Commissioner of Housing on behalf of the tenants – it was on a Monday – notices to quit were served on certain tenants on the following Friday. In other words, this petty Government officer who can stand no criticism used that loophole in the law to throw the people out. What is the excuse given? A had a quarrel with B next door. If it had been a private landlord it would have been a difficult thing for such a landlord to get a tenant out on that ground. It is very significant that people are being thrown out from Government housing estates a few days after making representations to the Commissioner of Housing, and the Magistrate's Court is deluged with applications for distress warrants by the Central Housing Authority.

There again is a hardship. If a private landlord has a tenant who has not paid his rent he has to take him to Court. Under the present law no warrant of distress can be issued by a private landlord until a tenant has had an opportunity to be heard. Why restrict the private landlord when

Government can just act without the tenant being heard? It is not an even hand of justice that falls upon all the tenants; it is an uneven hand, for those who for some reason or other are favoured; those who are the blue-eyed boys do not have distress warrants executed against them. They do not get notices to quit; they stay on. But those who are members of the Tenants' Association and make representations – those are the people who are taken by the scruff of their necks and thrown out.

That brings me to another point. One would have expected that the Department which controls these Government Housing Estates, having neglected its duty, having failed to provide proper social services, would have been appreciative of an organisation like the Tenants' Association, but oh no! When the Association writes a letter to the Commissioner of Housing it receives a rude reply. The Tenants' Association writes to the Commissioner of Housing asking him to receive its Executive to discuss the smooth running of the Government estate, but the Shylock-like Commissioner of Housing sends a reply saying, *"I am not interested in that. Tell me what you are going to do about paying the arrears of rent."* Such a Commissioner would be a worthy agent of a private landlord; because a private landlord must get his rents in order to live, and I would suggest that such a person should be employed by a private landlord, and not as a Commissioner of Housing.

The Tenants' Association has been ignored. It is an organisation which wants to see things run smoothly, and desires to make representations for the proper administration of the housing estate; to bring to the attention of the Housing Department such unfavourable and unsavoury conditions as exist, but it would appear that there is a new policy. The Association has no status. Apparently, to qualify for any, say with the Commissioner of Housing, one has to be sure that he owes no arrears of rent. Very many of us here would hardly be in a position to make representations, because many of us have been in arrears of rent from time to time. When an interview is granted by "*Caesar*" his adjutant points out that the person seeking the interview owes a lot of rent. Those are conditions which should be investigated. Such a knavish attitude should not be tolerated in any circumstances whatsoever.

I contend that provision should be made for tenants to have representation. I know I shall be told that one housing estate or on two housing estates there is such an association, but I am calling upon Government to see to it, after careful investigation, that whatever association is formed by the tenants should have bargaining rights and access to the Department responsible for the administration of the Government housing estates. Technically speaking, this is not a Motion which deals with Government's failure to provide housing, but perhaps it may be well if at this stage I call upon Government not merely to have an immediate investigation into the appalling conditions existing on the Government housing estates, but also to state its housing policy. It is all bound up.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker: Isn't that outside the bounds of your Motion?]

Mr. Burnham: With respect I submit that part of that policy would be what proposals Government has for the weighing of rents. Should they be weighed against income or against accommodation? Certainly the arrears of rent which are tremendous and which I contend are not deliberate, are part of the conditions existing on the Government Housing Estates. But if Your Honour rules me out of order I shall bow to your ruling.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker: I think we should confine ourselves within the ambit of the Motion itself.]

Mr. Burnham: As Your Honour pleases. Perhaps at this stage it is not necessary for me to say much more, except to express the hope that my colleagues around this Table have realised that even if all the facts I have alluded to and all the instances I have mentioned are wrong, inaccurate; springing from prejudice and misinformation – even if all that can be said of the remarks I have made, there is something wrong with the Government Housing Estates, and an immediate investigation is absolutely necessary. If Government says that what I have said is wrong then it need not fear an investigation. If, as I am sure, what I have said is right, an investigation would help Government to put its house in order.

Mr. Burnham: *(Replying)*

Mr. Speaker, there was a Shakespearian character called Falstaff of somewhat larger proportions than the Hon. Minister of Labour, Health and Housing, who accused his enemies and others of his own vices. Falstaff is admirably represented here today by his lineal descendant. Says the Hon. Minister of Labour, Health and Housing. *"Those who oppose are opposing for the sake of opposition."* I have not opposed anything today. I have taken the trouble to bring to the surface some of the unsavoury and unsatisfactory conditions that exist, and to ask for an investigation.

I knew that this Motion would have been opposed as it is being opposed today – the tables are turned – for the sake of opposition! The Majority Party once fought hard and showed solicitude for the proper housing of the working class people—we are told. Is the Hon. Minister of Labour, Health and Housing so obtuse as not to recognise that an investigation into the few dollars stolen from the Housing Department has nothing to do with an investigation with respect to the conditions existing on the housing estates? I did not suggest that there was any corruption there.

I said that there should be an investigation into the conditions on the housing estates which were in need of such investigation.

We were told that a reorganisation has taken place in the Housing Department. As I had recently to remark the reorganisation has taken the form of having a Commissioner of Housing who refuses, and I say so cat-

egorically, to bargain with the Tenants Association and shows a great interest in the collection of rents, when housing should be a social service.

We could have gone to one of the well-known rent collectors in Georgetown and paid him 5 percent or 10 percent and he would have done the job properly. Is it that those on the other side do not recognise that I am not saying that there is no subsidy, but that the rationale of the subsidy is wrong? Rent must be weighed against income and not accommodation. You may well find a family occupying less space and paying more than \$17 per month because the income of the man is higher, if things are properly balanced. I did not know that I would have to give kindergarten lectures on this matter! I am saying that the rents are wrongly weighed and charged in the same way as I expect private landlords would charge.

I did not major in mathematics, but I took particular care to look at the Paro Report. I will assist the Hon. Minister of Labour, Health and Housing in her calculation. If she will turn to page 61 of the Paro Report, Table 21, she will discover that in my remarks, first of all, I referred to the wages that actually came in cash. The average earnings of the householder were \$22.72, but include things like agricultural commodities which you do not get in Georgetown. The basic wage of the wage earner, therefore, is \$15.21 a week or \$60 per month, if the rent is \$17 that is 28.33 percent of wages.

The fact remains that the average tenant on the Government Estates has to pay approximately 30 percent of his wages for rent. Proper housing is a prerequisite to development. Proper housing and proper food are essential to the health of people, and if you do not want to provide houses for them, their health will suffer. If, however, you are going to house them at a rental they cannot pay, then they must deprive themselves of food to pay it, and their health must suffer. Of course this callous Government can take care of them in hospital.

In any housing scheme the emphasis must be on social services. Housing is an important service in the development of any country. The Hon. Minister's regime has only been eight months in existence, but it does not take eight months to realise that there is necessity for investigation. I am merely asking Government to realise that things are not right on the Government Estates and should not continue as they are.

The Hon. Minister strayed from the point of issue. I have spoken about priority. Nothing has been said in the reply from the Government side about the policy of the Government on that point. Nothing has been said about the priority of the people in the Decanting Centre to permanent housing when available. Nothing has been said in reply to the major points raised by Members on this side of the table. I am sure it is not incompetence that causes the Government to forget those points. It is just clear that the Hon. Minister has opposed for opposition sake. I know from past experience that they will not accept this Motion for political reasons, but I move because of the crying needs of the people. I challenge them to deny that. In a simple Motion like this all we ask for is an investigation. In

asking in this Council for an investigation, the elected representatives of the people are doing their best to help this country, for this is the best the people can get from their representatives.

Although I know that this Motion will be lost as the previous one was, I will support it as a matter of principle and out of conviction. One of the reasons for my rising to speak on it is due to the last remark made by the Hon. Minister of Labour, Health and Housing about "*our Ministry is considering ways and means*". She has now joined the ranks of Royalty when she speaks of "*Our Ministry,*" and that remark is significant. I wonder what are these ways and means that our Ministry is now considering? Perhaps one of the ways and means is that the land at the East Coast which was allocated for housing people from Sparendaaam will be sold or given up. What about the land at Ruimveldt?

We are absolutely convinced of the incompetence of our Ministry. It is all very well to come here and shed crocodile tears and say that we know people are suffering. Why can't something be said about what is being done? Tell us something about what the Ministry is doing. When Officials tell me that they are considering ways and means without telling me what the ways and means are, I am quite convinced that it is a veil to hide their incompetence and/or laziness.

I am sure that we have enough brains in British Guiana to investigate this matter and make proper recommendations, but we are told that the poor Government will find ways and means. If they lack originality, perhaps, the Commission of Inquiry will supply it. They do not want something that they can adopt and adapt. They are very proud of their incompetence. I wish to congratulate them for being such great economists.

The Hon. Minister says, "*Ask any rent collector.*" How long now have rent collectors become sociologists? I know that a rent collector can be a housing officer, but not a sociologist. I beg the Government to accept this Motion, and have an investigation into the matter. If necessary, let us get a trained investigator and/or sociologist to go into the matter.

Let me calm their fears. I noticed that they have become very parsimonious since they have become a part of Government. The Manifesto said, "*It is Government's duty to provide cheap houses.*"

I did not say that the terms are synonymous. I did not say rent-free; I said cheap houses. Certainly cheap means cheap. \$17 may be cheap for the Hon. Minister, but it is not cheap for the worker who gets \$60 per month. Let us get a trained investigator and/or sociologist with a few more brains to investigate the matter.

They sit here and plan development projects, Trinidad sends for experts in the field of economics; Jamaica sends; Ghana sends; Japan invites, but our Government is quite satisfied that it has all the answers, and that our problems in this country are not different from the problems in other parts of the world.

Death of Hubert Nathaniel Critchlow: 28th May, 1958

Mr. Burnham: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I desire to second the Motion moved by the Hon. Minister of Trade and Industry. The late Mr. Critchlow may not have left a name at which the world grows pale, but certainly he has left a name and reputation which would be indelibly inscribed in the history of British Guiana. Enough has been said of his contributions as a trade unionist. He has already been honoured for his work in the field of Trade Unionism. Mention has been made of the fact that he had served in this Council. May I be permitted to remind my Hon. colleague that he had also served very admirably and efficiently on the Georgetown Town Council.

But Mr. Critchlow was not only a trade unionist and a politician. He was a sportsman whose reputation will live even after his death. Only recently I have heard tales of his prowess on the football field, on the cricket field and also on the athletic track. He was also good as a man. Very often one achieves distinction and thereby loses the common touch. But Mr. Critchlow was not such a man. Indeed we have by his death lost not only an outstanding trade unionist, politician and defender of the people, especially the working people, but also one of the finest men of our time. There could have been no greater pleasure for me than to second this Motion, as I do now.

Motion on Aid to Private Secondary Schools: 28th May, 1958

Mr. Burnhan: I beg to move the Motion standing in my name which reads:

“Be it resolved:

That this Council recommends to Government that the policy with respect to aid to Private Secondary Schools to reviewed immediately.”

In 1957, I think in May, to be precise, a White Paper was presented on Secondary Education by the Chief Secretary, within whose portfolio at that time fell the responsibility for Education. The White Paper deals with various aspects of post-primary education, but the particular section to which I would like to make reference is that which deals with what at that time was the proposed aid by Government to private secondary schools which are described in the Sessional Paper as Secondary Grammar Schools. Subsequent to the Sessional Paper or White Paper there were published a series of Regulations, sometime in 1957, which sought to prescribe, amongst other things, the conditions which were considered necessary before any of the private secondary schools could receive aid from Government.

When one looks both at the Regulations and the Sessional Paper – not to mention the Hon. Minister of Education’s latest statement on the subject – one seems to be justified in coming to the conclusion that the Government at that time and the Government of today though anxious, perhaps in the face of public opinion, to grant aid to private secondary schools, did not properly and carefully examine the entire subject. It is true that the Hon. Minister did allude to the fact that visits were paid by members of the staff of the Education Department to those private secondary schools, but apart from the fact that I have it on very good authority that those visits were of the most fleeting nature, and the observations of the most superficial kind, it is clear that when one tries to recognise the policy of Government, that the only policy that is obvious is an absence of any distinct and sensible policy.

For instance, putting aside the platitudes about the great job the private secondary schools have done, and the necessity of having our education system integrated into one whole mass, one agrees that the private secondary schools have in the past played an important part and are very necessary in our education system at the moment, because our Government seems too poor to be able to undertake fully all the responsibilities for our secondary or post-primary education.

Let us see, what is the policy? The sketches of policy recognisable may be found in the statement made by the Hon. Minister of Community Development and Education in this Council on the 7th February of this year. Aid will be granted to certain schools under Regulation 4 (1), or rather to schools

which under Regulation 4 (1) apply for aid, but what this Government is doing is granting aid primarily to schools whose need is less than that of other schools. Let me not be misunderstood; let me not be misrepresented or misquoted. I am not for one moment saying that those schools which have been granted aid should not have been granted aid. Rather I am saying that the Government's policy is such that the schools which need most are those that are left out. In other words, if you can find some rich benefactor, some wealthy testator, some philanthropic and wealthy individual to put up a fine building for you, to build a laboratory for you, well then, according to Government's policy you can apply for and get aid.

Admittedly, even after one has been fortunate enough to get a benefactor to put up a building and build a laboratory, Government aid will still be necessary. But why give aid to such schools to the exclusion of other schools which need aid badly?

One finds a number of schools which, from their records, have done well. Schools which have produced some of the finest material, not qualifying for aid because they do not have the floor space, because they do not measure up to the rather strict requirements laid down by Government. One gets the impression that whoever drafted the original programme – it is not the present Government, but the Members of the present Government are not so simple as to continue what has been handed down to them and the policy of giving aid to nice schools – was most cynical.

I am not suggesting that the quality of the material which comes from those schools is always good. I may, however, observe that the attractiveness of a school is not necessarily an indication of the products that come out from the school. It seems to me that on that point the Government, to my mind, went wrong and that no sincere attempt was made to give assistance to those schools which have borne the brunt of the day – those schools whose needs are greatest and whose records are finest.

Our present Government, perhaps, not satisfied with the shortcomings and inadequacies of the policy and programme of the previous much maligned Interim Government has gone further. May I, Sir, refer to the White Paper, paragraph 5, page 2? I am referring to the Regulations to be drafted:

“It will be provided that schools which reach a certain prescribed minimum standard will be listed for financial assistance on the basis recommended in paragraph 27 of the Memorandum.”

When one looks at paragraph 27 of the Memorandum one sees that it was suggested that the three main types of grants submitted and recommended by the Committee in Trinidad in 1956 were going to be accepted by the British Guiana Government. Those three types of grants are staff grants for paying the staff; practical subject grants for the upkeep of laboratories, home economics, woodwork and special grants, which I interpret to mean capital grants.

The present Government, it would appear, has restricted whatever aid it proposes to give to Private Secondary Schools to staff grants only. I see a brow being raised and a back being turned, but for practical purposes this is what results: \$1,000 will be given to a school which has a laboratory, but nothing will be given for things like woodwork, domestic science, etc. and no capital grant will be made to enable schools to erect laboratories or workrooms.

Let us take school "X" which has no laboratory. It is said that you want scientists with practical education, you do not want academic education over emphasised as it has been in the past.

However, there will be no capital grant for the erection of laboratories and the greater part of the aid will go towards the payment of the staff.

The present Government is always seeking to outdo the Interim Government in parsimony and reaction. Whereas the Interim Government had proposed to subsidise staff salaries after the first \$70, the present Government is going to subsidise it in the case of graduate teachers only after the first \$100. Whereas the Interim Government proposed to introduce aid as from 1st September, 1957, this progressive Government introduced it from 1st January, 1958. The poor Interim Government did not bargain for the Elections on the 12th August, 1957.

In any case it seems to me that, even if we accept the proposals of the Interim Government with respect to aided Secondary Schools, the sums to be voted would be inadequate. It is ridiculous, and the author of the Sessional Paper must come in for his share of criticism. It is ridiculous to find that, whereas at Queen's College, a Government Secondary School, it costs over \$300 per annum per child, Government has suggested that the provision of \$150 per annum per child at Private Secondary Schools would be adequate.

In other words this policy indicates a differentiation. Is this an increase? This seems to me to be a differentiation between Government Secondary Schools and the Private Secondary Schools. They talk about levelling up, but that is mere verbiage. If you are levelling up at Queen's College at a cost of \$300 per child, \$150.00 would not be enough for a child at a Private Secondary School.

I do not propose to speak very long at this stage. I shall save my shot for the reply. It seems to me that the original plan was rather hastily conceived. The present policy was even more hastily applied, and what is worse is that the present Government had the advantage of representations from individuals and bodies on this subject.

Of course I shall hear Members of Government say that there is no necessity for a review. The echo from "*Solomon's seat*" will be: "*What we have done has been well done*". I shall plead with them as I attempted to plead with the Government on another occasion. It seems to me that there is an urgent necessity to have this matter reviewed and, perhaps, the Hon. Minister of Community Development and Education may be able to discover

some rationale for the awarding of aid to Private Secondary Schools.

In the circumstances, I beg to move the Motion that stands in my name. It will be observed that all I am asking for is a review and immediate reconsideration whereby the people's views can be taken into account, and we may have some sensible approach as well as an integration of the educational system. We will have the people who are concerned, less dissatisfied, and there will be less cause for complaints, or fewer complaints of discrimination of every sort.

Motion on the Second Reading of the Rent Restriction (Amendment) Bill: 30th May, 1958

Mr. Burnham: I am in sympathy with the Government in so far as the original intention behind this Amendment to the Rent Restriction Ordinance is concerned, but there are a few things which concern me and which bother me. I recall that when another measure was under consideration this Government was particularly against piecemeal legislation, and as I had to remark then, they were against what they had been doing from the time they got into office. There was a Committee, to which reference has been made, which sat throughout 1954 and 1955 and reported. It would seem to be a better idea in all the circumstances, for them to have come to this Council a few weeks or months from now with a draft Bill in substitution for Chapter 186.

But what also seems strange and somewhat queer, giving point to the otherwise baseless observation of the Hon. Member for Georgetown South, is that the Government seeks with such alacrity to amend subsection (4) of Section 20 of the Rent Restriction Ordinance, yet it has not seen fit to repeal Subsection (2) (b) of section 3, to which reference was made during the course of a Motion which was debated here a week or two ago. Either it is seeking to do a favour to some group, or this is another example of its incompetence. In the drafting of the amendment which is before us, the Government has not made its intention plain. It is to be noted that the amendment which has been circulated reads as follows:

*"2. (1) Subsection (4) of section 20 of the Principal Ordinance is hereby repealed.
(2) Where an agreement in respect of a tenancy for a period of five years or upwards has been made before the enactment of this Ordinance and the agreement includes a provision requiring the payment of any fine, premium, or other like sum, or the giving of any consideration in addition to the rent which could lawfully have been required prior to the enactment of this Ordinance, such provision shall cease to have effect."*

I can hardly believe it. I am quite sure that this drafting was not done by the Attorney-General's Office, because what does it mean? Does it mean that the premium already paid would then become recoverable by the payer, or does it mean that only any premium fine or like sum becoming due under an agreement made prior to this Ordinance will not be payable? That is why I say I am sure the drafting did not take place in the Attorney-General's office. I am sure this must be the layman's way, the other Ministers' ways of expressing what they want to put over. If it is the intention of this Government that fines and premiums which have been paid prior to the enactment of this Ordinance are to be repayable by those who have received them, I would be opposed to any such retroactivity of the Ordinance. If this provision is intended to exempt the tenant from paying any

fine or premium, even though the contract was made prior to the Ordinance, I would be in sympathy with and support such a measure.

The Hon. Member for Georgetown South stated that the small man never, or very seldom, if ever, falls within the provisions of section 20, subsection (4). My learned and Honourable Friend, who has been practicing at the Bar longer than I have been, must certainly be misinformed, or his experience is not as wide as I otherwise thought, for very frequently one finds the small man is caught within the ambit of section 20, subsection (4) by an agreement which purports to be for more than a five-year period, but is in fact for a shorter period.

It further seems to me that the very Rent Restriction Ordinance itself in any case injects new terms into agreements which have been made between private persons and consequently there can be no objection to changing any agreement which previously provided for premiums. If we consider everything carefully we would be rather inclined to agree with the point of view urged by the Hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Fredericks – that since the object of the Rent Restriction Ordinance, as we understand it, should be to protect the smaller, helpless tenants, we may abolish the landlords' right to exact a premium or fine subsequent to the enactment of this Ordinance, where the rental is below a certain sum.

It seems to me that that is an eminently reasonable proposal, for then we should be in a position to protect the small man, whom we seek to protect, and leave the big fellows who can deal with each other at arm's length, to fight for themselves. It does not appear to me that the businessman, whose rental of a premises may be in the vicinity of \$200 or \$300 per month, is necessarily an individual we want to protect. He is capable of protecting himself against the rapacious landlord. It also seems to me that any private individual who can enter into a contract of tenancy at a rental of \$90 or \$100 per month is not the sort of person who ought to be protected by the Ordinance. As I understand it, the purpose of the Rent Restriction Ordinance is to protect those who need protection. In the circumstances, since the Majority Party are playing politics, they may recognise the reasonableness of the proposal of the Hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Fredericks.

Centenary Exhibitioners' Fees: 30th May, 1958

Mr. Burnham: I support the Motion as far as it goes, but I still think the time is ripe for Government to consider the necessity or feasibility of giving Centenary Exhibitioners allowances similar to those given to Government County Scholars. The Exhibitioners are usually very badly off financially. They just get the tuition with no book allowance. They find it very difficult to be at school.

Motion on Aid to Private Secondary Schools: 30th May, 1958

Mr. Burnhan: (*Replying*)

I am not in the habit of questioning the ruling of the Chair, but, with your permission, may I point out that the Standing Orders provide that no person should speak more than once. The Standing Orders also provide that no one can speak after the mover of a Motion has replied. It is submitted that a Member of the Executive Council may be given leave by you to speak, but not when he has spoken already on the subject.

I have been to the House of Commons, and I have seen that the custom is that a Member, other than the one who has spoken, winds up on behalf of the Government when there is a Private Member's Motion which is critical of the Government, and not the Minister who has spoken already.

Your Honour has ruled. When I originally raised the question in this Council, I had expected, as the Hon. Minister of Education in his wisdom has discovered that the opposition to the present policy and the administration of that policy with respect to the granting of aid to private secondary schools would have taken different forms. In my simplicity I assumed that the mere fact that the opposition took different forms was a perfectly good argument in favour of reviewing the policy. It may be suggested that my suggestion came from a fevered brain, but you certainly cannot suggest that the Hon. Members who have spoken on different points are persons with fevered brains. No amount of sophistry can hide the facts. It is easy to talk about being the champion of the working class and to take umbrage when one is accused of betraying the working class.

I would have expected the Hon. Minister of Education to show astuteness, and say that he found the requirements there and had to apply them. That would have been more plausible than some of the excuses he has given. I admit that some of the requirements have the wrong emphasis. You have to satisfy certain criteria before you can qualify for aid. It is so much reminiscent of the advice of a mother to her young son who wanted to go for a swim, not to go into the water until he had learnt to swim.

These poor schools in the majority of cases are incompetent and incapable of satisfying the criteria fixed by Government. Rather I would have expected that a progressive Government like this, "*the vanguard of the proletariat*," would have taken this approach. If these schools have done well by their records, but are financially incapable of filling the necessary requirements, let us find some means of giving them capital grants so that they would be able to meet these requirements and so qualify for staff and/or capital grants. Who has accused the Hon. Minister of not giving capitation grants? Nobody has accused him of not giving capitation grants. Is it an attempt to veil his obvious shortcomings?

Government fell down on this question of aid to private secondary

schools. I do not want to use unparliamentary language. Here we have a typical illogicality in the argument put forward by the very learned Minister of Education. On the question of ignorance, I take no objection to the Hon. Minister's reference to things which come under his portfolio. He says that some schools are getting more than half of what they paid to their staff before, therefore, how can they go bankrupt? Let us reason together. These schools have to pay bigger salaries, therefore, if yesterday, they paid A and tomorrow in the light of the new Regulations they have to pay 2A, if you subsidise them to the extent of half, a bankruptcy can still be imminent. I thought the Hon. Minister of Education would have been able to appreciate that fact – it is so simple.

We hear that visits were not fleeting. I am not here to argue about that, but I understand that the people concerned did not spend much time when visiting these schools. The Hon. Minister of Education is guilty of another illogicality when he says that the condition whereby laboratories must be provided in schools is a good one. Where are these people going to get the money from to provide these laboratories? It must be my fault and the fault of my confreres who supported the Motion, that the Hon. Minister of Education does not understand what we are asking for. We do not say that we object to the condition that laboratories should be provided by these schools that are to receive aid. What I and most of my confreres said was that unless there are going to be capital grants this new policy will create hardships, and in the majority of cases the provision of laboratories will be prerequisite that cannot be met by the majority of schools.

It is all well and good to talk about national income – such clichés are easy to repeat. Industry and education must not be divorced. You want to industrialise British Guiana and you are trying to save \$50,000 to \$60,000. You say let us save \$100,000 by subsidising and starting our aid in January 1958 instead of September 1957. When you have got the \$100,000 what are you going to do with it? It is merely a needle in a haystack or a drop of water in the ocean. It must be a simple-minded Government to talk about saving this money for development purposes. What good can this small amount do in the way of development? On the other hand Government may be capable of investing this money intelligently on education. You will then have products from schools who will be competent and able to take part in whatever form of industrial development Government were to have in mind. We are not for one moment suggesting that the stress should continue to be on the academic subjects.

Once again the Hon. Minister of Education misses the pint – there is none so blind as he who would not see. The "*Opposition*" is not arguing that you must teach more Latin and French, but those schools that have done so well in academics so far may well be able to do a good job on practical subjects if they are given the facilities. But, says the Hon. Minister, "*We do not need commercial subjects because they are already covered*". We are still to hear why it has been decided to give aid as from January instead of from Sep-

tember last. Says the Hon. Minister, "*The Ministry is run by the Minister*". Everyone expects the Minister to run his Ministry.

That the Minister runs his Ministry and no other Minister or person is not questioned. Maybe he does not run his Ministry, but we assume he does, either competently or incompetently. The Hon. Minister says the recommendations of the Education Committee are good, but therein lies another significant fact. The Memorandum which was appended to the Sessional Paper is the Memorandum from the Education Committee which has been honoured on many points in the breach. I need not repeat that the Hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Fredericks, pointed out the number of points in which the Hon. Minister has moved away from the Education Committee's recommendations.

The whole point about this Motion is this: I would like to repeat it slowly and in simple language. The object is to ask the Government to recognise that there are many critics of the system under which Government aid is granted. For the sake of argument I should assume that the majority of those criticisms are wrong. But if that assumption of mine is right, the Government needs to have no fear about a review or reconsideration. We have heard nothing to show that the criticisms of this school aid are unwarranted. When will this Government ever understand that it is not their duty to vote against every Motion that comes from this side of the table? It is puerile merely to use every opportunity to vote against every Motion from this side of the table. It takes a strong man to be able to admit the possibility of his being wrong, but the Hon. Minister admits of no possibility of his being wrong.

The Hon. Minister talks about being satisfied that the visits were not fleeting. How can he vouch for that when he was not the Minister when the visits were made? Has he made an attempt to inquire into this Report? Only the teaching of one subject was listened to for three minutes by the inspector who went to the Central High School and that subject was mathematics. The report was good because the teacher at that school is known throughout the Colony as a good teacher of mathematics. In my opinion he did not go there to inspect the school but to have a cursory glance at the school. An inspection is something much deeper, requiring a much more careful approach. I am begging, I am pleading with the Government. After all is said and done, though the Majority Party is in office and probably thinks that it is fine to muddle things, I feel that the muddle will be left as a legacy to us when we assume office.

Motion on the Distribution of State Owned Lands: 4th June, 1958

Mr. Burnham: The Hon. Minister of Natural Resources, in his best mock-heroic style and transparent sincerity, in his peroration confessed that he was not a master of language, but the most significant part of that peroration was the dictatorial fashion in which he said "*I will distribute lands*". That is significant when considered in the context of the alleged relationship between the P.P.P. and the Colonial Office. We have often been told by the P.P.P. Ministers that they are bound hand and foot by this backward Constitution; they can do nothing. It is very significant that whenever there is any criticism of their inability to carry out any of the promises which they made at the hustings to relieve unemployment their excuse is "*We have no power*", but here we learn straight from the horse's mouth that the P.P.P. Ministers have power to distribute lands. Obviously, we of the "*Opposition*" have no lands to distribute. That is in the very nature of things.

A further significance – murder will out – of that statement by the Ministers is that the P.P.P. is very anxious to distribute lands – I say unreservedly – primarily to their supporters. I do not accuse the Hon. Minister of being a party to the discrimination, political and otherwise, which takes place in the distribution of lands. I prefer to accept his assurance that, like Caesar's wife, he is above suspicion and would never soil his hands with such unsavoury matters. But the difficulty into which the Minister and his Ministry ran is that, unlike Napoleon, they are incapable of appointing competent and experienced lieutenants. Their lieutenants are not so astute as he, as in the case of Pandit Ramotar, a Party satellite in Essequibo.

Mr. Speaker, the amendment itself is critical of the Government's policy. I was referring to the satellite in Essequibo who openly boasts and tells persons "*Join the P.P.P. and you will get land.*" The same thing is happening in the Berbice River, and the same thing happened at Onverwagt. Fair distribution, facts and figures! My teacher once told me that there are two sets of lies – lies and figures. But in respect of Onverwagt we have not only the lies of figures but we have the lie that is part truth, which is a difficult matter to combat. This is an indisputable fact in respect of Onverwagt, and I would like the Minister to hear this: A certain gentleman who hails from Perth, many miles from Onverwagt and his name is Angad Beharry. I am not suggesting any family relationship, but he hails from the same area as the Minister who would know whether he is a family relation. That gentleman's father is a substantial landowner at Perth, and the Minister knows that. Mr. Beharry was given 100 acres of land at Onverwagt, and by sheer coincidence he has the same name as the Minister.

What the Hon. Minister should say is whether my information that Angad Beharry was given 100 acres of land is right or wrong, and my

further information is that there were several persons in the area – not Africans alone but Africans and Indians – whose needs were greater than that gentleman's. Have I stirred up a hornet's nest? I would assume for argument sake that every criticism made by the Hon. Mover of the Motion can be answered, and answered satisfactorily. I am going to assume that all the answers given by the Hon. Minister are proper answers, but as I had reason to say in the debate on another Motion, in the administration of public business and the giving out of our land – the people's land – it is not "*I will distribute the land*". How have the puny become mighty in these days! In the distribution of public lands the Administration must be sure, not merely that the distribution is proceeding fairly, but also that it appears to be proceeding fairly, and that it will continue to proceed fairly.

The fact that there is mounting discontent, the fact that a number of people have been complaining about nepotism, the fact that many of the canvassers of the Majority Party are promising people lands if they join the Party – all these facts point to the necessity for a full public investigation, so that the milk-white lambs over there will have their whiteness recognised. It is in the interest of Government that this investigation should take place, because the Ministers say that there is nothing to worry about. There is nothing wrong in the State, therefore, open up the cupboard and let everyone see – let these misinformed, malicious, prevaricators of the People's National Congress see once and for all that there is nothing wrong.

We are told that the Hon. Mover of this Motion should be criticised and castigated because he brought the Motion based on information received. What else could he bring the Motion on? He received the information and he brought it here. It is his duty to his constituents to ask that the matter be investigated.

The Hon. Minister of Natural Resources referred to Ithaca. Ithaca is an African village and everybody knows that. He said that he had appointed a committee to go into the question of the distribution of 2,000 acres of land. That is half truth and half lie.

The Hon. Minister told you about the second interview I had with him, but he did not tell you about the first interview. At the second interview, after I had given notice that I desired to raise the question on the Adjournment, the Minister saw the light of reason and he, astute politician that he is, decided to have a second interview. He said, "*I will distribute the land where the need is greatest*". There was no question of people getting land at Ithaca. The people have to pay \$20 for sewerage rates and so on. The following people were appointed to serve on the Committee; Mr. Macnie, *ex officio* – above reproach; Mr. Ajodha Singh – above reproach; Mr. Sayers, Party Member. All of the non-official members are members of the P.P.P. if you feel that the P.P.P. has all the brains, the majority of the community does not share that view. Surujdeo holds a Party card as well as the three P.P.P. members who are filling all of the unofficial seats. This is political discrimination.

I am not suggesting the Hon. Minister of Natural Resources would do that for, astute politician that he is, he would at least have had a few outsiders so that his opponents would get the impression that he is a large-souled, large-hearted, generous individual. He says that he has appointed two other members on the Committee, but he has not substituted the members of the P.P.P. You have two officials completely impartial; three P.P.P. members and two others.

Unfortunately, the People's National Congress does not have that advantage, for neither Mr. Ramsay nor Mr. Linton holds a party card; they are not high in the hierarchy of the P.N.C.; they are merely individuals whom I happen to know. The books of the P.N.C. are there for scrutiny to show whether those two names appear therein. These two gentlemen have to live in that area; their navel strings are buried there. Mr. Linton, whom I know well, was a little worried about serving on a P.P.P. packed Committee for several reasons. In these Committees they do not have minority reports and, consequently, he would have been open to the partiality of the P.P.P. dominated Committee. He was not prepared to put his neck into a noose because he lives there.

So far as Ithaca is concerned, the Hon. Minister has not told us why his satellites have said that they have been promised 2,000 acres of land at the back of Ithaca. It is not today that people have been applying for land at Ithaca – long before the Hon. Minister entered politics people have been applying for the 2,000 acres of land at the back of Ithaca. To come here hypocritically today, and refer to Ithaca after all the noise and quarrelling that took place, is to seek to deceive the Members of this Council.

The Hon. Minister of Natural Resources does not seem to appreciate the fact that there is a distinction between a cooperative group and individual cooperation. At the last interview I had with him he told me that his Party favoured cooperative groups or individual cooperation. All these things need investigating, because there must be some policy with respect to the taking over of land by these private citizens before you can decide on the allocation of the various plots.

We are still awaiting the report of Ithaca. What about Hopetown where the Hon. Minister of Natural Resources and the Hon. Minister of Trade and Industry opposed the purchase of 1,000 acres of land by a company? These are statements which I do not need the privilege of the Council to protect me when I make them. I am prepared to make them in a place where there is no privilege from defamation.

Is it not meet and right that this Government should see the wisdom of appointing a Committee to go into these questions and criticisms? This is not the time to say who are interested in race. The 12th August has passed; votes are already received. Therefore why should people come here like sweet "souled" virgins and say that they are not interested in race. I agree that any racial discrimination in this country will be catastrophic, but one does not prove these things by judicious repetition. Goebbels was the

only man who thought that repetition proved a point – he is now deceased.

Let us prove that the satellite P.P.P. members who are appointed on this Committee have exercised discrimination in the distribution of land. Why didn't we hear about Angad Beharry? The Africans have been done an injustice. A lot of people – Africans and Indians – are suffering for land, but one man can be given 100 acres to work. Some people seem to believe that the Legislative Council is a place like a pulpit. A pulpit is for Sunday and the church. Here we want deeds and not words. If there is an impression floating about that there is political or racial discrimination, it is the duty of the Government to allay the fears of the people by having the matter investigated.

I am not going to plead with the Government to save their faces. Let them reject the Motion; let half of the country continue to be dissatisfied with them, but when they fail who will benefit?

Motion on the Delegation to Discuss Constitutional Reform for British Guiana: 5th June, 1958

Mr. Burnham: There are some subjects which are above the pettiness of party differences, and there are some Motions which are so momentous, so far as our country is concerned, that to bandy words across the table is almost sacrilegious. Such a debate, such a Motion is the present one. So far as the People's National Congress is concerned, and so far as I am concerned, we are entirely in favour of full self-government for the country in which we were born, in which we live and in which we are likely to die. We are not apologists for or supporters of paternalism. Which woman of character would prefer to be a well-kept mistress when she has the opportunity to be a respectable, though poor, wife? Which man worthy of the description of man would be prepared to be a pampered slave of some rich uncle rather than master of his small hut? So far as I am concerned, colonial status is degrading and can never be satisfactory to any man who considers himself a man or to any people who are human beings.

I would like to assure the Members of the Majority Party that their disgust for the Colonial system and all that it speaks and means can never in a world of Sundays be any greater than ours. Colonial administration and that type of constitution, apart from being degrading, apart from being disgusting, are such as breed irresponsibility. I hope that no one on the other side would argue that it is not degrading in a Colonial Constitution, when you have the Ministers being able to hide behind the fact that above them there is some higher Executive with reserve powers or powers of veto. I do not necessarily suggest that that is what we have been saying in this Council recently, but I am saying that the Constitution is pregnant with that danger of producing a number of irresponsible leaders and would-be leaders, who can always shelter behind the wide powers of and the domination of the colonial power. That is another good reason why we should all be in favour of the principle of this motion and the principle of the amendment.

I heard the Hon. Minister of Communications and Works, Mr. Ram Karran, make reference to the 'red scare' which he said had been dragged into this debate. Unfortunately, when the Hon. Member who has been accused of doing so was speaking I was absent from the Council Chamber. I know not what he did say, but what I desire to say is this: that though I would not yield second place to any Guianese when it comes to fighting for independence, it is necessary for us in the circumstances of the world today to appreciate the realities and to recognise that pious sentiments and declarations about one's inalienable rights are not a sufficient means of gaining self-government and independence.

It is the most galling thing for us who are born and bred in a colony to have to accept the fact that other people have got to decide whether we are

ripe or whether we are green; to decide whether we are ready or whether we are too young; for other people to decide that we should not go into the sea until we learn how to swim on land. On the other hand I wish that all Members of this Council would appreciate that, however much one may be galled by a particular fact, it is necessary to recognise the realities of the situation. I say that because I did not hear, coming from the other side of the table, any warning or appreciation of the fact that we live in a world of fact – not a world merely of sentiments and thoughts. Reference was made to the fact that the alleged attempt to bully Egypt was thwarted by international opinion and pressure. I think that all of us around this table should appreciate the necessity to win the necessary international pressure and opinion in our quest for independence.

No one group of people have the right to tell any other people what they should do and what they should not do. It is a matter of philosophy, but does it always work out that way in the world? Is it not necessary to establish such a reputation that we can always call to our assistance support and pressure of opinion where these matter most, and from those who are in the best position to lend material assistance? I am not proposing to deliver a homily, and I am not proposing to assume the role of school master, but I am appealing to all the Members of this Council to appreciate those facts, because it is something I feel very strongly about, and I am sure we would not like to see ourselves in the position where, by our bad tactics, we are our greatest enemies in the achievement of what we want most.

I have heard some remarks made around this table that there is some uncertainty in some people's minds as to what some people want when they say they want independence, as to what some people mean when they say they are demanding basic human rights. I was reading a book the other day in which the author referred to the fact that some people, when they are out of office or not in control, are most vocal in their demand for basic human rights, but as soon as they sit in the saddle they deny those rights to those outside their circle or their clique. I shall accuse no one here today of such chicanery and cynicism. It is for the people of British Guiana, when we achieve full self-government, to see to it that those who are loudest in asking for human rights do not fall into the trap of imagining that they alone can enjoy those rights, or that they alone can decide whether the other people, the governed, should have those rights at all. The author to whom I refer is one Djilas of Yugoslavia. The right to freedom, the right to independence, also connotes to my mind, simple though it may be, the right of people to change their Government whenever they consider it necessary.

One of the facts of the Colonial system has been the fact that the people can never change their Government. Faces may come and faces may go, but the ruling Government still remains. This is perhaps a question which we may discuss in the future. We all want independence, we all want freedom and we all want self-government, but we may have differences of opinion as to what state we will build after we have achieved full self-govern-

ment and/or independence. But even though I know there is the grave possibility that my concept as to the eventual goal, the type of state I should like to see flourishing in this our land, in spite of the fact that I know that that goal may be quite different from what others think, I am prepared to support this Motion and this Amendment. I am prepared to take the risk, because I feel that the Guianese people have got the right to decide the type of Government they want. The time may well come when I shall have to oppose the form of State envisaged by others with whom I now stand arm in arm, but that is my democratic right to oppose them and I am asking no one to come as arbitrator between us Guianese. I will hate the guts of those whose models of State are different from my models, but I am asking no one from outside to decide for us. Let us fight it out ourselves and work it out ourselves, but I should like to make this clear: I shall fight any attempt at dictatorship as vehemently as I have been fighting Colonialism.

Yesterday the Hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Hubbard, remarked on the absence of statesmanship in this country. I think we are all agreed that this country tries hard. I think we are all agreed that this is not a giggling matter but a serious matter. We should not hold blank papers before our eyes to hide the fact of our behaving childishly. It is a serious matter we are considering. The Hon. Minister of Communications and Works, Mr. Ram Karran, need have no fear. I never thought that the Majority Party was seeking independence for itself. I thought it was seeking independence for the people of British Guiana, and that it was hoping that the people of British Guiana would elect the member of that Party in a majority again. Anything other than that would be hypocrisy and cant. No political party goes around saying it does not want to be elected in a majority, and does not hope to cash in on independence. I never thought they wanted independence for their Party; I thought they wanted it so that their Party could have an opportunity to make or break British Guiana. But that again is their democratic right. I am no seer or no prophet, but it may well be that the Majority Party will have assisted in achieving independence so that another Party may carry this country further on.

I was delighted to hear the Hon. Minister of Trade and Industry, Dr. Jagan, refer to the fact that there is no sense in talking about economic advancement and saying that that is a good alternative to political independence and responsibility.

I agree entirely with the new position which the Hon. Minister of Trade and Industry has now taken up. I say this not for the purpose of breaking lances nor for the purpose of saying "*I told you so*", but merely for the purpose of observing that some of us can change our ideas for the betterment of our country.

I remember in 1957 there was a big debate going on between two Parties. Each party said that there should be economic development. What is the sense of independence without economic stability and improvement? One Party said it could draft the best economic programme in the country and

that was all that was important. The Party to which I belong said that we must have economic development and stability, but our contention was that if we were given political independence we would be able to tackle our economic problems much more effectively and conscientiously than people from outside.

Motion on the Delegation to Discuss Constitutional Reform for British Guiana: 6th June, 1958

Mr. Burnham: At the adjournment I believe I was making the observation that most of us have come to the conclusion that for the beneficial exploitation of our economic resources primarily for the benefit of the inhabitants of our country, full self-government seems to be a prerequisite. That, of course, follows naturally from a fact common to us, or a common experience that no person, however well-meaning, can look after another person's interest as well and as thoroughly and as conscientiously as that particular person will. I also did allude to what we want to get.

I hope that the Hon. Mover of the Amendment appreciates the real distinction between a free country and a free people. A free country is a country which is not subjected to the control of another outside country or power. For that matter Argentine was a free country under Peron. For that matter Venezuela was a free country under Jimenez. I do hope that the majority party has in mind as the ultimate goal not merely a free country but a free people, because some patriots when fighting for freedom from outside powers, retain for themselves, as if by divine right, the right to decide that those who oppose them are not entitled to the basic human rights and the freedom of which they had spoken before. I am not accusing the Majority Party of being likely to ignore the necessity for having not merely a free country but also a free people.

Since the Hon. Mover of the Amendment has asked all Members of this Council to support it, and since this seems to be a subject on which there can be cooperation, I should hope that all of us on both sides of the table will so conduct our affairs, so plan our strategy, our tactics, that there can be no mistaken conception of the fact that we want not only a free country but a country in which the people are free and enjoy human rights. Otherwise, once again we would be giving an excuse to those who oppose our right to self-determination. Whether or not that excuse is valid is unimportant in international politics. As long as it is plausible it can get a great deal of support. Therefore I hope to see the Majority Party, the Members of the People's National Congress, the Guianese Independent Movement – all these groups – act in such a way as to give no excuse to any power for saying that we are not entitled to self-government. What has very frequently happened to those of us who seek independence and self-government is that we are inclined, in the fervour of the moment, to lose sight of the facts of the situation. I feel that all of us around this table know the facts we are talking about, and we have to proceed clear-sightedly to see how we can achieve self-government.

In spite of my general agreement with the principle underlying the Amendment, there are some criticisms which I shall make. The first is with

respect to the representative approach. I am not saying that we should put on the delegation every Tom, dick and Harry, but on the other hand as wide a section of our community as possible should be allowed the opportunity of stating their adherence to the principle of full self-government for British Guiana. Therefore I propose, as I come to the end of my remarks and observations, to move an amendment to the last line of the main part of the Amendment. After the word "*delegation*", I am going to suggest that the words "*chosen by and from this Council*" be inserted. I am hoping that since during these last two days on this Motion, there has been some spirit of co-operation and understanding, the Hon. Mover of the Amendment will accept this suggestion as part of his Amendment to the Motion. I do not think this is the time when we should squabble. It would be a happy omen if the Majority Party's willingness to give and take, as is practiced in the Democracies, is evidenced now.

There is another criticism which I desire to make, and which will necessitate an amendment. In the Amendment proposed by the Hon. Minister of Trade and Industry it is suggested in paragraph (3) (c) (i) –

"...constitutional reform with a view to granting to British Guiana of the status of a fully self-governing territory within the Commonwealth";

I wish to reserve my position on the question of Federation. I shall not be debating the question of Federation today, but since this seems to be the hour when the lamb is lying with the lion and the bear with the sheep, I would recommend that the wording there be slightly changed so that the position with respect to Federation can remain open. I am not seeking to say at this moment that we should join the West Indies Federation; I will say that from next week Wednesday. Why I want to suggest this amendment and this slight change is because there seems to be growing abroad this approach – let us not bother with the question of Federation; let us seek independence. Those who may have been responsible originally for that attitude may well have in their minds this point of view: that if we are independent, well then we shall be independent and free to join the Federation if we want to.

It is sometimes necessary to remove all misconceptions and let everyone be sure of what you mean, because another interpretation of this talk – "*let us not worry with Federation but worry with independence*" – can be "*let us forget Federation for this and all time, and let us only concentrate on independence*". I am not here to dispute the argument of the Hon. Mover of the Amendment on the possibilities, theoretical and otherwise, of a small country being independent. This is not the time for it. But I desire to say that so far as the People's National Congress is concerned we seek full independence for B.G. – Dominion Status – as a part of the West Indies Federation, and so as to give everyone the opportunity of supporting the Motion fully and without necessarily having to withdraw from one's forward position, I

would suggest to the Mover of the Amendment that the words "*fully self-governing*" be deleted, and after the word "*territory*" be inserted the words "*with full internal self-government.*"

I shall show where that would not destroy the original intention of the Mover, because his Amendment suggests a transitional period in which defence and foreign relations, other than trade and commerce, would still be under the control of the United Kingdom Government. When we put it together it really means what the Hon. Member is asking for at this stage – full internal self-government, similar to what I understand is now enjoyed by Jamaica, Barbados and Trinidad and I take it that if we got that we would be no longer backward so far as those three West Indian territories are concerned. That means that the anti-federationist feeling that British Guiana can stand in every respect on her own would be satisfied *pro tem*. The pro-federationists who feel that it is a stage before British Guiana enters Federation will also be satisfied.

This is the type of compromise of which democracy is made. The Majority Party say "*Support us; let us be one people. Let us show the Metropolitan power that all the people in British Guiana want the right to rule themselves: they want to enjoy the right of self-determination*". So as to make it unanimous, so as to get the maximum agreement, let us therefore insert these two amendments which I have suggested. I suppose the Hon. Mover of the Amendment will give some indication as to whether or not he is willing to accept them so as to present that unanimity to Her Majesty's Government. I would ask him to get up and accept them, so that the necessity for an amendment from this side would not arise. If he accepts my amendments and incorporates them as part of his Amendment to the original Motion, what better effect can there be; what greater indication can there be to H.M. Government that the fact that the "*Opposition*" amendment has been accepted, the Majority Party's amendment has been accepted by the "*Opposition*", and we are telling them once and for all that though there are some things about which we cannot agree among ourselves, they must leave us to dispute here, but the moment you from outside put your finger in, you will find you are up against a united people?

This is what I understand to be the essence of the spirit behind this debate – not that we are going to be arm in arm loving each other. As a matter of fact it would be most boring if there were no differences of opinion and strong ideological and political differences, but no one must try to settle our quarrels; we will settle them ourselves. We are sure that we can settle them. We are sure – at least on this side – that we can and will settle them in a democratic fashion.

I wonder if I can have some indication from the Hon. Minister of Trade and Industry as to whether he is prepared to incorporate these suggested amendments into his Amendment, so that the unanimity to which I referred may become a fact. If he does not I shall move them formally. It is a pity that the Majority Party should continue to be as it has been in the past. No

suggestion from the other side of the table is ever worthy of consideration. They want unanimity but mere verbal amendments which satisfy everyone and leave everyone's position clear are not accepted by the almighty Majority Party. I made some remarks a little earlier about the distinction between a free country and a free people, about the contradiction of a free county and an unfree people. Further I shall say when the time arrives.

Therefore I move that in the tenth line of the Motion, as amended, between the words "*delegation*" and "*to*", there be inserted the words "*chosen by and from this Council*", and in the thirteenth line the words "*fully self-government*" be deleted and between the words "*territory*" and "*within*" the words "*with full internal self-government*" be inserted.

It seems that what I said about the point of view being carted around about Federation is a correct analysis of the attitude of the Mover of the Amendment, but if he and his Party believe that by using their numbers here and by refusing to accept verbal amendments which leave everyone's position intact and everyone satisfied, that this side of the Council has committed itself against Federation, he is mistaken.

Motion on Loans to Domestics Leaving for Canada: 20th August, 1958

Mr. Burnham: I am particularly happy that this Government has seen the reason to change its previous opinion and to agree to the granting of loans to domestics recruited for employment in Canada. It is, however, regrettable that the amount proposed to be loaned is so miserly in this case which obviously calls for assistance.

I heard the Hon. Minister of Labour, Health and Housing, Mrs. Jagan, announced that it was proposed to make a loan of \$200 to each domestic towards the cost of passage and incidental expenses. I thought her argument might have been that the cost of a passage from British Guiana to Canada was less than \$200, in which case I would have asked her which shipping line was offering passages so cheaply. At the moment 30 persons are to be recruited and \$200 each will involve a sum of \$6,000. We know that the financial or economic conditions in British Guiana are supposed to be tight at the moment, but if a few thousand dollars are going to make such a difference in the economy of a country with a Budget of \$67 million, something is radically wrong.

I cannot understand this sort of naïve penny-pinching attitude, and to give as an explanation for offering less than Barbados, the fact that Barbados has two problems – unemployment and over-population – seems to me a very specious reason. The point is not what are the problems of the Barbados Government, but what are the needs of the persons here whom we are seeking to assist? The Government must be far removed from the type of persons selected as domestics to suggest that a mere pittance of \$200 would be sufficient to assist them in defraying the cost of passages and incidental expenses. The passage alone costs more than \$200, and I would have thought that this Government was aware of the fact that this category of workers would not have been able to save money to pay their passages to Canada.

It will mean, therefore, that this inadequate loan of \$200 will still leave the selectees in the position where they would have to borrow money from moneylenders, and I am not aware that there is any moneylender who charges as little as 6 percent interest per annum. The result would be that those persons who have been inadequately assisted would be burdened with the repayment of the loans they obtain from moneylenders, in addition to the repayment of the loans they get from Government.

In the circumstances I should ask Government not be stubborn, not to be unchanging with respect to the sum of money it proposes to lend to each selectee. I rather believe that if Government's experts and advisers had an opportunity to go into the matter more carefully they would come to the conclusion that the minimum loan to be offered should be in the vicinity of what is provided in Barbados. You excite the appetite of the individual but

do not attempt to assuage his hunger. As I see it, the domestics who are to be given loans of \$200 are going to be in a worse position.

I am not in favour of the Amendment which suggests that the Government is only willing to assist by giving loans towards the cost of passages but is not prepared to provide loans to meet the cost of the passages. I can see no reason for that, and I am all the more surprised and disappointed when I recall that the Hon. Minister who offers this pittance is the same Minister who bemoaned the percentage of unemployment that exists in British Guiana.

Here we have an opportunity to relieve, to some extent, the unemployment over which so many crocodile tears have been shed. Here we have an opportunity to set up, so to speak, a number of Guianese in Canada who, like most Guianese, will not be forgetful of their relatives but will send back money when they are on their legs.

Here it is we have an opportunity not only to ease the unemployment situation but to make sure that more hard currency, more Canadian dollars, come into the country. If we accept the attitude of Government that a few thousand dollars is a lot of money, may I point out that this will be an investment, because Government will get a few more thousand dollars of hard currency. I plead with Government not to persist in its decision to grant loans of only \$200 to these domestics.

Motion on Federation with the West Indies: 20th August, 1958

Mr. Burnham: I beg to move the Motion standing in my name on the Order Paper:

“Be it resolved:

That this Council recommends that Government enter immediately into negotiations with the Government of the West Indies Federation with a view to British Guiana’s entering the West Indies Federation immediately.”

The subject of federation has been debated in this council time and again since the first dispatch by His Majesty’s Secretary of State for the Colonies in 1945, the last debate taking place as recently as 1956.

I, however, submit that what distinguishes the present debate from the former ones is the fact that whereas on previous occasions the subject of federation was rather academic; today it is a vital question. Whereas before it was whether or not there was going to be a federation, today there is the West Indies Federation and today the choice is ours as to whether British Guiana will accede to that West Indies Federation or go it alone, as some people think we have been doing successfully so far.

I do not propose to consider in any detail the history of the movement towards federation in the Caribbean. I shall only make reference to any incidents or landmarks in the discussion that has gone on for over a century, if such references are necessary to illustrate any point. I should rather prefer as early and as quickly as possible to get down to today, the year 1958.

It may, of course, be necessary to cast our eyes around the world at the moment and see whether we recognise certain trends and whether our decision to federate or not to federate is in consonance with those trends or diametrically opposed to them. One trend that is easily recognisable, save to Members, whose blindness is accounted for by their unwillingness to see, is the fact that this is no longer the age of the small nation, but rather of the large nation and groupings of nations. You have the Eastern bloc and the Western bloc. You have, for instance, in the Eastern bloc a citizen of one nation being a Minister of Defence in the Government of another nation.

Coming down to the lower level, you will find that various countries have been seeking to come closer together. You have the United Arab Republic whose birth was hailed by those on the right and those on the left. You have the United Arab Kingdom – in Jordan and Iraq – whose formation is indicative of a specific trend. There is no desire on my part to analyse the reasons for its failure. I suppose there are others who can analyse it with the assistance of Idris Cox more carefully and successfully. You have N.A.T.O. and the Warsaw Pact countries; you have talks about a un-

ion, economic and political of the Western European countries; in our part of the world, you have the Pan American Conference which meets with great regularity. With respect to the Pan American Conference, I will concede knowledge to other Members of this Council.

You have within recent times the suggestion of the French Government that there should be a federation of France with her overseas territories. Within recent months we have heard of discussions which, apparently, have not proved very fruitful, but discussions with respect to the advisability and possibility of a closer union between the USA and Canada.

It is true that some of these attempts at unity, union or federation have been motivated by the desire of some to form a military bloc. It is true that, perhaps, an argument may be advanced that some of these attempts at the union of various countries are being made because one or the other of the countries entering the union may be seeking economic domination of an area. But even accepting for argument's sake that there are such instances, it does not mean that that criticism is referable to every instance of an attempted union between independent states.

It is significant in this respect to observe that many of these independent states are seeking to create some union between themselves and regret the fact that their long histories of national independence and borders which have been the cause of so much bloodshed make such union difficult.

We, on the other hand, are fortunate in that we do not have those difficulties placed in the way of our federating with the West Indies.

It is usual for some individuals who have a *penchant* for research into obscure facts to point out that the smallness of a country is no impediment to the achievement of independence. Costa Rica, they say, with a population of under one million is an independent nation. We hear that Suriname with a population of 240,000 is on its way to achieving independence. That is a fact. I can assist these research statisticians by alluding to a little republic situated between Spain and France – Andorra – with a population of 5,231, San Marino, a tiny spot in Italy with 13,500, Liechtenstein with 13,571 inhabitants, Monaco, of which we heard so much recently, with a population of 20,422 and Luxembourg, which is to be counted with these independent States, with a population of 309,000.

But Mr. Speaker, what is the point? Do we want the doubtful reputation of being independent and unknown? Whoever hears of any of those countries in world affairs? Maybe one has heard of Luxembourg, not as Luxembourg but as one of the Benelux countries. Perhaps, she does have another claim to recognition – the fact that the German armies are in the habit of marching through there every 25 years.

I will confess that Monaco is well known, due to the fact that Prince Rainier, its sovereign, married an American film star. Take a place like Costa Rica. Are you going to say that it is a country known for the part it plays in world affairs? It may be that one hears of Costa Rica in the councils of the world, but only as part of the Latin American bloc. Take the

Republic of Panama. It is true that we know that the Panama Canal passes through Panama and that some Guianese got jobs there, but have you heard about Panama except as a part of the Latin American bloc?

Therefore if it is the ambition of British Guiana to enjoy independence similar to that of those places and to be unknown or perhaps to be independent and be the recipients of charity from Britain or elsewhere, let us say that and let us be prepared in this 20th century to be a parasitical nation.

Centuries ago there were the Greek city states which numbered their population in thousands and hundreds of thousands. Undoubtedly we have been bequeathed by them legacy of literature and philosophy for which we can never pay.

I am reminded that there is a school of thought which holds that Greek philosophy was stolen from Egypt, but I accept the conventional view that Greek philosophy is Greek philosophy. It can be said of them that they have left us a great deal that we can learn but certainly not the theory of political organisation in this 20th century. Will we take our political lessons from countries whose nation also fought with swords and whose navies consisted of triremes? Will we, in this century, when you have atomic bombs and planes flying faster than sound and sputniks?

No purpose is served by referring merely to the fact that there are many small nations that are or have been independent, for (a) in the majority of cases those countries achieved independence at a time and over a period when there was no large scale capitalist expansion and industrialisation as today; it was fashionable as recently as the 18th century for Barbados to be considered an ideal size for a State; they are relics and have no lesson to teach us except that we know that they are relics of the past; and (b) the small nations play significant roles, in international politics.

It is conceded that with its population of 500,000 souls in this second half of the 20th century British Guiana's gaining independence connotes not only the fact of electing its own President or having its own king or head of state, but also the fact of the control of the country both politically and economically being entirely in the hand of Guianese. But small States cannot exist without alms, as Jordan does. If, therefore, it is granted, as it must be by every true-thinking Guianese, that British Guiana's standing on her own is but an empty dream engendered in a fevered brain, we must ask so ourselves: "*With whom will we join? With whom will we make our union?*" My view is – I shall not at this stage refer to our continental destiny and shall rather take a positive approach – that British Guiana should federate with the West Indian territories. It is unfortunate in some respects that the arguments around federation have been based on material advantages or disadvantages and what we get out of it. I am unaware of the fact that no high-sounding altruism will appeal to the Guianese. We live in a material world. Every Guianese, like practically every other national wants to be satisfied as to what he will get out of every act or action or decision.

I propose to deal with the advantages that will accrue to Guianese as a

unit if we were to accede to the West Indies Federation. The unfortunate thing about federation in British Guiana is that it has not been sufficiently discussed publicly and its implications and meaning made clear to the people. It is only within recent times that the Party to which I belong took the step of holding public meetings for public education and I hope edification of the people on this vital subject.

Assuming the role of schoolmaster, it may be fitting if I attempt at this stage to define "*federation*", because there abound so many misconceptions and so much ignorance. We hear the uninformed and misinformed making remarks like this – "*If we federate, British Guiana will be swallowed up and we will be no longer Guianese.*" One can sympathise with that attitude of mind for, after all, Guianese, like any other set of people, desire to retain a certain amount of their individuality. If I am permitted, I should desire to quote the definition offered by Professor Wheare who is reputed to be one of the greatest living authorities on Federal Government and Federation. At page 35 of his book on "*Federation Government*", copies of which are hard to come by, as they were all sold out in recent times, he gives this definition of "*Federal Government*" –

"Federal government exists, it was suggested, when the powers of government for a community are divided substantially according to the principle that there is a single independent authority for the whole area in respect of some matters and that there are independent regional authorities for other matters, each set of authorities being co-ordinate with and not subordinate to the others within its own prescribed sphere."

Professor Wheare may have put it in a rather involved manner but it seems to me that the definition which may be applied to Federation is that it implies the existence of two Governments – a strong central Government and a strong local Government or territorial Government. If that definition of Professor Wheare is correct and my précis of it is accurate, there should be the answer to the various Guianese who imagine that under Federation their identity will be lost in the Caribbean sea.

In a Federation the units or the various political communities, for certain reasons have thought it the wisest thing to come together and to set up a strong central Government capable of organising and protecting the area, at the same time permitting each territory to have its own Government which in its own sphere is supreme. So that if there are any peculiar Guianese traditions, if there are any things about Guiana we want to retain, it would be a question merely of the allocation of powers.

For example, under the present West Indies Federation, Education is a unit power; it is not on the Exclusive List. It means that if we wanted perhaps to maintain our own system of education which we believe is peculiar to British Guiana and should devoutly be protected and maintained there will be no fear. As Dicey says, federation connotes unity in diversity –

unity which we desire for the progress of the entire area, side by side with the diversity which each unit wants so as to be able to maintain the individuality of its own citizens and territory.

Federation is to be distinguished from union. As at present advised, if a political union in its technical legalistic sense were to be urged between British Guiana and the West Indian territories I should be opposed to it because a union in its legalistic sense premises one Government and the territorial Governments are to be local arms or agents of a strong central Government. Then there would be no scope for the individuality of Guianese people as distinct from the Trinidadian people. Thus we shall all be regimented and then certain difficulties may arise.

South Africa thought fit to have a Union rather than a Federation, but the people of South Africa knew what was good for them. But, speaking as a Guianese, I should not be the one at this stage to ask for a union in its technical legalistic sense, for in such a union the Government of British Guiana would merely be a provincial arm, a sort of part of the central machine carrying out and executing orders and decisions rather than being capable of making important policy decisions.

I rather believe that if all those who approach the question of federation in the circumstances of British Guiana at the moment were to appreciate the distinction between federation and union a great deal of the antipathy to federation would be removed and completely banished. So may I repeat that what I am seeking to urge this Legislative Council to do is to decide on British Guiana's being a part of the West Indies Federation and not part of a Union.

But there will possibly be the argument – for the anti-federationists are rather resourceful – that this Legislative Council, constituted as it is at the moment, is incompetent to make so far-reaching a decision as the entry of British Guiana into the West Indies Federation.

Somewhere in the books on Equity one finds (I do not remember in which book or in which case, Mr. Speaker you probably know better than I) the principle enunciated that you cannot approbate and reprobate. What is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander. You must retain a certain amount of consistency, you must be intellectually honest. You cannot come here and say that the Legislative Council is the repository of the wishes of the people of British Guiana on one subject – an important subject like the type of Constitution you want, the form of self-government you desire – and then Pilate-like afterwards say that on the question of federation this Council is not competent to deal with the subject. On what basis is that argument urged? It is true that this Council is not entirely elected. That is a truth which a kindergarten student will admit, but as you look around this Chamber you see, I would say, actually every section of the community, socially and economically is represented.

That was the advantage of the Motion for self-government – that we had the businessmen, local and expatriate, agreeing; we had the commission

agents agreeing; we had the farmers agreeing that we should have a better Constitution. The Legislative Council on that score was competent, but, alas, the same Legislative Council is incompetent to make what I submit and shall attempt to prove later is a decision which will ensure to the economic and political benefit of the whole of British Guiana. If you are incompetent to make a decision that affects the interests of the people of British Guiana on one score then you are an imposter if on another score you set yourself up as a representative of the people.

I have no personalities in mind; I am dealing with principles. I may have reason later, when we come to consider some of the specious arguments of the anti-federationists and some of the unspoken and major premises of the anti-federationists, to refer to individuals, but merely to illustrate principles and concepts.

Perhaps, before we go into the actual advantages that would come to British Guiana from her entry into the Federation. I would consider what have been described as the pre-requisites of Federation. Those are the factors which have been found to be present in all of the modern federations. Those are the factors which have tended to make the modern federations strong units rather than dissident peoples, groups and units. I make no claim to originality. I shall seek Your Honour's permission to refer once more to Professor Wheare's book "*Federal Government.*" At page 37 the professor wrote this:

"Communities have been led to desire union for a variety of reasons. But in the modern federations some factors seem always to have been present. A sense of military insecurity and of the consequent need for common defence; a desire to be independent of foreign powers and a realisation that only through union could independence be secured; a hope of economic advantage from union; some political association of the communities concerned prior to their federal union either in a loose confederation, as with the American states and the Swiss cantons or as parts of the same Empire as with the Canadian and Australian colonies; geographical neighbourhood and similarity of political institutions – these half-dozen factors all operated in the United States, Switzerland, Canada and Australia, to produce a desire for union among the communities concerned. They operated in varying degree in each case but they were all present in each case. Some of them were present also in other examples of voluntary unions where the federal principle was not adopted. Thus, the need for common defence, the desire to be independent, geographical contiguity and the hope of economic advantage all helped to produce a desire for union which was a force in leading England and Scotland to form the United Kingdom of Great Britain in 1707; the Italian states to form the Kingdom of Italy in the years from 1856 to 1864; the German states to form, first the North German confederation of 1867, and then the German Empire of 1871; and the South African Colonies – Transvaal, Orange River, the Cape and Natal to form the Union of South Africa in 1909. And in all these cases except the Italian states, there was some form of previous political association and some substantial similarity of political institutions."

Six factors. It is proposed to show that, so far as British Guiana and the West Indies Federation are concerned, five of those factors are in evidence. I say five because one of them I consider immaterial in the circumstances of the 20th century here on the doorstep of the USA. The one which I will dismiss quickly, Mr. Speaker is the sense of military insecurity and of the consequent need for a common defence. It does not matter to the West Indies Federation and British Guiana whether we feel militarily insecure or not. Yes, some idle dreamer would think that we are capable of defending ourselves militarily.

I do not see that, in the context of the western hemisphere, our defence will not be looked after by those who have to defend this area against the other bloc. I do not envisage raids from Venezuela or revolutions from Brazil. I have not taken into account the idle dreams of idle men. We cannot produce an atom bomb; we cannot have an I.C.B.M.; we cannot have jet bombers, so this question of military insecurity is immaterial. We may feel militarily insecure, but that is not a good, individual reason for our not federating because our military defence will be taken care of by someone else.

Mr. Speaker, I prefer to deal in greater detail with the second factor, "*the desire to be independent of foreign powers and a realisation that only through union could independence be secured.*"

I had forgotten to ask you before if you would be kind enough to adjourn this Council at 4.30 p.m. for very personal reasons. I have to attend the funeral of a very close friend, but that does not mean that I am asking for an adjournment now. I still have ten minutes more. With your permission and the permission of the Council, I ask that the meeting be adjourned at 4.30 p.m. to enable me to pay my last respects to a close friend.

Mr. Speaker, with regard to this desire for independence, it must be conceded that there is no political party in British Guiana which does not say that an attempt should not be made to win independence. Of course some parties contend that they are the vanguard of the struggle for independence. Maybe they are right, but it is not to be assumed that the desire of political parties and the people of British Guiana for independence is in any way greater than the comparable desire on the part of West Indian politicians and peoples.

There is a Pharisaical attitude pervading a certain political party whose leaders express themselves thus: "*Only we are the fighters for independence; only we want independence and to cast off the colonial shackles; the others are only paying lip-service; the others are stooges and are not sincere.*" I shall ask them to be a little more reasonable in their analysis and not mistake a difference in technique or tactics for a difference or conviction for as far as I am aware the desire of the West Indian people for independence is as great as ours.

But the desire must not stop there. If we are going to make out a case that this is one of the factors in Federation, it must be coupled with the realisation that only through union that independence can be secured. It is

taken for granted by outside observers like Professor Knaplund of Wisconsin University that the desire of West Indians for independence by their persistent determination is much greater than was the desire of the Canadians or Australians.

The West Indians realise and appreciate (a) that each little territory, each little island may, first of all, find it more difficult to wrest from Britain its independence than would all of these islands together as one bloc or one region; (b) that assuming that each island and each territory were to achieve – I would not say the impossible but the extremely difficult in what must be a much longer time of gaining – its independence as a little unit, the next question will be, can each unit by itself make a reality of its independence?

Will we have in the Caribbean a number of Andorras and Monacos? We have one thing in common with Monaco which is a tourist centre; in the West Indian islands are also to be found tourist centres. If that argument against isolation is valid for the West Indian Islands, it is also valid for British Guiana.

British Guiana has less than 90,000 square miles. I was taught that in the second standard in the elementary school but we have a population of 500,000 people. The largeness, power or importance of a nation is not calculated merely by its acreage or square miles. If that were so the nation which owned the Sahara Desert would be, of course, one of the most powerful and important nation in the world.

There are the human resources which are so important in reckoning the importance of the nation. If the West Indian Islands have recognised – Jamaica with a population of over one million; Trinidad with a population one and a half times that of ours – that independence in isolation will not mean real independence, why should not we in British Guiana recognise that, if we are to make a reality of our desire for the achievement of independence, we should join with the others – I say yes to the West Indies Federation.

I shall deal with the alternatives – the South American link up, for instance, at the proper time. One of the reasons for the West Indian people, like the Canadians and Australians before them, recognising that a union would mean real independence, is the fact that there are certain economic advantages which must follow the union as night follows day.

But before I deal with those economic advantages which are anticipated and which must come from a union, I may, perhaps, point out that the West Indies Federation will be enjoying dominion status or independence within a matter of years – within my lifetime, for I do not propose dying within the next 365 days. Of course, that is barring accidents planned or unplanned.

One may say that Britain has been forced to concede dominion status to the West Indies within a short time. One may say that the British Government, out of the largeness of its democratic heart, will grant Dominion Status to the West Indies within a short time. To me, it does not matter which point of view you subscribe to; I subscribe to the former. The fact is that,

whether it is the result of embarrassment by world opinion or the pressures of various facts or factors, Britain is going to grant Dominion Status to the West Indies Federation.

It is significant that while this country goes "*cap-in-hand*," to the Secretary of State for the Colonies and says, "*Please give us an improved constitution – in breach of a gentleman's agreement*" – the West Indies Federation has decided to appoint a committee to consider the type of constitution it will have within a short period. The fact is, therefore, that political independence for the West Indies is around the corner. Whereas, with some of the blow-hards, repeaters of clichés, one has to use a telescope to recognise how soon we are going to get independence in British Guiana.

Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, this is a convenient point at which I may seek your permission to stop this afternoon.

Motion on Federation with the West Indies: 21st August, 1958

(Council resumed the debate on the Motion by the Hon. Member for Georgetown Central (Mr. Burnham):

"That this Council recommends that Government enter immediately into negotiations with the Government of the West Indies Federation with a view to British Guiana's entering the West Indies Federation immediately."

Mr. Burnham: Mr. Speaker, just before the adjournment was taken yesterday, I sought or essayed to discuss the second of the pre-requisites which Professor Wheare discovered to be present in the case of all modern federations. It was: *"the desire to be independent and the realization that only through union can independence be secured."* I referred to the opinion of an outside observer, Professor Knaplund of Wisconsin University to the effect that he discovered that in the Caribbean the desire for independence or rather to be free of British control was greater than that which existed in the case of Canada and Australia.

I desire to re-emphasise from my own observation that the desire for and quest of independence in the Caribbean Islands are no less than they are in British Guiana. It may be true that in some cases the tactics and declarations of the West Indian political leaders lack the flamboyance of their counterparts in British Guiana, but anyone who has had the opportunity of meeting those leaders and politicians of the Caribbean Islands must be struck by their intense desire to have their respective territories and the region as a whole politically independent. But they have recognised in the first place, that if each separate territory were to pursue its quest for independence, its struggles – to use a familiar term – to be free, though in theory they would be successful in time, if all the nationalist forces of the West Indian territories and islands were coordinated and channelized, the possibility of success is much greater.

It seems, therefore, especially in view of the fact that in the cases of at least the three larger islands of the British Caribbean there are advanced Constitutions, that for us in British Guiana to pursue the vision of hoping, some day in the distant future, to achieve independence, is for us to be as ignorant of the writing on the wall as were the Chaldean sorcerers whose ignorance Daniel exposed.

Wouldn't it be a pity that we in British Guiana who yield pride of place to no one, should have to concede that whereas the West Indian leaders and politicians are Daniels we cannot discern or understand the writing on the wall and the signs of the times? It seems that those West Indian leaders and politicians have recognised that little units by themselves may be able to make a certain amount of noise, but in the world of today and with world

opinion at the point which it has reached, the concerted demand of the region is more likely to be listened to and to be conceded.

Of course it is not to be imagined that for one moment I suggest that Federation will automatically bring freedom, independence or – to use the more conventional term in this context and this area – Dominion Status. I merely urge that federation offers an opportunity for the coordination of the nationalist movement in the various territories and islands, which coordination can bring, eventually; Dominion Status and I assume that everyone here is with me in assuming that Dominion Status means independence. Consequently, I can see no need for me to attempt to define or to deliver any homily on Dominion Status.

I think it is also accepted that Britain will be granting it – some people will say granting, others will say yielding; a distinction without a difference in view of the fact that within a short time the West Indies Federation is convinced that it will in fact get Dominion Status. What shall we do in those circumstances? Shall we stay out? Shall we indulge in our usual tearfulness and bemoan the fact that whereas in 1953 our Constitution was the most forward of the British Caribbean, today Jamaica, Trinidad and Barbados are all ahead of us? – perfect sentiments if one is delivering a bedtime story to an infant, but certainly not the type of attitude that is to be admired, condoned or excused in individuals or Parties that set themselves up as leaders of any community. What does not matter is whether we achieve independence as little British Guiana or as part of a new nation, an independent nation. Only the vain glorious and conceited, I submit, will see any benefit flowing automatically from British Guiana being independent by itself, as against British Guiana being part of an independent nation and community. A comparable attitude to that in the United States of America would be for the New Yorkers to insist on being members of an independent State of New York with its own flag, its own United Nations representative and its own embassies, and on being independent outside of and away from the larger community and nation of the United States of America.

I have pondered this question for some time and I have attempted in my charity to discover what advantage there can be in an independent British Guiana of 500,000 people and 83,000 square miles, when British Guiana has an opportunity to be part of a nation of about 4,000,000. Perhaps, if there are any anti-federationists here present they will do us the favour of solving that puzzle and removing that misunderstanding which still lingers with me so far as their opposition to British Guiana's joining the West Indies Federation is concerned.

It will be recalled that I referred to six prerequisites or factors yesterday. I dismissed one out of hand as not being relevant. I shall now deal with the third, as listed by Professor Wheare, or the second really for our purpose – the hope of economic advantage which has led previous States, unit territories, political communities, to desire and make a success of federation. It seems that if I can convince – and I do believe that an open mind will not be

difficult to convince – if I can convince the anti-federationists under this head, British Guiana will soon be a country of all federationists.

In considering the economic advantage which people hope for from federation – though it must be agreed that it is in some measure bound up with the desire for political independence and freedom – it must not be assumed that the hope of economic advantage necessarily has a direct connection with political independence. As an historical fact we may recall that when Canada was federated in 1867 and Australia in 1900 those two countries did not enjoy independence or Dominion Status, but rather at the time they had responsible Government of a sort which the West Indian leaders will not today accept as a political goal.

I hope I will not be misinterpreted, misconstrued or misrepresented on this point. I agree that political independence in itself is an end. I agree that I should never be one to advocate British Guiana's accession to the West Indies Federation if full political independence were not the goal of that Federation. But I contend that although we may accept political independence as the goal it does not preclude us from taking advantage at this stage of the economic advantages which flow from a federation of a number of political communities.

Can it be doubted that subsequent to the Canadian Federation of 1867 and prior to the achievement of Dominion Status by that Federation in the 1930s, that the economy of Canada has developed? Can it be denied that subsequent to 1900, when the Australian colonies were federated and prior to the 1930s when that Federation gained Dominion Status that the economy of Australia developed by leaps and bounds? I have not been able so far to hear anyone deny those two facts, but perhaps it is not always appreciated by those who have not taken the time and the trouble to investigate, that the economic progress made by Canada and Australia was a direct consequence of the Federations of Canada and Australia.

I do not purport to be an economist, but some of the arguments which have been advanced in explanation of the buoyant economies which came as a consequence of federation in Canada and Australia, as set out by economists, are simple and such that even a layman like myself will understand. No doubt there are economists here – economists of "guesstimate" tradition and fame – who may disagree with the observation made by Professor Knaplund in an essay in the *Social and Economic Studies* series on Federation of the West Indies published by the Institute of Social and Economic Research at the U.C.W.I. This is what the Professor says – and his opinion I shall adopt – at page 102.

"British and Canadian financial interests enthusiastically supported the agitation for a British North American Federation. The large States would provide a better credit base than the small provinces..."

I am instructed to read page 148. I am grateful for the direction of my attention by the Hon. Minister of Trade and Industry to page 148 of the same book. I had anticipated the fallacious argument that would be advanced on the score of the disadvantages set out in page 148, and I shall deal with that in my own good time. I have read this book from cover to cover. I believe that the condition of my copy bears testimony of that fact, which cannot be said of the copy I see across the table.

But, Mr. Speaker, may I refer to one of the finest arguments in favour of federation from the economic point of view. I think I can do nothing better, at his stage, than to quote the Hon. Minister of Trade and Industry who, in one of his inspired moments in this Council on the 11th February, 1958, said – the inspired speech is reported at column 930 of the 1958 *Hansard* –

“... we have always said that we believe, economically speaking, there is everything to be gained in planning the resources both material and human in the area as a whole, including British Guiana. We have said time and time again that if this region is to progress, then a stock has to be taken of all the resources and a decision made as to how these resources will have to be developed. It is no use having industries planned and developed in territories when there are no markets for the industries. Unless these things are done we will find factories closing down, and the people whom we are trying to help will find themselves unemployed.”

Was it Chaucer who said, “Murder will out”? Was it Shakespeare who said, “Truth will out”, or the Bible that stated, “Out of the mouths of babes and suckling ...?”

This same gentleman, Dr. Jagan, said at Piarco Airport that he would welcome a conference of West Indian leaders to work out a common programme for the economies of the West Indies and British Guiana. What easier way is there of ensuring such a conference than to accept federation?

At this stage, with your permission, may I read the editorial in *The Daily Gleaner* of Jamaica dated Saturday, 9th August, 1958. It states:

“We can see little virtue in the proposal per se by Dr. Cheddi Jagan that there should be a conference of West Indian leaders to work out a common programme for the economies of the West Indies and British Guiana. It appears to us on the basis mooted to be an effort to obtain the fruits of federation without its labours. Dr. Jagan is well aware of the open offer of full association for British Guiana in the federation. It is he and his party who are resisting the efforts to bring about an early union; a union, we may add, which would not be without problems for the federation as well as presenting also obvious advantages. Dr. Jagan’s offer can however profitably lead to discussions, not perhaps to work out a common programme, but to find a means to establish the prerequisite unity he has delayed.

It may be that Dr. Jagan feels his approach to this problem is on par with that of the U.K. to the European Common Market. We do not consider this can be a valid comparison. By Federating, British Guiana would, it is true, enhance the eco-

conomic potentialities of the federation, it would also, we believe, be greatly assisted in solving its own political problems. The advantages are by no means one sided only. The pattern of communications, to take one example, would be simplified for British Guiana by such a move. Her financial problems at present are a serious headache for Dr. Jagan and, if not handled with care, might reflect adversely upon the federation; these could also we believe be eased by such a direct association. The valuable outlet for British Guiana rice would be safeguarded. These are considerable advantages which Dr. Jagan cannot afford to ignore.

Inevitably, association of British Guiana with the federation would entail the surrender by Dr. Jagan of some of the freedom he at present enjoys to run his own political line. He would be subjected to the pressures and counter balances accepted in the federation; this may in fact be greatly to his benefit and to that of British Guiana. Even a cursory examination of Dr. Jagan's present suggestion supports the belief that it would not be practicable to isolate the economic aspects of British Guiana's relations with the federation from the political aspects. The federation can hardly present its own case for international assistance and trail along a separate case for British Guiana. In fact in existing circumstances, it is difficult to see what interest the federation could have in adopting such a course even where it is agreeable to doing so. The danger for British Guiana in its present isolation is that as the federation gathers momentum, its political and economic standards will advance at a rate which British Guiana on its own cannot hope to emulate.

It is encouraging that Dr. Jagan is coming round to the view that a close link between the economies of British Guiana and the West Indies Federation is desirable. No doubt the results of his efforts to raise finances have impressed his thinking; the West Indies would be churlish and short-sighted to refuse an offer of partnership even if the offer is one of self interest. It would be a much more hopeful sign however if Dr. Jagan were to accept concurrently the view that direct association with the federation now would assist him in meeting some of his country's pressing economic and political problems.

Meanwhile should negotiations take place as the result of Dr. Jagan's move we suggest the federal negotiators should make it plain that while in the world at large half a loaf is better than none, Dr. Jagan cannot offer merely a crumb to keep his loaf."

Mr. Speaker, I took the trouble to quote the editorial at length because I want to emphasize the point I sought to make earlier. While some people accept the necessity of regional planning, they will not also accept the necessity for a union between the units that are going to plan economically, in this case British Guiana and the West Indies.

They believe that West Indian political leaders are a number of altruists; philanthropists or Sunday School teachers who are going to say to British Guiana, "We will plan with you for your economic benefit, but we are not going to insist that you share the benefits of your economic development." In other words what some people would like to see is a situation where British Guiana coalesces or cooperates with the West Indies only on such matters as British

Guiana decides, perhaps.

It must be remembered that were we a country with the vastness and richness of the USA we could dictate such terms to the West Indies but unfortunately while our thoughts rise on high, our bodies remain on mother earth. We are a little over 500,000 in population, and in no position to dictate to the West Indies. We must cooperate with them fully if we are to benefit. That there are economic advantages to be gained from federation with the West Indies there can be no doubt.

May I refer first of all to the much discussed question of the Customs Union? A Customs Union has been proposed for the West Indies Federation. It is true it has not yet become a reality. It is true that there is bickering between Jamaica and Trinidad. It is true there is no full agreement yet. But these things happen in any democratic society, it is only in societies where there is a monolithic political structure that you do not find such discussions and disagreements as can be ironed out as a result of negotiations.

I will concede that there seems to be trouble brewing between Jamaica and Trinidad on this question. But that is the stuff of which democracy is made, that is the touchstone on which statesmen and politicians are tried. This Customs Union which is proposed for the West Indies Federation and which I have no doubt will be eventually adopted, has three essential features. They are set out in paragraph 13 of the Report of the mission on the establishment of a Customs Union in the British Caribbean area. There are three essential features of Customs Union, namely – (a) as large a measure as possible of free trade among the constituent members; (b) substantially the same tariff applied by all the constituent members to goods received from territories outside the union; and (c) a common system for joint negotiations with countries outside the union area so as to unify not only tariff policy but also commercial policy.

May I go on to read paragraph 16 of the same Report, for the loan of which some time ago I must express my gratitude to the Hon. Minister of Trade and Industry:

“In the early stages of a Customs Union, however, it might be necessary to afford a certain amount of protection to selected local industries by restricting the importation of the like kind of goods from other parts of the free trade area but care would have to be exercised to ensure that industries were not being artificially kept alive against the interests of the consumer or the real interests of local economies. As one of the main purposes of Customs Union is to encourage local industry by providing a wider area for which production can be planned without the hindrance imposed by tariff and other economic restrictions, the Commission is of the opinion that any suggestion of protecting individual industries within the union area should be viewed with caution. Should circumstances appear to warrant protection it should be with the agreement of the representative central authority referred to later in this report and might either take the form of a quota which could gradually be increased until its restrictive effect was nullified or, in exceptional cases, by means of the common external tariff.”

I have quoted paragraph 16 to illustrate that even a Customs Union when it comes into being will not mark the end of the problem – it will not be the end to difficulties and disagreements. That will not mean that one territory or another will not have a grouse. But in those circumstances, Mr. Speaker, it is not so much what are the best interests of the little individual units but what are the best interests of the entire region. If the entire region benefits as a whole, it means that the recipients of those benefits which will accrue will be the inhabitants of the whole region.

Can British Guiana hope to enjoy eventually the benefits of a Customs Union without going into the Federation? If that can be established, then there is some scintilla of evidence in favour of the anti-federationists' case. As I see it, I cannot see the West Indies agreeing to British Guiana being a member of the Customs Union without British Guiana being part of the West Indian Federation. British Guiana's economy at the moment is competitive with that of the West Indies and one is not going to accept readily a competitor and give him the protection of this Union unless that competitor ceases his competition, and the only way to ensure that is to have political union.

There is no doubt that the problem which faces all countries today, whether they are agricultural or industrial, is the question of markets. That is why we hear of a European Common Market. The West Indian leaders are bound to and will accept, a Customs Union throughout the area. This problem of finding markets, which the Hon. Minister of Trade and Industry alluded to, is a problem that faces so many other countries. For instance, it is the problem that today faces Britain, or perhaps it has been faced by Britain and it has been proposed that Britain could solve it by guaranteeing her European markets by means of the European Common Market.

It is interesting to repeat what one Mr. Ivan Munro, a British industrialist, I understand, had to say on this question of the Common Market. It is interesting to note his arguments in favour of the Common Market and it will be interesting to hear any arguments to destroy those in favour of the Common Market. I submit with confidence, if we accept the authority of his argument with respect to the Common Market in respect of the British industrialists we must accept it in respect of the West Indies. Once you accept that, you accept the case of federation.

I may be taken in that belief, but I think that originally that had been shared by the Hon. Leader of the Majority Party. At one time he was a federationist. But there may be others in this Council who are not federationists and it is for their benefit that I repeat this argument. Mr. Munro said, and it is recorded in *The Listener* of the 8th August, 1957:

"It has been decided, with reservations, that Great Britain will join the European Free Trade Zone. The main reservation and one which may prove a considerable stumbling block, is the exclusion of agriculture. British agriculture has quietly burned itself out. It remains to be seen whether our farmers are allowed to stay

outside the scheme or not, but certainly, our manufacturers cannot afford to be left out. We know the enormous competitive power of American industry based on a large home market and if we find that our already considerable competitors on the continent are going to be further strengthened by having an enormous home market, from which we are excluded we shall then indeed be in a sorry plight."

The American industry has been developed because of its large home market. The Soviet industry has been developed because of its large home market. The British industry has been developed because the British had the foresight to own colonies and so provide herself with markets. These are historical facts. Assuming for arguments sake that British Guiana succeeds in developing its industries, agricultural and industrial – a proposition to which I do not subscribe – the big question still is markets. But where will we get the market? To quote the Hon. Minister of Trade and Industry, *"We shall not be helping the people we set out to help unless we get markets"*. We must face the fact that we want a protected market; 500,000 people cannot offer a protected market in this 20th century. Who will offer us a protected market? – the West Indies. But the new Federation will say *"We will give the protected market, but not when you go it on your own."*

Mr. Speaker, the point is this: if you want the West Indian protected market, which is an immediate market, you must enter the Federation. We want an immediate market, the type offered by the West Indies. From acceptance of the fact that there is need for a market there must follow the acceptance that the only market in which we can obtain protection is the West Indian market. Acceptance of these facts means that federation for British Guiana is the answer. But, Mr. Speaker, it is not merely a question of markets. It is a question of being able to plan the economy of a region on a regional basis. Take our exports. We export sugar and gin, and so do Jamaica and Trinidad. We have set up a beer factory and so have Trinidad and Jamaica. Except for such things like oil in Trinidad and until recently bauxite in British Guiana – now we have a competitor in Jamaica – basically the economies of British Guiana and the West Indies are competitive. We do not in this area enjoy the advantages which the young American Federation enjoyed of having States with complementary rather than competitive economies.

In this 20th century, whether one's ideology is the right or to the left, it is accepted that economic matters must be planned. It would mean that by entering the Federation we would be making sure of planning our economy in such a way that our benefits would be assured as well as the benefits of the West Indies. In these days when, as we have been told by the Governor, there are so many under-developed countries seeking loans abroad, it is important that we execute such a plan as to rationalise and develop all our resources and be able to contribute to further development.

There is a fallacy abroad that if you want to develop British Guiana all you have to do is to hang your mouth out and the soup of foreign capital

will fall unto it. But what we are thrown back on in this area is the necessity to so organise our resources that there will be the minimum necessity to seek assistance from outside. We must realise that in these days the lending countries are being asked by under-developed countries to set up industries which at the moment, the would-be lenders find more profitable to operate in the metropolitan countries. Therefore it is not going to be so easy merely to go and beg for money to set up new industries.

There is also the necessity to establish to would-be lenders what we want, and to explain to them the importance of our plans and how we are going to repay the money we want to borrow, and again the necessity to provide out of our own resources the necessary capital for at least our welfare services. It is difficult enough to get them to come and spend money willingly in the development of industries which they have established in the metropolitan countries, but even more difficult to get them to come and spend money on our welfare services. Therefore the money necessary for the development of our welfare service will at least have to be got from the area, and that cannot be got by mouthing and saying that we are standing on our own, but by pooling the resources of British Guiana with the resources of the Caribbean territories.

Take, for instance, one of the advantages that have already begun to accrue to Jamaica as a result of her entry into Federation – not only to Jamaica but to the rest of the West Indies. On Thursday, 31st July, there was passed in the Jamaica Legislature an Anti-Dumping Bill which put a restrictive tariff on all goods from outside the Federal area which were being dumped or were in competition with goods produced in the Federal area. Of course, countries like Japan can always afford to dump goods in order to capture a market. Jamaica's passing of an anti-dumping law means that not only is she protecting her industries which would be subject to competition from the dumped goods, but also, so far as the Jamaica market is concerned, she is protecting the industries in other parts of the Federation. If we, for instance, started to produce glass we may well find ourselves in the position where we would be undersold, or where dumping could ruin our West Indian markets, since we are not part of the Federation. For then our products will not be federal products subject to protection.

If we are outside of the Customs Union and outside of the Federation it would mean that to the West Indies we are a "*foreign*" country, and there will be this anti-dumping law against British Guiana's products entering the Federal area if they are in any way in competition with goods produced in that area. But the immediate advantages to be got from British Guiana's joining the Federation are not limited merely to markets; are not limited merely to the opportunity which will be afforded to plan our development. Incidentally, I wonder whether or not the ambitious "*stand-it-alone*" can tell us where we will get the money from to pay for modern plant and modern experts. But I shall deal with that aspect later.

There is another advantage that the West Indies Federation will achieve

independence before British Guiana – I am sure of that. I am sorry to be so pessimistic about the political future of British Guiana. I do not say that British Guiana, standing on its own, will never achieve independence, but that the West Indies Federation will achieve independence before British Guiana, standing on its own, will. If we were part of the West Indies Federation and it achieved Dominion Status, the Federation would be in a position to carry out diplomatic manoeuvre – not to run to the United Nations, to meet Secretaries of the under-developed countries or Trust Territories Committees who are merely investigators. They are functionaries; they are not policy makers. The West Indies Federation will have a delegation at the United Nations where it will be able to execute diplomatic manoeuvres and make contacts. There is nothing like meeting on the level of equality and the possibility of Government-to-Government loans or practical assistance becomes greater. No, let us stand alone and let us go to meet the functionaries who merely collate papers and give information to the delegates! That is the alternative to joining the Federation. I cannot conceive of Government-to-Government loans to British Guiana standing on its own, but I shall have more to say on that aspect later.

May I quote from the *“Federation of the West Indies” – Social and Economic Studies series* – and from an essay written by Dudley Sears, in which he deals with some of the economic advantages which are to be expected from Federation? I quote from page 210:

“Moreover, unit governments are also giving up important powers in the new constitution, which will make it difficult for them to devise their own development programmes. Unless funds flow in from abroad on a scale larger than seems likely at present, any considerable development programme will require exchange controls against all external currencies (including sterling), but only the Federal government will have the power to impose such controls. Furthermore, a central banking system will be needed for two reasons. First, the supply of money would then reflect local needs rather than the needs of the United Kingdom, which may (as in recent years) be different; and, secondly an additional channel would be provided for the mobilization of local capital – particularly the assets of savings and commercial banks. Even if the Federal Government permitted the units to use their ‘concurrent’ powers in banking legislation, it would be very difficult in practice for any of the units to establish their own central banks, with the possible exceptions of Jamaica and Trinidad. Lastly, except for Jamaica, units lack the economists and the planning staff needed for a development plan, and it would be wasteful for each one to attempt to establish its own planning organisation.”

The important sentence, as I see it, in that passage which I have just quoted, is this:

“... the supply of money would then reflect local needs rather than the needs of the United Kingdom, which may (as in recent years) be different ...”

If my thesis is accepted – and I feel it is logical in the light of experience over the past few years – that British Guiana cannot achieve independence as quickly as the West Indies Federation will achieve Dominion Status it means that even if B.G. had the capital locally to establish a Central Bank, British Guiana will not be in a position to have its own money policy, for then it would still be a Crown Colony. It is well to say that you are tired of colonialism when by your very actions you fail to take the opportunity to escape from the grasp of the colonialists. In these days when practically every Guianese agrees that we want to be free of colonialism, there are two types to be shunned and criticized – (1) those with the Uncle Tom attitude who still believe that colonialism is a good thing; those who would lick the boot that kicks them, and (2) those who, in spite of their mouthings, by their actions and deeds strengthen the moral position of the colonists. We want to stand on our own, some say glibly, but I shall deal with the shadow of suspicion under which British Guiana now stands, and which gives the colonialists a moral excuse for refusing to give us independence now, and tends to make standing on our own an empty dream.

It is a question of manoeuvre and forcing the colonial powers into a position. In the case of Ghana and the West Indies they have had to yield independence. Let us be realistic – all that talk about a fight and a struggle is so much hot air unless you are prepared to grapple with the situation, realise what you are facing, accept realities and by manoeuvre get at your goal.

The freedom fighters in British Guiana are begging for constitutional advance. Mr. Norman Manley in the Jamaica Legislature quite recently had a Motion passed seeking to abolish the Governor's reserve powers, and Britain says nothing. But we, freedom fighters, are begging for a constitutional advance which we do not understand. We are begging for a constitutional advance, but we get nothing out of Mr. Lennox Boyd or the British Government. It does not take much to strike one's breast and say "*I am a freedom fighter!*" But let us assume that we get full control of affairs in spite of everything. We do not have enough money to set up our own bank. Do we have a planning staff? If we stay out of federation, we will have to find our own staff for planning. Every housewife – I see at least one around this table – knows that what it takes to feed four persons is not four times what it takes to feed one person. Can we afford to employ and pay for the services of Economic Planning Experts, or will we continue as our Government intends to bring down statisticians to prepare a plan for economic development? Can we afford to pay advisers for things like Public Health and Finance, etc., or shall we continue to be satisfied to just muddle our way through?

If British Guiana is going to stay on its feet and make a success of things in this 20th century, it will have to get expert planners. No matter how willing these gentlemen may be to come here, they are not exactly charitable organisations and they will require payment for their services. Can we

afford the necessary experts? And consequently, is it not easier, better and more sensible for us to join the West Indies Federation where we would contribute a part of the money for the payment of these experts and enjoy their services and advice? But even if our fairy godmother were to smile upon us and give us the money to do it, we will still have to face the question of finding markets for our products, because we will then be competing with the West Indies.

Will the West Indian leaders present their case and carry us behind, as stated in an editorial in the *Jamaica Gleaner*? Is it not significant, furthermore, that while our delegates went on a world tour making "demands", the USA issued an invitation to the West Indies Federation? Is it not significant that the West Indies received money from Canada? Is it not significant that Canada has given ships to the West Indies? Is it not significant that in this the 20th century in this western hemisphere the two nations, who are in a position to give assistance or loans to the Federation, do not seem prepared to give economic assistance or loans to the little two by three units here and there? Is it not significant that Canada is as interested in the West Indies as America? The West Indies Federation has a population of 3,000,000, but British Guiana has a population of 500,000 – we are merely a drop in the ocean.

The would-be lenders or helpers in Canada and the USA are not parsons. They are businessmen and which businessman would be interested in a market of 500,000 when he has a market of over 3,000,000? Is it not significant that, while we are crying and squealing, the West Indian Federation is forging ahead?

Of course it is possible in the dim and distant future that we will move up alongside the West Indies. I do not foresee it in my lifetime, but then, I suppose all things are possible with the Lord. It is quite possible that certain individuals of certain schools of thought will think otherwise. But there is an old Guianese saying: "*While the grass is growing the horse is starving.*" While we are trying for some time to get nearer to the West Indies the hungry electorate that put us there are getting more hungry. Though we may shed tears over the disclosures of the McGale report, weepings will not save you when the people discover that you are not working in the best interests of the country, and for some obscure reason you prefer to take British Guiana off the road to economic progress.

At the moment I am merely discussing the economic advantages which apply in the case of British Guiana and the West Indies as forcibly as they applied in the case of Quebec and Ontario for instance. Maybe on certain subjects British Guiana may say that it is getting a raw deal in the same way as West Australia in 1934 considered it was getting a raw deal because of the protective tariff which benefitted East Australia. That may arise if we join the Federation, but it must be remembered that the whole of Australia benefitted as a result of the protective tariff in favour of the industrial East.

I am not suggesting for one moment that if British Guiana joined the

Federation it has everything to gain and nothing to lose. First of all we have to give and take; secondly, the West Indies as well as British Guiana are going to benefit. Of course we can adopt the 1958 version of "*the dog in the manger*" attitude; we can stay and say that we will keep our 83,000 square miles; we will go it alone, rather than share our resources with our West Indian brothers. This is possible, but it seems to me to be the very epitome of foolhardiness to indulge in such an attitude when, by sharing our own wealth, we can get more.

One of the factors to which Professor Wheare referred and which he found in all modern federations was "*that the states federating or coming together had some political association prior to the federal union.*" I will concede that even though in theory there may be certain economic advantages to be gained from British Guiana's federating with the West Indies, if we had no history of political association, as in the case of the Federations of Switzerland, Canada and Australia, there would be certain difficulties in our working together. I do not go all the way with Professor Wheare who seems to suggest that if there is no prior political association the Federation is not likely to be a success. I do not go all the way with him on that, but at least we have to accept this: If we find that there is a history of earlier political association, that is one stumbling block removed from the path of Federation. There is no necessity, I believe, for me to dwell at any length on that.

Admittedly, there has not been a time so far as we are aware, when the whole region was one political unit. We have never had, say, an assembly of Barbados, Trinidad and Jamaica and British Guiana, but at the same time we have been in the same Empire. Fortunately or unfortunately, we have been part of the British Empire and that, as in the case of Canada, should be sufficient to remove one of the difficulties. Almost all of the islands and territories have the same political forms and institutions existing at the moment and they are all working towards the same political goal.

British Guiana, Jamaica, Barbados, Antigua, Nevis, St. Kitts were all Crown Colonies under Colonial Office control until recently when some of them received internal self-government. You find Nominated and Elected sections in the Legislature of British Guiana and you will also find Nominated and Elected sections in the Legislatures of the islands, presumably to look after the interests of every section of the community.

You may sometimes have, as in the case of the Waddington Constitution, introduced an Upper House as in Jamaica. You always have the ever-present officials. You always have the Governor presiding over the Executive Council, and you always have the Governor with the reserve power. In each territory you have a quest for a completely elected Legislature. If you are going to have bi-cameral legislature, then the Upper House may be nominated. By and large the political forum most West Indian leaders aim at and the quest of political leaders in British Guiana is the forum that we see in the United Kingdom. It may well be that, when the West Indies and British Guiana federate. It is a matter of time that we will come to be known

as Daniels rather than Chaldeans. It may well be that after British Guiana and the West Indies have come together in the Federation they must find from their own experience that their forums are not entirely desirable and adaptable to all circumstances in this area, but having started off from the same base, having started off with the same goal in view, they can more easily together formulate a new system and set up a new forum and institution. That, I think, stands in our favour. We, as far as I see, would find no difficulty in the sphere of political constitution. It seems for the moment some importance is attached to it. In fact it has the communal neighbourhood which is present in all modern federations.

I have heard some misguided persons, speaking against our federating, say that British Guiana is separated from Jamaica by so many thousand miles and there are so many islands between. This fact they urge as an argument against our federating. But the distance between Sydney in east Australia and Perth in West Australia is greater than that between Jamaica and British Guiana. It is twice the distance. The distance between Halifax in the east of Canada and Vancouver in the west is 2½ times the distance between Jamaica and British Guiana. In 1958 one does not speak of distance in terms of miles. We speak of two places being so many hours apart and consequently they can be no argument that British Guiana on the southern extremity of what we propose to be the Federation is too far away from Jamaica, which is on the northern extremity of it.

There are some persons who say "*It is all right, but is it not difficult to work a federation the units of which are separated by sea?*" To them an easy answer is, planes fly over the sea as well as the land and we have the example of the Indonesian Republic which is a federation of islands. Consequently even that argument holds no water and is merely one of the little pebbles cast into the stream of federation. I have already dealt with the similarity of political institutions which Professor Wheare puts as one of the factors. There is no need to spend any more time on that. I shall rather deal with a factor present in the case of British Guiana and the West Indies which was not there in the case of the USA, or of Canada, or of Switzerland – that is the similarity of social institutions, customs and traditions.

British Guiana's history reveals European occupation and labour, African slaves, Portuguese indentured labour, Chinese indentured labour and finally Indian indentured labour. With the possible exception of Barbados, which does not seem to have an Indian population, the same is true of every one of the British West Indian colonies. What sort of society has arisen? You have the Europeans, then a crossed or mixed population. You have those of African and Indian descent, with small admixtures of other ethnic groups.

This mixed population of African and Indians and mixed and other groups, what sort of language they all speak? – English. Some of the Indians speak Hindi and that for cultural reasons rather than to get by in the society in which they live. The social snobbery, prejudices and motifs of

British Guiana can be duplicated in Jamaica, Barbados and anywhere. What are our ideals?

Western; indeed some of us are even more Western than those who have westernised us. I am seeking to be objective on this question. I am merely trying to see what difference there may be between our social structure, our social institutions and our social aspirations, and those of the Caribbean territories. It may be good or bad for us to be more westernised than those who westernised us. Mine is not a qualitative judgment. Some Western forms have been current so long as to be regarded as Guianese and the same is true of the West Indies. We play the same games as the West Indians and enjoy looking at cricket. We are basically the same people.

Another fact which, to my mind, is typical and exemplifies that community between the West Indian and the Guianese is that in the United Kingdom the Guianese are members of the West Indian Students' Union. There is no question of his being a Guianese and not a West Indian. There can be no social barrier between the Guianese and the Jamaicans. We do not have the difficulties as in the case of Venezuela where you have people speaking a different language and having a different national outlook and a different culture and tradition. We have no such difficulties with respect to the West Indies.

It has been said that the Indians oppose Federation. In this respect perhaps it may be observed that an injustice is being done to this particular group to assume that they cannot be persuaded by argument and facts. It may be said that so far as the Indian section of our population is concerned it considers that joining the Federation is a threat to its way of life. That is a faulty argument. The Indians in British Guiana and Trinidad are not separate and distinct group; they are part of British Guiana and Trinidad, and contribute to the economy and history of British Guiana and Trinidad. Further I will say that there seems to have been no such difficulty in the case of the Indians in Trinidad, for there certain prejudices have been overcome. I want to imagine that in Federation Europeans, Chinese, Amerindians, Africans and Indians of the units will be merged into a larger unit.

So that the present opposition in British Guiana need have no fear with respect to their rights if British Guiana were to enter the Federation. In fact, at the Conference before the last I remember clearly that that was one of the Resolutions passed – protection and guarantee of minority rights. I read recently that the Hon. Minister of Trade and Industry, Dr. Jagan, expressed some doubt as to what was likely to be the attitude of West Indian leaders on the question of minorities. If he was reported correctly I am sure it must have been an oversight on his part to have made such an observation or raised such an impediment in the way of Federation, because it has been clearly accepted by the West Indian leaders at the Conferences, that minority rights would be protected.

Therefore it is submitted that if one accepted the authority of Professor Wheare – than whom I know of no greater authority on the subject – one

would be driven to the conclusion that the pre-requisites laid down by him are present as between British Guiana and the West Indies, except for the one which I think is of no importance – military insecurity. To most of us fear may be rather general and academic.

What are the specific advantages that British Guiana can hope to get from joining the Federation? May I deal with the political and constitutional advantages? May I ask this Council to be objective and believe me when I say that whether one likes it or not it is a fact that British Guiana's politics and political leaders are supposed to be suspect in the eyes of the western world? Let me concede that it is entirely unjustified, and that if the people want to elect "X" they have a right to elect "X". That is my view, and I shall hold it until I die. It is for no outsider to tell us whether "X" is the right or the wrong person. But we do not live in a world of political philosophy, but a world of realities, a world of balances and counter-balances, and we have to accept the fact, whether we like it or not, that British Guiana is rather suspect – its ideological orientation. Let me concede that in theory that is wrong, but it is a fact.

Because, says a little infant we did not stand up and fight – because I did not stand up and fight. There is a fighter over there still appealing to Mr. Secretary of State for the Colonies – "*Please give me something.*" The people have elected his Party with a majority of 9 out of 14 seats. They speak for the people with the voice of the people; *vox populi*. They want other Parties to fight for them. That is the Stalinist twist – when you do not succeed blame or liquidate someone else.

As I was saying, we have to accept the fact that our Constitution in British Guiana is inferior to those of Trinidad, Barbados and Jamaica. We have to note the excuse which the British Government has been giving – and let me give some solace to the Leader of the Majority Party, that it is a lame excuse – to the western hemisphere, where we are geographically situated, that there are abroad in Guiana certain ideological convictions and beliefs conned from Stalin and Mr. Khrushchev. We have to accept those facts, and that is what puts Britain in the position to say to the Western world "*We cannot trust those people; they are a political risk; they would usher in a system of dictatorship.*" Let us say it is wrong, but the attitude is a fact.

Great Britain has not been placed in that advantageous position with respect to the West Indian leaders who, according to the Majority Party Leader, without doing any real fighting, have been able to achieve a further measure of self-government by 1958 than we have been able to do. What is more, it is significant that on the eve of Federation Jamaica, Trinidad and Barbados were granted internal self-government. Was it accidental that at the same time they were getting self-government, Federation was coming in? Is it accidental that Dominion Status is going to be given to the Federation? I say it is not accidental, and I say that in the same way as Trinidad, Barbados and Jamaica have been able to get internal self-government, British Guiana will be able to get it in the Federation.

Do you think that if British Guiana were part of the West Indian nation the West Indian leaders and people would tolerate the insult to this region which the present Constitution of British Guiana is? It will not be then a matter of being nice to your bothers or loving your neighbours as yourself. It will be a matter of British Guiana being part of the same unit, of the same region, and thus it will be to the West Indian people an insult to the region, and Britain will have no excuse to offer but communism. She cannot do it; she has no moral ground on which to stand. Can Great Britain tell the Chief Minister of Trinidad "*You are a communist*"? Can she tell Sir Grantley Adams "*You are a communist*"? Or Mr. Norman Manley "*You are a communist*"? She has no excuse.

No amount of calling together or coalitions under your leadership, no "*poppycock*" of that sort is going to frighten Great Britain. Is it not significant that whilst the West Indies are moving forward politically and constitutionally we are establishing for ourselves the reputation of being crisis shouters, the most flamboyant freedom fighters, and we are still marking time? Words do not matter. What matters is achievement, and I submit, freedom fighters, that if we hitch our wagon to the West Indian team there will be no more need for weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth.

I shall attempt later to analyse the psychological reasons that lay behind some people's opposition to Federation. We have heard, as an excuse for British Guiana's not entering the Federation, this bit of fanciful and nonsensical reasoning – that the Constitution of the West Indies Federation is backward. Macaulay would have said, "*as every schoolboy knows,*" the same people who say that the Constitution of the West Indies Federation is so backward that they would not grace the Federation with their entry, are the people who are working the Renison Constitution which, I submit, is so much more backward that Macaulay, were he alive today, would have said "*as every kindergarten student knows.*" If you are working the Renison Constitution and hoping to make it an instrument to help your people until you can build a new Constitution that represents the aspirations of the people, what is wrong with your trying your hand with the Federal Constitution which at the moment offers much more power and scope than does the Renison Constitution?

We have not even a Chief Minister in British Guiana. The West Indies Federation has a Prime Minister. The Governor-General is bound, on certain issues, to take the advice of the Cabinet of the West Indies Federation. Here the Governor is not bound at all to take any advice. The Executive Council is purely advisory, and it is only because of the Governor's conception of the elasticity of the Constitution that you have any say at all.

You criticise the Federal Constitution on the thesis that the principle of nomination to the Upper House is backward and undemocratic, but Dr. Eric Williams, Mr. Manley and others have said the same thing. They agree that the Constitution is backward, but in the same way as the freedom fighters believe that they can work the Renison Constitution and get a better

constitution for British Guiana, the West Indian leaders have taken the Federal Constitution in the hope, and with the certainty of getting a better one. If one Constitution is too backward for you to enter into, the other Constitution should be equally backward for you to enter into. You should have told His Excellency the Governor to run his Constitution alone. You should not have waited until the P.P.P. is in office for over six months before you talk of resigning.

I have heard certain people reiterating Karl Marx's 1848 Manifesto: "*Workers of the world unite! You have nothing to lose but your chains.*" Here is an opportunity for British Guiana with its workers, businessmen, farmers, commission agents to unite and fight for the nationalist cause. We have nothing to lose but our chains. Would it not be less difficult to achieve Dominion Status if the leaders of British Guiana spoke to the people on this question of Federation and got them to join with their West Indian brothers in the struggle? I have heard such specious excuses by others, that the West Indies Federal Constitution is so backward that they cannot have their capital site where they want it. So backward is British Guiana's Constitution that the Governor has the final word in all things.

I have heard it said that certain reserve powers of the Governor-General with respect to defence and other subjects should be taken away. I agree, but what must we do? Should we look on and say that it is a backward Constitution and therefore we will not enter, or should we not give our West Indian brothers the benefit of our freedom fighting, our agitation, ability and progressive ideas? That would be in the general interest of the people of the entire region.

Therefore the excuse of the backwardness of the West Indies Federal Constitution is nothing but hot air. If those who feel that the Federal Constitution is bad want to show their sincerity they would join the Federation and agitate for a better Constitution. It is no use saying that the Governor-General has too much power; that the power be in the hands of the Elected Members of the people, and that certain things are not in keeping with democratic principles.

The Constitution of the Federal Government can be changed by Her Majesty in Council. The Constitution of Australia can be changed by the vote of the majority of States and Legislatures. Let us, therefore, since we are dissatisfied with this undemocratic reservation of power by her Majesty's Government as imposed on the West Indies Federation, agitate for a better Constitution after we have joined the Federation. I know that some of us would like an Assembly elected on the basis of universal adult suffrage throughout the Federal region. Let us show to the world that British Guiana is not backward in coming forward to help the West Indies in fighting for a better – a democratic Constitution. This would be a positive and not a negative approach. Some of you may not like this Constitution, but it would be wrong for those who pretend that they want something when they really want something else. They are seeking to hide their cloven hoof.

I shall expose them later.

Apart from the obvious constitutional advance, apart from the obvious political advantage, some of which I have discussed earlier, there are certain clear and definite economic advantages that will accrue if we joined the Federation. I am not speaking generally in terms of the factors as set out by Professor Wheare. I am coming down to brass tacks.

Before I do so, I should desire to refer to the annual Account Relating to External Trade for 1957. Tables XI and XII to be found on pages 328-341 disclose that in 1957 British Guiana imported from the British West Indies \$11,777,034 worth of goods, and during the same period exported \$12,076,982. I am no economist, but it seems to me that we sold more to the British West Indies than we bought from them. Over the same period, however, a certain commodity called rice was responsible for \$9,159,204. Of that \$12,076,982, rice therefore accounted for – this can be ascertained from the Department of Customs and Excise – more than three-fourths of our exports to the British West Indies.

We shall discuss rice *per se*. Somewhere it has been reported that rice is a political subject. Maybe it is, but that does not matter. Let us get rid of certain ideas which seem to pervade the minds of certain anti-federationists. Some anti-federationists state that if British Guiana should love her West Indian market for rice and other products she could retaliate by refusing to purchase West Indian goods. That was voiced to me by a Minister of the Government.

But of the \$11,777,034 which we import, a total of \$8,314,178 is spent on petroleum and petroleum products – petroleum products are in a seller's and not a buyer's market. If tomorrow we told Trinidad that we were not going to purchase any more petroleum or petroleum products, Trinidad would say "*thank you; it does not matter.*"

Why are Britain, America and Russia so interested in the Middle East and its oil? Because oil is a commodity in a seller's market. They are determined that their opponents should not get their hands on this "*black gold.*" Therefore, if tomorrow we were to break off our trade with the West Indies we cannot do them much harm. They can find markets for their oil. Then, perhaps, we would find a way of getting hard currency to purchase petroleum from Venezuela when we do not have dollars to purchase machinery from the USA! Whereas 3,000,000 people would be losing \$8 million worth of trade 500,000 people would be losing \$12,000,000 worth of trade. You may say that we can find other markets, but since three-fourths of the things we export to the West Indies, in value at least, is rice, you have got to tell us whether you can find other markets for rice.

Let us assume that British Guiana does not enter into the Federation. The last occasion on which our Rice Delegation went to Trinidad, the members went there asking for one cent a pound more and did not get it. They did not get that cent, because the West Indies contended that to give them one cent more would mean that they would eventually be paying more for

British Guiana's rice than for the rice they could get from other sources. If that is so, you will have to remember that if British Guiana stays out of Federation it has to compete in the West Indies with the rice from other parts of the world.

It is said that Burma rice is Government-subsidised. I do not know if it is, but it is cheaply produced. I do not know what the effect is on the price of Burma rice, but contrary to opinion expressed by some people the world price of rice is going down rather than showing an upward trend. The fact is that if any rice from any quarter of the world were to come on the West Indies market at a cheaper price than British Guiana can quote to the West Indies and if British Guiana is outside of the Federation, I am afraid it would be asking too much of the West Indian leaders to make their people pay more for a commodity they can get more cheaply from another place. British Guiana would then be a foreign country *vis-à-vis* the Federation. Assuming that situation was reached, it will be an awkward situation. I have not heard it said in here, but I have heard it said at the street-corners as to what would happen if we were to lose the West Indies market. May I emphasise at this stage that this is a matter that concerns the rice producers as well as us because not only do we eat rice but what the rice producer gets for his product has an effect on us. If the rice producer as a result of a slump cannot sell his rice it would affect all of us, even the lawyers. That is a matter to be seriously considered.

It has been said that the People's National Congress is using rice to frighten the rice producers. It is no such thing. The P.N.C. has no intention of frightening the rice producers. At Block III more land is being put under rice cultivation and for the Boerasirie area the Hon. Minister of Natural Resources wants \$2 million for internal drainage so as to put more land under the plough to grow more rice. Unless we produce that rice more cheaply than or as cheaply as elsewhere, we would not have a market anywhere. We must not be forgetful of the fact that Brazil and Venezuela are increasing their rice production, and that North America is one of the largest rice producers in the world. If we cannot sell our rice in the West Indies against Burma where shipping cost to us is cheaper, how can we hope to sell in far away Europe, where it is cheaper to carry rice from Burma and which is closer to the Eastern rice countries than to British Guiana? I suppose we can sell it to Moscow, if a newspaper report is correct. But that is to assume that Moscow thinks of us as more politically important than of Burma, who is on her door-step, and from whom she is purchasing rice. Assuming all this altruism on the part of Russia, let us ask ourselves what guarantee would she give us? Assuming we are so important to Russia, would she pay us for our rice in cash? If we are to develop our industries and she does not pay in currency, then in machinery?

As I see it, there is no immediate alternative market for our rice to the West Indies market. If that is so we must not forget that the West Indies may be able to get rice more cheaply and need not take British Guiana rice.

If the members of the rice delegation who went to Trinidad the last time speak the truth they would agree that that is the threat that faces us. We did not get the one cent more we asked for. There is a point of view that the West Indies are morally bound to take our rice in the future at a high price because we sold them below world price during the War. That is a type of morality one would hardly see guiding the decision of politicians and statesmen. The fact that the West Indies might have been fed from our bounty during the War years is not necessarily a good reason for them to give us from their bounty now. They may not be prepared to distribute largesse. Therefore that is the answer.

I hope I have already destroyed the fallacious propaganda disseminated at the street corners about selling our rice to Moscow. If you are going to look contemptuously upon the West Indies as a rice market you must decide either that you get another market or you think of exporting your rice at a loss, or exporting some other product for which you can find a ready market. Those who freely say that Federation is being used to frighten the rice producer must be honest to themselves and to the people, and tell them the facts, tell them that they must be prepared to tighten their belts if we are to achieve independence on our own, and not that we can sell to Russia. Russia does not need our rice.

But that is not all. That is not the only economic disadvantage that would come to British Guiana if we stay out of the Federation. We must remember that Customs Union may become a reality and a fact in the West Indies Federation, and if it does become a fact it would mean – let me quote accurately from the Report – *“There would be a large measure of free trade among the constituent members.”* We have had an example recently where a certain British Guiana exporter of soap who does a trade of a few thousand dollars, went to the West Indian islands and was told that it was proposed that the products manufactured in the West Indies Federation would be admitted duty free to the various Federal territories. British Guiana stays out of the Federation and therefore duty will have to be paid.

Even if a penal duty, it is a duty, but at the moment there is an initial market for our soap. It may appear to be a minor detail, but on these details are built up decisions and policies. It is known that British Guiana soap is being exported to Dominica, and the Dominica Government has decided to admit all West Indian soap duty-free and that duty is 87½ cents per carton and the profit 43 cents. That means if British Guiana is out of the Federation, this would happen. The Trinidad soap would be in an advantageous position in the market. The British Guiana soap manufacturer would have, if he wants to compete with the Trinidad manufacturer, to place his soap on the market at a price 87½ cents less than at present, which is more than the 43 cents profit. What will he do?

If his Government subsidised him so that he can quote not at a loss, there would be the Anti-Dumping Law which is in being. If the British Guiana Government thinks it can by subsidy put the British Guiana prod-

uct in a position to compete with the West Indies products in that market, it would be mistaken, as it would run up against this law which is soon to become part of the pattern of the Federation. It is important that what we manufacture we should be able to export, if our production exceeds the local demand. It would mean that unless the local demand goes up, or he finds some other market where he can enter into real competition with other producers of soap, the soap manufacturer will have to cut down his production of soap and dismiss some of his employees. Then Mr. McGale will be able to write another report showing how many more people have become unemployed.

Then there is wine. There are three wine factories in British Guiana which do a rollicking trade with the West Indies, but wine is also manufactured in Trinidad and the same thing will happen. We also have Banks Beer. I can never forget how the beer industry in British Guiana was welcomed by one and all including His Excellency the Governor and the Minister of Trade and Industry, Dr. Jagan,. In fact it is perhaps a good point at which I may quote what the Minister of Trade and Industry said on the occasion of the opening of the Banks Beer factory on the 16th October, 1957, as reported in the press on the 17th of October. Of course my intonation will not be the Minister's. I quote:

"Unfortunately, in our country we are hidebound in many ways. We have to come out of our shells. We have to bring together all the people to participate in enterprises such as this if we are to make Guiana the remarkable place it should be. Unfortunately, we have certain drawbacks which we must recognise. There is too much individualism; there are too many individual and small family concerns. I think that the time has come when these concerns must get together and form themselves into a company, and let us build big enterprises such as Banks Breweries."

Two comments I desire to make on this most important and impressive speech. The first is that while we decry individualism and the little family groups that are a damper or brake on the expansion of industry, business and commerce, we are still like a high priest of individualism, of British Guiana against the West Indies. In other words, let us build up our industries here; do not let us go into the Federation but let us have our industries planned on a regional basis. Instead of Mr. X selling salt fish and Mr. Y also selling salt fish, it is suggested that a company comprising Mr. X, Y and Z should sell salt fish, and that Mr. X and Mr. Y should form another company to sell condensed milk. If you say that in a country like British Guiana one of the drawbacks is individualism, which is a brake on industrial expansion, mustn't it also follow that for the largest possible industrial expansion it is better to join with a large community of three million people? The logic here is the logic of the federationists.

Let us suppose that a man from Mars came here and gave that speech. If

that same man were to say "I will not encourage British Guiana to enter the Federation now," will not the inconsistency be obvious?

You say that Guianese should wait until Dominion Status is achieved over there in the Federation, before they join. You then tell them to build industries now like Banks Beer. Then a market has to be found as against Carib Beer in Trinidad and Red Stripe Beer In Jamaica. Carib Beer and Red Stripe Beer are circulating throughout the Federation, but Banks Beer will have to pay duty which neither of those two brands of beer will have to pay. Don't you see you are defeating your own purpose?

Consequently it seems to me a bit foolhardy, if you accept the thesis put forward in column 930 of this year's *Hansard* – that we want markets – to be anti-federationist. If you accept that thesis, and if you also accept sincerely and seriously the advice which was given to the people by the Minister of Trade and Industry on the 16th of October, 1957, to build more industries and stop being individualists, where are you going to find your markets? You are competing in South America with Heineken and the other beer, and what makes you think in any case that the South American countries will not produce their own beer? The building of large industries and the sustaining of old industries must be related to markets, and in British Guiana it must be bound up with our accession to Federation.

As I have attempted to urge before, it is not a question of waiting until the Federation achieves independence for the economic advantages and blessings to flow. Those economic advantages can be enjoyed prior to the achievement of independence, as in the case of Canada and Australia. I took the opportunity to refer to the good Minister's comments on Banks Beer in the hope that the Majority Party would recognise that the greater part of my argument is based on their own quotes, and that they would recognise that the logic of their arguments, as set out in the newspapers and *Hansard*, compels them to vote for this Motion. But, of course, politicians are not always guided by logic. Politicians, if they are weak, can sometimes be influenced by prejudice; by the prejudice of the uninformed whom they fear to educate. Politicians are like the Roman Governor, Pilate. The logic of the circumstances should have struck him that Jesus should have been released, but he thought he should accede to the prejudice of the crowd, and he said "Have Him." Pilate wanted to be a nice Governor to the Jewish crowd, the *hoi polloi*.

If politicians hope to be nice men to their uninformed supporters, adopting a Pilate-like attitude, they are going to find themselves at least enjoying with posterity the same amount of opprobrium that is attached to Pilate's name today. It is for the political group or party to take a strong stand on a question like this. Some politicians have admitted to me behind closed doors, "We are in favour of Federation, but it is a little embarrassing; certain sections do not like it, and we cannot afford to lose their votes."

Our economic destinies are inextricably bound up with Federation. It may be possible for us to find other markets; it may be possible that the

British Guiana market may be enough for those new industries – maybe enough for the old ones. But will British Guiana be in a position to live in the modern world? I earlier spoke of the 20th century as being a planning age, whether you are right or left in political ideology. Now I shall refer to some of the administrative expenses that are attached to our going it alone. I shall refer to some of the institutions we shall have to pay for when we go it alone, and the first to which I desire to make reference is brought to my mind when I remember the statement made by the Minister of Natural Resources, Mr. Beharry, now unfortunately absent.

On his return from the money mission to London, New York and Washington he said that the Governments in the past were not interested in selling British Guiana. *“We shall have to set up an A.B.C. in places like London, New York, those centres of money.”* Unless this A.B.C. we are going to set up is going to be in some little dark room in the East End of London and not in the City of London, or in some little dark recess in the slums of New York, Washington or what have you, it will be very expensive.

Our contribution to the West Indian Regional Trade Commissioner and Students and Migrant Service cost us \$84,674. That is the amount we paid in 1958. The employees at the Trade Commissioner’s Office in London are having their salaries upgraded because they are paid less than their opposite numbers employed in the Ghanaian High Commissioner’s Office. I am no mathematician, but calculate how much it would cost if we had to run the full service on our own. As I understand it, you cannot hope to set up an A.B.C. in London to look after British Guiana’s interest unless you put it on a respectable scale. You cannot have a little room here or there. You must have a Trade Commissioner, a Trade Commissioner’s staff, etc., and the office will have to be situated in a section of London where you will find Trade Commissioners and Embassies. You cannot put an office of that status in a cheap part of London.

Of course we shall have to consider our University. This year we have voted \$450,180 towards the University College of The West Indies. We contribute to the U.C.W.I., but if we are out of the Federation, the University is not ours. It must be remembered that the University, like so many other services, falls within the portfolio of a Minister of the Federation. Of course they extend to us the courtesy of allowing our representatives to sit in when discussions are taking place. It is a matter of privilege, as distinct from a right.

I remember that last year when certain Guianese were dismissed from the Trade Commissioner’s Office in London, I took up the question with the Chief Secretary and the Minister of Trade and Industry. They both admitted that the responsibility for that fell within the portfolio of the chief Minister of the Federation, and though we may make representations we could not make decisions. All we can do in the circumstances is to pay money and make representations.

The same thing will happen so far as the West Indies University is con-

cerned for, after all, our contribution is not so great that they cannot do without it and make it exclusively a West Indian University in view of the shortage of space. Right now we are enjoying the benefit of the U.C.W.I.; we contribute towards its upkeep, we have our allocation, but it is a West Indian University. Our contribution is not so great that we can apply any particular type of pressure on them.

I understand that it was proposed by a certain Minister of this Government to withdraw our contribution, but the University would not suffer if he did that. Trinidad alone proposes to put up an Engineering Faculty. It will be a University of the West Indies in the same way as there are British Universities, and with the continued pressure for space in institutions of higher learning, where are we going to send our students who want to attend such institutions?

You may say, "*send them to America.*" You know how difficult it is to get students into certain Faculties in America. Send them to the United Kingdom, and they will be put on a long list until they can be squeezed in. There are Guianese in London waiting for years to do their second M.B. "*Send them to Switzerland and France*" some may say. Some of the more ambitious people may say, "*Let us establish a Guianese University.*" My mother used to say, "*Fools never raise their thoughts so high.*"

Can a population of 500,000 supports a modern University? Where are we going to get the personnel from for this University? Where will the people come from to fill this University? All of these things are for consideration if we want to establish a modern University. If you have to maintain a High Commissioner's Office in London, an A.B.C. in New York, and probably something else, where are you going to find the money?

It must not be forgotten that we also make a contribution towards the West Indian Shipping Service. I assume that this Government has continued that contribution because it is convinced that the shipping service serves British Guiana. Therefore since the Shipping Service serves British Guiana, if we stay out of Federation we will be contributing to something the running of which we cannot control. Do we hope to get ships from Canada in the same way as the West Indies Federation got?

There is an Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture in Trinidad to which we make a contribution. It is true that when the Imperial College was originally set up it was not really a West Indian institution. But it has now become a West Indian institution.

Of course we can continue to contribute to the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture. I am sure that this Government would not suggest that our contribution to the I.C.T.A. be cut, because it is interested in training farmers in the technical science of agriculture. So, will we continue to pay the piper without being able to call the tune, or be more ambitious and set up a British Guiana College of Tropical Agriculture with all the expenses attached and with all the available staff? If we can do that all is well and good, but I cannot see us providing our own shipping service, our own High Commis-

sioner's Office, and our own University. Of course it may be conceded that we can set up an Agricultural Faculty, but I cannot see us providing all of these things on a population of 500,000, unless we want some two by three institutions. Half a million people cannot support such institutions in this modern world.

I believe that my legs can no longer support me, and I ask for an adjournment at this stage.

Motion on Federation with the West Indies: 22nd August, 1958

Mr. Burnham: Really, when the adjournment was taken yesterday afternoon I was referring to the fact that if British Guiana did not accede to the Federation the country would be placed in an extremely awkward position when the necessity arose to set up certain institutions and bodies which seem necessary, or are admittedly necessary for the proper administration of any country in this century. Of course I alluded in my remarks to the University College of the West Indies and to the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture which is now a West Indian institution and I believe I also made passing reference to the West Indies Shipping Service. Dare I observe today that so far as the last mentioned is concerned there apparently will be no necessity for British Guiana to consider either further contributions to the running of the service or, if I understand the official communiqué correctly, to consider the necessity of having its own bottoms to transport its produce. Now I thought it was perhaps appropriate that I should make reference to this subject which is rather topical, and even admitting the correctness of the attitude of our Government and the validity of its argument, that is not a case against the proposal that British Guiana should join the West Indies Federation.

Even though it is quite possible, as the official communiqué suggests, that the Shipping Service will be of no direct economic benefit to British Guiana, but that would be so much similar to the instance which I referred to yesterday in Australia where in 1934 the agricultural western states objected to the protectionist policy which favoured the products or commodities produced by the eastern states. Yet, in any event, it was shown, and it has been proven that, though the western states did not particularly benefit directly, the benefits that accrued to the eastern states were benefits that accrued to the entire federation, a part of which the western states shared by virtue of their membership of the federation; it may well be that in the same way as British Guiana's Government has argued that the Shipping Service is of no immediate benefit to British Guiana, some other federal service may be of no immediate benefit to another unit territory in the Federation.

Likewise I think I should discuss that matter very briefly in order to anticipate any argument, or any suggestion that makes out a case against Federation. I am not here to say, however, whether or not the decision of the West Indies Federation to terminate the shipping service to British Guiana was done out of spite, or was done to squeeze British Guiana. Verily, that is a qualitative judgment which I am not competent to pass as I am not seized of the necessary data and facts. Even, however, I should like to observe that, even if we can afford to get our own bottoms to send our rice, there are two interesting questions which the anti-federationists will have

to answer: (a) Where are we going to sell our rice? (b) Where are we going to get the money from to get these bottoms? Surely the answer to the second question is easy. I concede you can use the available service. You can use the local bottoms we have here, or you can use the international lines, but I look forward with anxiety to the answer to the former question. Where will we send these bottoms with our rice?

But even if we can find the bottoms and find somewhere to send the rice, the Head under which I began to discuss the questions of shipping still leaves certain questions to be answered by these anti-federationists. Have you found the answer to the question of obtaining the necessary planning staff which is, admittedly, short in the world today? Do you think (a) you can obtain the necessary staff? Do you think (b) if, by a stroke of good fortune, you were to obtain the staff, you can pay such staff for such services on an economy based on 500,000 persons?

Before I proceed further in this debate, may I be permitted to refer to a short passage in the debate on this question of Federation in the year 1948? The passage I take from the speech of the Hon. Member for Central Demerara, Dr. Jagan. This passage can be found at page 139 of the compilation of extracts from the *Hansard* proceedings in the Legislative Council on Federation. I quote:

"I am not suggesting for one moment that capital should be kept out of the Colonies."

May I, Mr. Speaker, since I am admitting my source – and I do not think I am guilty of plagiarism – adopt the sentiments expressed in this passage and proceed to deal with the argument that has been put forward by some anti-federationists with respect to the weakness of the present Government of the Federation?

I notice that Dr. Jagan then spoke of a "*strong Federal Government.*" I shall concede, not merely for purposes of my present argument, that the present Federal Government is not as strong as we may want it; as strong as it should be or as strong as Dr. Jagan and myself would like it to be.

I will also accept what my good friend and contemporary, Mr. Lloyd Braithwaite, who wrote an essay on the progress of Federation and the social and economic status of Federation, said. He points out on page 148, "*That there is definitely some difficulty about the financing of the Federation, and that there appears to be a shortage of money.*" That is how I sum up his points made there. The argument in favour of the centralisation of powers for the Federal Government appears to be weak and consequently he sees some difficulty in dealing with economic conditions in the West Indies.

But a federation, if I may simplify my argument, is so much like a human being. It has to be a child for sometime; it must have its growing pains; it has to be weak at some time. Those who are members of the Federation units and/or politicians and statesmen, recognising these weak-

nesses, should be able to cure them, and should be able, as a result of their experience and expertise, to inject some strength into the Federation.

The present budget of the Federation is miserly. It is less than that of any of the larger unit territories in the Federation, but that is not the be all and the end all. The fact that there is a Federation, the fact that there is a Central Government, the fact that it is better if the Central Government lends itself to regional planning – in fact it is an indispensable instrument to regional planning – ought to put the members of the Federation in a position to realise that if we are going to plan regionally, we cannot give this miserly sum annually to the Federal Government. If we are going to raise the social and economic conditions by central planning and central administration, we will have to give more power in that respect to the Central Government.

The United States' constitution which its draftsmen imagined was the last word of wisdom, so far as federal constitutions were concerned, has itself on several occasions been amended in the light of experience. I will recommend to those who see the weakness of the present Federal Government as an excuse for British Guiana's not joining the Federation, that if they were to join the Federation – if British Guiana under their leadership were to join – they would be in a position to bring to the attention of their more unfortunate and mentally opaque brethren in the West Indies that there are certain things to be changed and certain things to be done.

I should, therefore, submit that the argument with respect to the weakness of the Central Government in the Federation is no argument whatsoever, but an excuse to obscure and veil other objections to Federation, some of which I propose to deal with at the moment.

One of the objections which we hear, and which in some quarters is based on lack of information and knowledge, and in others is propagated with a cynical political motive, and is fairly successful in some areas because it makes an appeal to the basest sentiments of the Guianese, is that if British Guiana were to join the Federation, we would be flooded out by numbers of West Indians who look upon British Guiana as a 20th century version of the "*Garden of Eden*" and are all so anxious to come and camp here. In the first place, may it be observed that it is not usual for persons to immigrate in large numbers to a country, unless that country to which they are going offers them a higher standard of living and wages? That is why the Jamaicans go to the United Kingdom. That is why West Indians go to the United Kingdom. That is why there is such jostling in the world to enter the USA. Those who fear there may be an uncontrolled influx of West Indians into British Guiana must be able to prove that British Guiana has a much higher standard of living and offers better opportunities for employment to West Indians than those West Indians can find in their own homes.

My contention is that that cannot be proved easily, if at all. Take one example – Trinidad. It has a population which is 1½ times ours, but the annual budget of Trinidad is more than twice ours. One will have to find out why Trinidadians in a body would seek to leave Trinidad to come to British Guiana. As Mr. Roberts said in his study of demographic aspects of Federation:

“Immigration will have to be Government controlled, and in any case, there cannot be large-scale immigration unless the receiving country is prepared to receive immigrants.”

Of course there is one other aspect which those who frighten or seek to frighten Guianese with the picture of boatloads of West Indians arriving here have forgotten, that we in turn will be obtaining open markets in the West Indies. There is one other fact which they, the anti-federationists, are ignoring, actually some out of ignorance and others out of dishonesty – and that is that under the Federal Constitution as it stands immigration is one of the subjects which rest with the unit territory, and which will be reviewed at the end of five years. If we join the Federation now we will be able to say whom we want and whom we will take and will not take. Let not Guianese fool themselves. The West Indian from the smaller and poorer islands will be more anxious to get to Trinidad than to British Guiana. British Guiana has forests but Trinidad has oil. If Trinidad which faces a greater threat than does British Guiana from immigration has seen the wisdom of joining the Federation, it seems to me an argument in favour of our joining the Federation. Mass immigration to British Guiana does not pose the same threat as in the case of Trinidad.

But that is not the end of the objections which we hear. There are others. Before I proceed to discuss some of them for the purpose of showing that they are not sound arguments against Federation, I desire to consider immigration somewhat further. I think it would be conceded by both sides of the Council, that if we are looking forward to large-scale development in British Guiana, we would sooner or later have to depend upon immigration to supply the necessary labour force. Reference to the USA, I think, is sufficient. If the press reports of what the Hon. Minister of Trade and Industry is supposed to have said are correct, he suggested we may start from countries like Japan. Excellent. But once you admit the necessity for immigration you cannot, therefore, object to West Indian migration, provided it is properly planned and the advantage West Indian immigrants would have over Japanese immigrants is that they would not create social problems which the Japanese immigrants are bound to create. The Japanese would be coming here with a different type of life, different customs and outlook and a different philosophy whereas these difficulties are not present in the case of West Indian immigrants. Then perchance there may be this semi-answer that the suggestion to Japanese our country was based on the fact that Japan is prepared to finance her immigrants.

During the course of the debate of the granting of loans to domestic servants for Canada, the Hon. Member for Georgetown North pointed out that Barbados, for instance, has a scheme for assisting and financing its immigrants. I am certain that the West Indies, with whom we would be one if we join the Federation, would not be so silly and stupid as to believe that they can get rid of their surplus population by merely dumping that

surplus into British Guiana. It will be a question of planning the migration of West Indians into British Guiana, but part of that planning will naturally include subsidisation of immigrants, choice of the correct type of immigrants needed at the particular time. I admit that immigration into British Guiana will have to be more carefully planned and the immigrants properly and strictly selected. I do not believe that anyone who can speak of Japanese immigrants can object to West Indian immigrants. If I remember correctly, one of the objections to the proposals in the Evans Report – the Settlement Mission Report of 1948 – was that he suggested bringing a number of Jews and putting them on the highlands in British Guiana. It was argued that the planting of a large Jewish population here would have created certain social difficulties and friction. The same would apply if you bring in Japanese immigrants for British Guiana's development.

Another objection which one hears is that British Guiana is a different territory from the West Indian Islands. A certain group of anti-federationists showing a marvellous insight into the perfectly obvious observed that British Guiana is on the mainland, and that the West Indian Colonies are islands. But this particular group of anti-Federationists is divided. You have one set of the group that says we can stand on our own. I should hope I have shown the difficulty of standing on our own; it means independence if we stood on our own. There has been reference to that in the Hon. Member's speech of March, 1955, which supports me on that, and there is no necessity to emphasise that aspect.

It is sufficient for that subsection of anti-federationists who refer to the fact that we are situated on the South American Continent and should go it alone. The other subsection says that ours is a continental destiny. It must be admitted that there is a certain attractiveness in speaking about continental destiny, especially when that continent is South America, but through no choice of ours, our situation on the South American Continent may be described as a geographical accident. What type of intercourse have we had with our South American neighbours? We have had smuggling and sometimes quarrels between Britain and Venezuela, with America backing one or other, as to whether a certain portion of territory belongs to British Guiana or Venezuela. There is no community of language, no community of tradition or custom. There is merely the accident of British Guiana being situated on the South American Continent in common with Venezuela on one side and Brazil on the other.

In pointing that out I am not for one moment saying that we should turn our backs on our South American neighbours, or that we should pursue the educational policy which has been pursued in the past, under which Spanish was never taught in our schools, and the possibility of our having social intercourse with our neighbours was lessened. I am not suggesting that it is a good thing that we are cut off from our South American neighbours, but on a question like this it is not so much what you think is a good thing. It is a question of what is, frankly speaking, advantageous to this country,

and I look forward to the day when British Guiana, having joined the West Indies Federation, can be the interpreter to the South American Continent in the West Indies Federation. I see in the future a reorientation which will include not only the British West Indies in the Federation but the other Caribbean territories and the Central American territories, and most, if not all, of the South American territories. I do not think that vision of mine is as fanciful as Tennyson's when he saw a Parliament of Nations and the Federation of the World. I think that it has got to come; I think it will come.

But there is urgent necessity at the moment for British Guiana to get together with other units into a larger unit for political and economic reasons, and since there are many difficulties in the way of our getting together immediately with our Latin American brothers to make a political unit or political institution of the "*Friends of the Pro Inter-American Relations Committee*," let us here and now decide that it is not in the field of practical politics, but that a federation with the West Indies is a practical step which we may take.

Various arguments have been put forward in favour of British Guiana joining with the South American countries. One of them is that as part of such a unit or federation British Guiana can be the entrepôt for Brazil and Venezuela, since we are on the northern seaboard and trade to and from those countries would pass through British Guiana; we would have a good road built thorough to Brazil and Venezuela, and the mere handling of the trade of those two countries would mean an accretion of income to us. I am not in a position to deny that; I am not in a position to say that it is based on a fallacy. But to my laymen's mind there appears this point: the natural resources of Brazil and Venezuela are thousands, if not millions of times greater than ours. Those natural resources of those two territories are still to a large extent untapped. If we joined in a political union or federation with them we are bound to be the smaller brother or partner, and if we are the smaller brother or partner why should we believe that in any large-scale development plans they may have, they will seek to develop our natural resources in British Guiana in priority to their own resources in Venezuela or Brazil? Those who are economists may point out that my argument on that point is wrong. I may be wrong but I have never been so sure of anything in my life.

On the other hand, British Guiana *vis-à-vis* the West Indies, to use a creole term, is like "*a one-eye man who is king in blind-eye man country*." *Vis-à-vis* the West Indies, British Guiana's natural resources are enormous. British Guiana is a potentially rich country, and it has been accepted by West Indians in public life and private life, that since British Guiana has the potential, when it came to large-scale development, if British Guiana were part of the Federation it would get the first nod. Our talk about hydroelectric power should be part of a regional plan for the development and production of electric power becoming a reality rather than remaining a potential. I am not aware of the fact that there is any part of the West Indies where

there is that potential so far as hydroelectric power is concerned. Therefore looking at it selfishly, forgetting for the moment any desire to help anyone outside, our boundaries, and remembering too that Canada seems particularly interested in the West Indies, and remembering too that the big lender, the USA, seems particularly friendly and sympathetic towards the West Indies, and thinking selfishly of what the West Indian leaders admit, that we have the potential which they would like to tap, it is difficult to understand why we should want to stay out of the Federation. But perhaps there are other reasons more personal and consequently rather narrow.

Another objection which I have heard raised to Federation is the fact that in the Report of the Standing Closer Association Committee, British Guiana was to be allocated only 6 seats while little Barbados has been allocated as many as 4 seats, huge Jamaica 16 and Trinidad 9. Many patriotic Guianese contend that the allocation of 6 seats is an insult to British Guiana with its huge terrain. There is a multiplicity of answers to so simple a mode of thought. (1) It is conceded that one of the considerations in allocating seats was population. If British Guiana is going to expand and become more populous doesn't it stand to reason that the time will come when it would be a giant rather than a pigmy? (2) The objection to Federation on the basis of the small number of seats to be allocated to British Guiana under the Rance Report was sometimes based on the argument that out of 50 seats Jamaica has 16, and that a combination of Jamaica and Trinidad with one island or one vote from any other island thrown in, would be able to dominate the elected House, and the interests of British Guiana would not be served.

That is one of the benefits of this debate taking place now. That seemed a legitimate objection in 1948-49, but in 1958, with the West Indian Federal Labour Party and the Democratic Labour Party, we have seen that there has not been a unit representation in the House, but rather party representation. We see that the parties cut across the unit loyalties. We see that the W.I.F.L.P.'s affiliates in Trinidad are as much opposed to the Trinidad D.L.P.'s as the Jamaica members of the W.I.F.L.P. are opposed to the D.L.P. affiliates of Jamaica, and there is a greater community of philosophy and approach between the D.L.P. representatives from Jamaica and the D.L.P. representatives from Trinidad than between the D.L.P. representative in Trinidad and the W.I.F.L.P. representative in Trinidad. There is no fear of a "*ganging up*" to squeeze out British Guiana. Though it may have been a reasonable fear ten years ago, that fear should have no basis in 1958.

In answer to the objection with respect to British Guiana's representation on the basis of the Rance Report by way of seats, this may further be urged. The West Indies need British Guiana as much as British Guiana needs the West Indies. Let us get that straight. I am not here urging upon Guianese that we need the West Indies more than they need us. They need us as much as we need them at the moment, because of the potentialities and possibilities of development if we enter. I cannot see them sticking to

the small representation if, whichever Government is speaking on behalf of British Guiana, in any negotiations which take place, says definitely that six seats are insufficient, and we would not be satisfied with six seats. Is not that a matter for negotiation?

Let us quote Mr. Khrushchev; let us go to the summit conference like merchants and bargain. Mr. Khrushchev is capable of some wisdom sometime. We go there to bargain and we are going to tell them that we cannot accept six seats. Which West Indian Federation will be prepared to say, "*go hang; we are not prepared to give you more than six seats?*"

Therefore, for another reason, there is really no reason in the argument against British Guiana's joining the Federation because of the few seats that were given, or suggested by Sir Hubert Rance in his Report of 1948-49.

A certain gentleman, who used to be a member of the Legislature, Mr. Theophilus Lee, and one of whose strongest objections to Federation is based on seat allocation, in a speech, a passage from which I desire to quote – the speech was made on the 5th September, 1945, and it can be found on page 24, column 2 of this compilation of Federation debates, said:

"I cannot conceive of any Member of this Council, who has the progress of this Colony at heart, opposing this Motion."

All sorts of things happen to people. They change their minds, they change their stands, but it seems to me that what Mr. Lee said then, in 1945, holds good today even though in 1958 the Elected Members are elected on the basis of universal adult suffrage, whereas those in 1945 were elected on the basis of a property qualification and/or income.

I am led to believe that those who oppose British Guiana's entry into the Federation, either do not have the interest of the country at heart, or are not sufficiently seized of the facts and factors. That is what I say to the more obvious die-hards, the anti-federationists.

But then there is a certain hypocrisy abroad. I am reminded of one of the maxims of Le Duc de Rochefoucauld "*hypocrisy is the homage which vice pays to virtue.*" There are some people who render homage to the virtue of Federation with their tongues in their cheeks, while they indulge in the vice of separatism. But they do it rather skilfully. They seek to impress their respective audiences and/or supporters with their ultra-democratic attitudes.

One of those arguments we hear today is the stand of the Caribbean Labour Congress which was taken in 1947, just immediately before the Montego Bay Conference, that there should be no Federation unless there is full internal self-government. Certainly the agitators must know that what is a good slogan in the particular circumstances of today is not a good slogan in the particular circumstances of tomorrow.

In 1947, when Federation was something in the future – a dream – it was absolutely correct for the Caribbean Labour Congress to take that stand for full self-government in the units and dominion status for the Federation.

That is a good thought to express.

But today, in 1958, 11 years after that, when there is Federation, the same people who took that stand in 1947 have agreed to their country's accession to Federation.

Let us examine and analyse the particular stand to which I have referred. I step out to smite hypocrisy now. You admit that the Federal Constitution is bad. It is presumed that you have in mind a better idea as to what type of Constitution an independent West Indian nation should have. You say you will not accept Federation until there is Dominion Status. In other words, let the West Indians fight it out, let them enjoy the labours and the sweat of the day, let them get Dominion Status, and then we will walk into the parlour other people have prepared for us. But that is not the only weakness.

Perhaps the West Indian leaders may well work out a Constitution for Dominion Status which you may consider undesirable when British Guiana enters the Federation. There are dependent Constitutions and independent Constitutions. The Constitution of Egypt is an independent Constitution. The Constitution of Germany from 1933-45 was an independent Constitution, and as long as it is an independent Constitution it is Dominion Status as long as you remain in the British Commonwealth. Therefore you will find yourself in the position that you may well be entering into a Dominion Constitution with which you do not agree.

Of course, you can say that once you get in you can use your influence to change it. I say it would be better, sounder and wiser to get in on the ground floor and help to mould a Constitution nearer to your heart's desire from the beginning.

In any case, much as British Guiana would be so useful and important to the West Indies from the point of view of economic and political progress, what manner of thing is this! You will tell them that "*unless you get Dominion Status immediately, we shall not come in!*" Dominion Status in 1958 as it was in 1947 is the goal. Unfortunately the goal of Dominion Status was not achieved at the same time as the birth of the West Indies Federation. At least some of the West Indian politicians who mouthed certain slogans in 1947 regret that Dominion Status did not come.

To put down immediate Dominion Status as a term of our entry into Federation seems to me to be raising as many obstacles as you possibly can to British Guiana's entry, which is justified on other grounds. Though internal self-government for British Guiana is achievable, and I admit that it is achievable, contemporaneously with our entry into Federation, I am afraid, so far as I see it, that at the moment Dominion Status is nonsense if that is our terms of entry into the Federation.

We have another type of argument which I would describe as equally hypocritical and unrealistic – the argument of the plebiscite. Let me say here that there was once a time when I talked of plebiscite. There was once a time when I put forward arguments in favour of a plebiscite. Without going into the realm of Party matters, I had put it forward because the Party

to which I belonged had decided by a majority of votes on a plebiscite, and I will always be a good Party man. I will assume for the moment the validity of this plebiscite. It is only a fool who cannot learn from experience and benefit from the wisdom of others. I did not speak of plebiscite so much as to convey to my plebiscite friends that I would continue to be so minded.

I am now of a different turn of mind. I shall not spend any time arguing it as the majority of that Party would get the decision carried. I would also admit that if one looks at the Manifesto which my Party presented to the electorate on 12th August, 1957, I said that Federation was not an issue at the time and that it should be decided after British Guiana got a better Constitution. But, Mr. Speaker, my contention is that conditions have changed. In 1957 the Majority Party said it could do this and it could do that, and in 1958 they say there is an economic crisis which demands coordination of all Parties. Similarly in 1958 I am convinced that in view of the economic impasse which British Guiana faces, in view of the economic difficulty which we hear of, and in view of the fact that the Federation has started and is on its way, the time has come when the political leaders of this country must come out and tell the people that Federation is a good thing for reasons (a) and (b) rather than do as some people do say as individuals that Federation is a good thing and, on the Party hustings, say that Federation is a bad thing – the group of hypocritical anti-Federationists. It gives the impression of being ultra-democratic by saying “*after we obtain internal self-government and the Federation obtains Dominion Status*” – which I accept as the goal – “*the people must decide if we are to join the Federation; there must be a plebiscite.*”

I have no desire to dilate on this, but certain facts must be discussed. We have had two Ministers of our Government going to the United Kingdom to raise \$200 million. One of the Ministers, the Leader of The Majority Party asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies for an improved Constitution. I take it that what he was asking for was full internal self-government which was embodied in the Amendment to that Motion moved by the Hon. Member for Georgetown South. The Secretary of State for the Colonies is reported to have said that he was not willing to discuss that at the time, but had instructed or would instruct, or would ask – I am not particularly good at official terms – the Governor to appoint a committee, which committee after hearing evidence and taking opinions, would report on the type of constitutional advance that British Guiana should have.

The Hon. Minister of Trade and Industry had replied, and I say, quite rightly, that the Legislative Council represents all interests in the Colony of British Guiana and the Legislative Council, composed as it is at the moment, is competent to speak for the people of British Guiana. I accept the thesis of the Hon. Minister of Trade and Industry though I may have some passing criticism of the Minister who anticipated what the Legislative Council might have done. It is something I forgive because, as a politician, if he had succeeded he would have been able to come back and say that he had done it. He would be naturally entitled to whatever political kudos that

might bring. I agree with him that the Legislative Council, as presently constituted, represent all interests. The fact is that it does, and, therefore, the Hon. Minister has quite rightly said that. In view of that, the Legislative Council is competent to represent the wishes of the people of British Guiana and the Legislative Council is competent to make a decision on constitutional matters which would affect the lives of the people in this country.

It seems a little difficult, starting from the premise, to say that the Legislative Council is suddenly denuded of all representative quality, and has become incompetent to decide on the question of Federation. Federation is also a political and constitutional question, the decision on which at this time would rebound to the advantage or disadvantage of the Colony. It seems difficult for me to accept that this Council has been caponised as far as Federation is concerned.

I would say that a plebiscite is a means of shrinking responsibility. What do you want a plebiscite for, if you are in favour of Federation? Are you afraid that your supporters will not recognise your wisdom in acceding to Federation? If you are assured of the high esteem on which your supporters hold you, it would be so easy to tell them, "*If you do not approve of my action, I remove myself from the scene.*"

Why this desire for a plebiscite? To spend more Government money? You cannot lend to domestics more than \$200 to assist them to obtain employment in Canada because of the tight financial position, but you are prepared to indulge in the expenditure of thousands of dollars to have a plebiscite. Are you going to do as persons say? I say, "*I am in favour of Federation. Can you not say it now?*"

There are two major Parties in British Guiana at the moment. One Party is definitely pro-Federationist now. The other Party, if it is pro-Federationist, has no fear of losing to the pro-Federationist group because they are also pro-Federationist. Therefore the issue will not be Federation but one of more seats in this Council, because a Political Party has to look after its survival. The winning of seats is an important thing. I will not say it is the only important thing. I can never be convinced that the two other Parties which say they are anti-Federationist, have the chance of a cent ice in the midday sun of upsetting the balance of seats. I believe in taking the gloves off, in calling a spade a spade. Therefore it means that there is nothing to lose from your saying "*Yes, I agree with the arguments about Federation; I am in favour of Federation and I will opt for Federation.*"

There is no necessity to return to the electorate for any plebiscite. Are you uncertain as to who will get in place of you? But since both sides are saying "*We are federationists*" there should be no such fear if you are otherwise popular. There is no fear that the benefits which will accrue from Federation will be lost to this country by an anti-federationist party getting in. Since Federation has become a fact, and since it has been agreed in theory and practice that it would be to the economic advantage of British

Guiana to join the Federation, the only reason I can see for a plebiscite is to absolve oneself; in this progressive world to be able to say: "*I was not in favour of Federation, but I am a true democrat and I am not prepared to run before the people; I am not prepared to be precipitate. I am prepared to accept what the people say.*" In other words, I say "*people, have your will. You can vote for or against. Whatever you say I will accept.*" That is the coward's way out. You should say: "*I am for Federation. If you do not like it, throw me out.*"

I suspect that there are in some quarters – and I have reason to believe that my suspicion is more than a suspicion – some politicians who are not prepared to take a strong stand through fear of losing the support of anti-federationists. But I would implore them to let us face the facts today; let us decide that we are pro-federationists and not worry with the vociferous little groups that are anti-federationist; they cannot upset the political apple cart. In view of that assurance I was hoping that there will be no longer any necessity for wanting a plebiscite. But as I am referring to a plebiscite at the moment it may be interesting to find out exactly what a plebiscite on this question can decide.

A plebiscite was held to decide whether the people of the Saar would go to Germany or to France. They had to answer "*Yes*" or "*No*". British Guiana is an important territory *vis-à-vis* the West Indies. British Guiana's views on the type of Constitution that should emerge with Dominion Status must be important if British Guiana is to accede to Federation. When we have both major Parties, claiming that they are federationist, going to the polls on this plebiscite, and people answer "*Yes*" and people answer "*No*", what are the voters saying "*Yes*" to?

I have been assured that the only difference between the two Parties is as to the type of Constitution. What an awful confusion there would be among the people if there is a plebiscite. When they say "*Yes*" what are they saying "*Yes*" to? The only difference the people have to decide is as to the type of Constitution. But that is not being put to them. What is being put to them is Federation, and not the type of Constitution. It would appear to me that in the present circumstances of British Guiana, in view of the fact that both major Parties are pro-federationists, there is absolutely no necessity for any plebiscite, unless some person or persons, some Party or Parties are afraid to come out strongly on Federation but prefer to sit in an ivory tower and tell the lesser mortals "*You go ahead and choose.*" But that is cowardly, because if you go before the people as a political leader you must be willing at all times to suggest the course they should take, and you must be prepared at all times to give leadership. Of course, if your leadership is rejected by the people there is nothing wrong about that. At least you will have offered your leadership before it was rejected.

Do not abrogate; do not surrender your position of leadership on so vital a question as Federation. In fact, rather than adopt this circuitous approach of a plebiscite I would say it would be much more admirable to come out openly against Federation – I am not saying that everyone who

calls for a plebiscite is anti-federationist. There are some people who seem to be convinced that there is some magic in a plebiscite, because we have not yet had one in British Guiana. Those anti-federationists who seek to cloak their anti-federation sentiments behind this façade of a plebiscite would be much more admired for their honesty if they were to come out straight and say "*We are anti-federationists for reasons A to Z.*" Then they will be admired and will be saying something to which people can listen.

I have dealt with some of what I consider the objections to British Guiana's joining the Federation. There are others. During the course of this debate we will be faced with some of the arguments of individuals who are anti-federationists. The anti-federationists may numerically dominate this Council, or pro-federationists may someday dominate this Council, but what is your answer in and out of this Council? It is, I submit, that the people of British Guiana should be educated on the question of Federation? And education on this question does not consist of shibboleths, passwords and mouthings of independence and that sort of thing. We all want independence.

I was hoping that during the course of this debate those who were anti-federationists would examine at length what they consider the social and economic disadvantages of British Guiana's joining the Federation. It will be a little difficult for them to make out a case. Those who insist on our remaining out of this new experiment are very much behind the times. The businessmen have federated already; the workers of the world are uniting. You have nothing to lose but your chains. Trade Union leaders say that workers must unite because their employers are united. Employers have already federated. How many times have we not heard politicians, with tears in their eyes, complaining how awful "*king sugar*" has been to the people of this country? The sugar producers have federated. There is a British Guiana and British West Indies Federation of Sugar Producers, but the leaders of the workers are not taking their courage in their hands and seeing to it that the workers federate politically. The teachers have federated, the Church has federated, the lawyers, the proverbial parasites, they say, of our community have federated.

The civil servants have federated, the Judiciary has federated, journalists have federated, trade unions have federated since 1926 under the aegis of the late Mr. Hubert Nathaniel Critchlow when the British Guiana and West Indies Labour Movement had its first meeting here in the Public Buildings. The Caribbean Labour Conference in 1934, going further, held its first meeting in Barbados, which gave a psychological fillip to the organisation for forming which Mr. Critchlow, whose death we mourned a few weeks ago, was responsible. The Caribbean Labour Conference was supported by the right and the left and each of the units in this area had its affiliate.

We have a West Indian University, a Federal institution, and it is important to note, if British Guiana is convinced that its interests are best served outside of a political union with the West Indies, it is a dangerous thing for

British Guiana to send its young people to the West Indies University, because they will inculcate a different set of values from those which we will desire them to inculcate.

One of the criticism made in the past of persons who attended European Universities is that they came back divorced from their surroundings. It may have been a valid criticism, but it seems to me that we must be careful they do not inculcate a set of wrong West Indian values of which we may have to cleanse them on their return home.

We have also, I would submit, federated with respect to our students in the United Kingdom. Our students Service are run by a West Indian High Commissioner's Office. We subscribe to a Students Centre in London where our students go and pass for West Indies Cricket Board of Control. It would be a little difficult to imagine circumstances in which you have a West Indian Federation with its own Cricket Team and you are asking them to include a number of Guianese in the Team. How can you call it a West Indian Cricket Team if British Guiana is outside of the Federation?

But then it is possible that we can build up a Cricket Team that would be as powerful internationally as the West Indies Cricket Team. Who knows? All things are possible. In sport we have federated; in literature we have also federated. Edgar Mittelholzer, who was born in Berbice, is now a West Indian writing against a West Indian background. We speak about Federation, but we rob our writers of that proper background and experience which they could get in the West Indies.

It seems to me that the arguments in favour of British Guiana joining the Federation are definitely more logical and reasonable than the arguments against joining the Federation. But I am not suggesting to this Council that we, like dumb sheep, should go into the West Indies Federation. My Motion reads: "*That we should enter into negotiations immediately with a view to immediate entry.*"

We may, perhaps, with some usefulness consider what terms may be put forward by our negotiators. I do not necessarily suggest that we should make it a condition precedent of our entry into Federation that we have the capital, but it is certainly a point that can be discussed. With the row over Chaguaramas and the unwillingness of the United States Government to yield the site as the West Indies Capital, I would submit that the chances of British Guiana getting the Capital, if we went into the Federation, are very, very good. I am not saying that I have been commissioned by anyone to promise British Guiana the Federal Capital.

Of course, if we get the Federal Capital it goes without saying that it would be a fillip to British Guiana, not only psychologically but economically. If the Federal services have to come here it would mean that a large part of the present Federal budget would be expended in this country. But I am not particularly interested at the moment in the financial fillip; I am more interested in the psychological fillip that we should get as a result of our getting the Federal Capital, if we bargained well and put forward our

case with ability.

We can also, as one of the terms when we are negotiating, say definitely we will not accept the six seats offered to us in the Rance Report. It is a perfectly good stand to take, and I cannot see the West Indian leaders being so backward as to say that is an unreasonable request. That is one of the terms we can put up. We must have more than six seats. Our negotiators, before they start their negotiations, can decide how many more than six seats we should have. We can also insist that, as a pre-requisite to our joining the Federation, we must get full internal self-government, the type that Jamaica, Barbados and Trinidad have – perfectly legitimate terms. We will then be throwing the ball into the West Indian Court. It will then be their duty to agitate for a better constitution which would compare with the three larger units in the Federation. These are the types of terms that should be introduced. In point of fact if the negotiators who have to bargain on our behalf with such terms in their bag fail to get something profitable, they would be unworthy negotiators.

I do not agree with making immediate Dominion Status one of the terms, because it is unrealistic, but we should insist on that later. We should stress strongly that there should be a rapid advance to Dominion Status. I confess that the West Indian leaders may agree to that, but somebody may say "*How can I hold you to that promise?*" May I assure you that the West Indian peoples – even if their leaders are not interested – are interested in Dominion Status as quickly as possible? I said even if their leaders are not interested, but I am not saying that they are not. You can be assured, therefore, that if British Guiana got into the Federation, and our leaders were interested in the rapid advance towards Dominion Status, that they would certainly have the West Indian peoples behind them.

It is a little difficult, in the absence of a dictatorship such as exists in certain countries, for leaders in any territory or country to be completely oblivious to the wishes and aspirations of the people. Therefore we need have no fear of that.

We know that the West Indies have a certain amount of surplus population and they want to get rid of those people. We can do with a bigger population in British Guiana as soon as we start developing and establishing industries. We can put up as one of our terms planned immigration. British Guiana must have the final word as to whom we will accept and whom we will not accept.

Let us have this term of planned immigration, because we have to think of our duty to our people in British Guiana. So many Guianese think that West Indians would want to rush over here and take away food from the mouths of our children. Planned immigration would remove the fear of West Indian influx, so you need not worry about that.

I cannot see that to be an unreasonable term. In fact, pro-federationist that I am, and though I urge that British Guiana should join the Federation now I should be one of the first here to say, "*Let us forget Federation, if the*

West Indian leaders in the Federal Government are not prepared to accept as reasonable a term as planned immigration."

More so shall I say "*away with Federation*" if they are not prepared to accept the term of internal self-government for British Guiana, at least of the type which is enjoyed by Jamaica, Trinidad and Barbados. Quite frankly I would not make a fuss about a Capital. Washington is the capital of the USA but it is not the richest city. Canberra is the capital of the Australian Federation and it is neither the richest nor best known city in Australia. Ottawa is the capital of the Canadian Federation and it is neither the richest nor best known city in Canada. I shall be very interested however in the Capital of the Federation coming to British Guiana, but I do not feel we should necessarily make an issue of that. It would be a tribute to our Government, who would be negotiating if this Motion is passed, and a credit to their competence if they are able to bring back in their bag the Federal Capital for British Guiana and they indeed would be worthy of appreciation.

At the moment it is accepted that our natural resources and potentialities are such as to be an economic asset to the entire region. But development has to be planned on a regional basis. If through the selfishness and blindness of British Guiana's political leaders, British Guiana stays out of the Federation at this period, it must be understood that the West Indian leaders will become more aware of the possibilities of the lands in their own territories. The West Indies Federation has got the support and sympathy of the Canadian Government as well as the American Government. The West Indies Federation can make for itself a name. The West Indies Federation will achieve Dominion Status, and automatically after achieving Dominion Status will get a seat in the Assembly of the United Nations. Undoubtedly, their economic planning, their economic development will be more comprehensive than any in British Guiana. If we stay out at the formative period when we can get in and when the Federation offers an answer to our economic problems, if we allow this opportunity to pass, if our leaders leave us out in the cold, the West Indies Federation will go ahead and, I can say this; as I see it, if ever after we are convinced of the wisdom of joining the West Indies Federation, you can be assured that the terms we are likely to get when the Federation is already organised and has planned its resources and is moving on, will not be as favourable as those we can get now. There is a time for seriousness, and I submit that this is such a time.

We hear talk of economic crisis, of constitutional crisis. We hear talk of cooperation. This is one means that we can use. This is our best opportunity. At the moment, the tide is at its flood. If we neglect it, the voyage of our political and economic life in British Guiana will be bound to end in misery and isolation. That is why I am moved to ask this Council to recommend that Government should enter immediately into negotiations with the Government of the West Indies Federation with a view to British Guiana's entering immediately in the West Indies Federation. Our entry immedi-

ately or our staying out is a matter of life or death, a matter of progress or stagnation.

Motion on the Racial Disturbances in UK: 5th September, 1958

Mr. Burnham: I beg to second the Motion moved by the Hon. Minister of Trade and Industry, and I desire to congratulate him on having moved it. There is not very much to be said, because all of us feel very keenly and deeply on this matter. It is indeed a tragedy and the circumstances, so far as we are concerned, certainly put into the shade the tales we have heard of Little Rock in the USA. I am sure it is most embarrassing to Her Majesty's Government for these things to be happening in the heart of the Commonwealth which boasts of being a commonwealth of so many peoples of so many shades of pigmentation and political opinions.

I join in supporting this Motion because I feel that Her Majesty's Government should be told how we in this Legislative Council feel. But realist as I am, I really wonder what steps can be taken by Her Majesty's Government. I see there are suggestions about restricting immigration. I see the fascists are being blamed. I see some people are saying it is a tragic comment on the social system. I think some Minister of Religion said that and frankly I am at a loss to see what exactly can be done immediately. What has happened in the case of apartheid in South Africa? What has been happening in the United Kingdom recently is a warning that we in this country with a cosmopolitan population should be most careful, since the Hon. Minister of Trade and Industry, Dr. Jagan, has said he believes unemployment in the United Kingdom is responsible for the outbreak. So especially as in British Guiana there is unemployment, pressure on jobs, we should be most careful that we do not see here duplication at any level of the type of events taking place in the United Kingdom.

I wholeheartedly support the Motion. This is one of the subjects in which we can cooperate, and once again I congratulate the Minister of Trade and Industry for being so interested and farsighted as to introduce this Motion.

Motion on Federation with the West Indies: 10th September, 1958

(Council resumed the debate on the Motion by the Hon. Member for Georgetown Central, Mr. Burnham):

"That this Council recommends that Government enter immediately into negotiations with the Government of the West Indies Federation with a view to British Guiana's entering the West Indies Federation immediately."

Mr. Burnham: *(Replying)*

Mr. Speaker, the outcome of this debate is a forgone conclusion after we have heard the Hon. Minister of Trade and Industry who, I understand, is the Leader of the Majority Party, in expressing his opinion say that the P.P.P. will decide when British Guiana will enter the Federation. He has also said that in his Party's opinion this is not the time when we should contemplate entering the Federation. It is to be presumed that the P.P.P. is waiting to see what is likely to happen. As I see it, we have been over the past three weeks writing a chapter of a few pages of the history of British Guiana, and I think it is only fitting that we should write the epilogue to this particular chapter, and when we have written we will leave it to posterity to judge – posterity who will not be guided by prejudice, but posterity who may well, in judging this period, say that the outcome of this debate has proven once more that wisdom does not necessarily coincide with sheer numbers. What has been significant in this debate is that those who are anti-federationists, though mindful of their greater numbers in this Council, have been psychologically disturbed and emotionally irritated, and we have seen conduct worthy of a *prima donna*. I submit that that is sure proof of the fact that they are politically backward and have recognised that the arguments and logic are against their stand.

With the courtesy which one Member of this Council owes to another, I have listened quite carefully to the arguments advanced by those who oppose the Motion. I may observe that many of those who have spoken against the Motion have not really read it, for we have heard the Hon. Member for Demerara River (Mr. Bowman) say, *"There are some of us who would like to hurl British Guiana headlong into the Federation."* The Motion speaks of negotiating as to the terms of entering the Federation. As I listened to some obscure reasons being advanced and the bitterness of the opponents of the motion, there came back to me the following lines –

*"Mulier saevissima tunc est
cum stimulos odio pudor admovet."*

The arguments of the anti-federationists have been completely specious and full of sophistry and incoherence. There is great diversion of opinion. The anti-federationists may be divided into two categories – those who are inveterate anti-federationists and those who prefer to veil anti-federation feelings and sentiments behind the criticism of the West Indies Federation as it stands at the moment. There are some like the Hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Hubbard who, I would assure, has given reasons for being against Federation for all times. Obviously the Hon. Member has misread or misunderstood his Party's policy.

Mr. Speaker, you do not know but my information is to that effect.

I accept your ruling, Sir, and I agree with respect that it is not necessary to refer to the Hon. Nominated Member's Party affiliations. But, says the Hon. Member, Mr. Hubbard, in his argument against Federation, the West Indian islands are poor; they are recipients of grants-in-aid. British Guiana, on the other hand – at least by inference – is a strong, rich country which does not enjoy grants-in-aid from the British Treasury. But certainly that is a typical example of sophistry because once it is conceded that British Guiana has received grants of several million dollars over the past few years, admittedly for development, the position of British Guiana is not different from that of the poor West Indian islands. For is it not the duty of the Government to supply those services for which those development grants are made?

If British Guiana receives from the British Treasury millions of dollars for developmental projects which are the responsibility of the British Guiana Government, it stands to reason that what has in fact been happening is that the British Guiana Government has been getting money to help it to carry out its ordinary responsibilities to the people. I should have thought that rather than the poverty of the West Indian islands, the poverty of British Guiana has been a sufficient argument against magnificent isolation which some of the anti-federationists would like to see here in British Guiana.

We are but a number of territories, maybe poor, but together, if our economies are rationalised, if there is cooperation and regional planning, we can at least have a hope, which we do not now enjoy, that the entire region can be economically viable. I do not for one moment accept what has been put into the mouth of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Mr. Lennox-Boyd, that Dominion Status can only come when there is economic self-sufficiency. I do not know whether he said so, but economic self-sufficiency is a dream and can only be approached by such countries as the USA and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. What we in this region want is not economic self-sufficiency; we can never achieve that even with British Guiana's resources. What we want is economic viability.

"We have fed the West Indies," says the Hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Hubbard. There are so many answers to that statement which I consider rather inept. In the first place I believe the submarine had been invented

prior to the last Great War, and I believe the submarine used to sink ships. Of course the fancy price which, it is alleged, we would have got for our rice from countries far away from the West Indies, might have been got if the bottoms could have been got, and if the ships could have reached their destination. In any case we must not forget when we talk about self-government, democracy and the people's will, that whether one likes it or not, during the war the Governments in the West Indies and British Guiana were certainly not the Governments we have today. Those were the days when if one wanted to find the Governor-General of the West Indies he would have had to look into some dingy room in the Colonial Office.

The present West Indian leaders were not responsible for those rice contracts. Let us assume that the contracts were pressing so far as British Guiana rice was concerned, yet the Hon. Minister of Trade and Industry, Dr. Jagan, in his book, *"Bitter Sweet"*, admitted that that was the period covered by the King Report which pointed to the fact that sugar workers found it more remunerative to work as rice farmers rather than continue to work for the miserly wages paid on sugar estates. So that assuming the Hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Hubbard's estimate of \$30 (US) is accurate, the fact is that the economy of British Guiana got a lift, as admitted in *"Bitter Sweet."* Therefore it does not behove us at this time, when we should be behaving like men, to talk about feeding the West Indies. Those who point to those things of the past are fit students for the kindergarten. A kindergarten child is told *"You do this and you will get that. If you behave yourself like a good boy you will get this."*

It is disconcerting to hear Members of this Council talk about the moral duty of the West Indies to buy our rice. What moral duty can we talk about in this hard material world? It is all the more surprising when these sermons about moral duties come from persons who pride themselves on being materialists. The fact is that the Hon. Minister of Trade and Industry, whose ability to collect facts and figures is internationally known, has not been able to tell us here today, or on any other day, what he is going to do with the 60,000 bags of rice lying on the wharf and, if perchance, Burmese and Siamese rice were to reach the West Indies at lower prices than ours. Yes, I think he did say something about buying rice from the USA, storing it and selling it back to the West Indies. Perhaps that is possible, but as I reflected there came to me the remark made by the doctor in Macbeth:

"More needs she the divine than the physician."

The gentleman's mental confusion is beyond the competence of the physician to cure.

The Leader of the Majority Party, who is Vice-Chairman of the Rice Marketing Board and President of the Rice Producers Association, stands here and says we can find other markets, which markets we did not hear of. Some voice said something about South Africa, but it was not the Minis-

ter's, and he cannot tell us what he is going to do with the rice that is stored now. I am not attempting to threaten the people of British Guiana; I am not in a position to do so.

The Hon. Minister of Trade and Industry, who seems *au fait* with American constitutional history, and who regaled us with the stand taken by Patrick Henry and Hamilton, forgot to tell us that when the final Constitution was written there was a State called Rhode Island which wanted to stay out of the Federation of the USA, but when the other States made it quite clear that they were going to impose tariffs against Rhode Island, the people of Rhode Island, through their representatives, saw the wisdom of Rhode Island's acceding to the Federation of the USA. I am no pedagogue but I wish to add that to the amount of learning which the Minister of Trade and Industry has displayed with respect to the USA.

Before I deal point by point with what the spokesmen of the Majority Party have said I may *en passant* refer to some of the points which the Hon. Minister of Community Development and Education, Mr. Benn, purported to make. Said he, with a *naïveté* which would have been engaging and amusing in other quarters, and in other circumstances, "*British Guiana will not be discriminated against because of the ideology of its Government,*" and in support of his argument he reminded us that Yugoslavia gets money from the USA and Poland does also. There is a local saying "*Fisherman don't give bait to fish he done catch.*" Of course the USA would be interested in attempting to get Yugoslavia and Poland out of the Eastern bloc, and the very fact that the USA has to go to their assistance proves that, especially in the case of Yugoslavia, Russia has been discriminating against her because she adopts an independent line. Therefore it is really not sensible – if I may say so with respect and use the word in its best sense – to draw such argument across the trail of this debate.

"*We are subsidising the U.C.W.I.*", the Minister of Education is reported to have said. "*We can have our Guianese students educated more cheaply at other places.*" Maybe. To the simple all things are simple. Certainly it is cheaper to us in British Guiana to have the same number of Guianese students at the U.C.W.I. educated elsewhere, but (1) can we find the places? (2) Do you know how many Guianese and West Indians are driving taxis in the USA because they cannot get into the professional schools after they get their first degree?

I will always bow to the Minister of Trade and Industry when it comes to telling us how one may earn a living driving taxing in the USA while studying. Do you know how many Guianese students are driving taxi-cabs in the USA because they cannot get into universities? The reason given to me is that they cannot get into a professional school. In any case, what manner of man is he who would be prepared to be a recipient of alms rather than to have a university of his own to which his Government makes a contribution? You go to Canada, the United Kingdom and France. The institutions there are subsidised by their Governments and we hope to get into those

universities cheaply! I suppose that would be good business, but I thought it would be revolting to the national pride of which we have heard so very much.

May I just clear up one misapprehension? The Hon. Member for Central Demerara has, with his capacity for research in other fields, discovered the Manifestoes of all of the parties and attempted to show that all of these parties agree that there should be a plebiscite, or that the people's wishes should be consulted before British Guiana entered the Federation of the West Indies. I do not deny that what was read was contained in the documents as alleged. I am willing to grant the Hon. Member of Central Demerara this, that each one of those Manifestoes on this particular subject of Federation can be interpreted to mean that all the parties subscribed to the holding of a plebiscite.

The Manifesto of the Party to which I belong actually had written in it words to the effect that Federation was not relevant at that time, and that we should consider Federation when British Guiana gets a better constitution. Was it Emerson who spoke about foolish consistency? A Member of a Party has to realise when circumstances have changed. I am now convinced, contrary to the view which I held on the 12th August, 1957, that British Guiana's entry into Federation now means immediate constitutional advances. That is my conviction. I make no apologies for changing my stand and my attitude. It is only a little political babe, or a rascal that has to keep to one line all the time.

Of course the Minister of Trade and Industry would like to be a political jack to blow upon the world and criticise everyone. He is saying that the West Indian leaders have forgotten how to beg. British Guiana has remembered how to beg, for at a cost of over \$10,000 two Ministers of the Government left this country and came back with nothing more than what the British Government was morally bound to give our country.

We must not in the context of this debate be critical of the leaders of other countries. We should, I submit, consider what British Guiana will get and what British Guiana should contribute if she were to enter into the Federation.

The gravamen of the argument of the Minister of Trade and Industry, notes from whose speech I took while he spoke so admirably and fluently, is this: The West Indies Federation is weak; the constitution is too backward, therefore it will not pay us to enter into the West Indies Federation for the time being. I know how this formula of self-government, Dominion Status and plebiscite happened to be drafted. It was drafted in March, 1952.

And plebiscite: It was made for certain political reasons which can be repeated in drawing rooms but not in this Council.

In the same way as the Minister of Community Development and Education who changed the subject to speak of "*Negro hooliganism*" –

[Interruption]

Mr. Burnham: Before I was interrupted I was saying that the gravamen of the argument of the Minister of Trade and Industry was that Federation is at the moment too weak, but that argument must certainly fall down.

If it is conceded that there is strength in numbers; if it is a fact that the larger the number of territories deciding to cooperate politically and economically the stronger would be our product, then his argument cannot stand. If you admit that the West Indian leaders also recognise the weakness of the constitution and are doing their best to revamp it, we must not with such pathetic conceit believe that gentlemen like the Chief Minister of Trinidad, Dr. Eric Williams, and other West Indian leaders have not made the same criticism regarding the weakness of the constitution.

Professor Gordon Lewis in very picturesque language points out the weakness of the constitution. All of that was conceded from the very beginning when I opened this debate. But how are we going to remedy that? Are we going to make it better by staying out, saying that when they get a better constitution we will then condescend to join the Federation? We may well find ourselves in the position of Rhode Island. If we do not enter the Federation now, it would be most unfortunate if we enter later and then find out that we have suffered from the disadvantage of not having our leaders in earlier to look after our interests.

Says the Minister of Trade and Industry, as spokesman for the Party: *"When New York and certain States got together to form a Federation they were independent."* That is granted. Is his argument this: that independence is a prerequisite to federating or making a federation that is worthwhile? If that is his argument, we have already found the lie in the history of the Canadian Federation and the Australian Federation of 1867 and 1900 respectively, to which I took the pains to refer in opening this debate.

We hear such specious excuses as this: Because one of the contributors to the *Social and Economic Studies* says that when New York federated with the other States it had 3 percent of the total population and Jamaica now has 51 percent of the W.I. population there is an unbalance of population. I cannot see the point he seeks to make. I may remind the Council that a similar argument was most beautifully answered on the 17th March, 1948, by the same person who now advances it.

At page 136 of the compilation of debates on Federation one sees:

"The next point which was mentioned was the various units must have the same density of population. It was stated that in any representation British Guiana would stand to lose. I would like to state that that is not the background of most federal bodies. If we take the United States of America again, we find that one of the larger areas, Nevada, has a population and area almost equivalent. Its area is 110,000, almost one person to one square mile. If we take the smallest State, Rhode Island, we find that it has a population of about 713,000 in an area of 1,200 square miles. In other words Rhode Island is 100 times smaller than Nevada yet its population is seven times as much. So that area does not matter very much."

I cannot do better than to quote that portion of Dr. Jagan's speech as an answer, because, in the West Indies the argument about density coincides with another argument.

We have heard it said that it is not really necessary at this stage to enter into Federation when we can get economic cooperation, experience, union and fruits without labour. So far as British Guiana's economy is concerned, it has been accepted on all sides of the Council that to a large extent it is competitive with that of the West Indies. In that particular context, Customs Union and trade agreements would not be sufficient. You will need a central organisation which will be able to plan and to promote specialisation so far as production is concerned.

The Federal Government may tell or advise you to drop product "A" because it can be more economically produced in another part of the West Indies, and similarly the Federal Government may decide that the production of article "B" in Trinidad should be forgotten and that article "B" can be better produced in British Guiana.

Outside of Federation there is still the probability of competition. As I had reason to say before, ours is not the luxuriant economy and resources of the USA. We cannot afford this continued competition if we are to improve economically. Customs Union and Free Trade cannot do it, but a regional political organisation of which British Guiana is a part can afford the type of regionalisation which is necessary. But some the anti-federationists were saying that political federation is not an urgent necessity or a necessity at all. The very fact they were talking in favour of a stronger Federal Government proves that somewhere in their minds there is lurking the thought of British Guiana entering the Federation. That is the difficulty in which one must land, if agreement is used merely for the purpose of expediency. Very few members around this table have had the guts to come out and say that federation is a bad thing. The others are doing a lot of double-talking. The Marxists of all people should know it. I do not claim to be one –

I have said I do not claim to be a Marxist. Some cannot understand it now. In 1871 Marx said that revolution would be madness where possibly agitation would more surely do the work. That is what the West Indian leaders have learnt as against our revolutionary leaders here. I thought the federationists had clearly said that constitutionally British Guiana would benefit from federation. No anti-federationists has had the guts to say that is not so. While the federationists have said that economically British Guiana would benefit, no anti-federationist has been able to prove by argument that cannot be so. We are glibly told that our rice industry would not be affected by our not joining the Federation and that there is no reason why we should cavalierly not contemplate the possibility of other markets in the West Indies. I cannot see the reason, the logic of that argument. Hon. Members must think carefully when they speak.

The anti-federationists are far away behind the leaders of the West Indies.

It is said the West Indies should have a national bank. They are working out that and are planning. There is a difference between intelligent and careful motion forward on the one hand and flamboyance on the other. The West Indian leaders do not shout on the house-tops what they are doing, and we may be inclined to believe, thanks to our position, that they are doing nothing.

Several centuries ago a Roman poet named Juvenal said something about "a woman's scorn." I think subsequently it has been brought into the English language in this form "there is no fury, in hell or heaven, like that of a woman scorned." As I listened to what was obviously the major objection of the Majority Party, I thought the words "Majority Party" can be substituted for the word "woman." "It is a matter of scorn," says the Leader of that Party. "When I went to Ghana I was not invited to meet the West Indian leaders. In Trinidad, Mr. Burnham was allowed five days to stay in that country, and I was allowed but a number of hours." What has that to do with the Motion? While, Sir, that stand they took in 1953 is wrong, let bygones be bygones. Let us move forward. What is the point of all that talk? The question is whether or not Federation would be to our advantage, not whether it is the personal pride of the Hon. Leader of the Majority Party, which is hurt. That, I say, is interposed only to confuse this debate. The Majority Party does not want any conference with the West Indian leaders because the people of British Guiana were insulted in 1953, and because their Leader was insulted when he arrived in Trinidad on his way to Ghana. Must we understand that the P.P.P. is to decide when British Guiana should enter into the Federation? What a contradiction. Is it the people of British Guiana or the P.P.P. to decide that? I am in wonder whether the thousands of electors of this country are in fact members of the P.P.P. I do know that is not the claim of the P.N.C. I have a *penchant* for speaking the truth always. How can we in the same breath speak about the necessity for a plebiscite? Yet, says the Majority Party Leader, "the P.P.P. will decide it." I think that statement contradicts the idea of a plebiscite.

That is why we bring this Motion to persuade the mighty P.P.P., who at the moment are staunch advocates of a plebiscite. They say they want a plebiscite because opinions are divided. I know that opinions are divided in the P.P.P. Why not give a free vote? If it is good argument let the Ministers themselves get a free vote. This reference to a plebiscite can only be intended to delude the unwary and ignorant. The protagonists of the plebiscite say the people of Alaska decided whether they should be a part of the USA or not. It was the choice of the Alaska people to decide: "Will our country become a State or part of the USA, or will our country continue to be a territory or colony of the USA?" was the question. What do you expect those people to choose?

We want to take the analogy further. That is exactly what the anti-federationists should be told. The question is not whether British Guiana will remain independent, but whether British Guiana will remain a Colony

for some longer time or become a part of a new nation. I have had some sympathy at times with those who talk about internal self-government first. I agree, as I said before, that it is an excellent bargaining point. So far as I am concerned I am prepared to accept the suggestion that in our negotiations we should insist that we get full internal self-government, at least up to the level of that enjoyed by Jamaica, Barbados and Trinidad. I agree with that absolutely. What I disagree with, because I feel that it does not make sense, is saying that we will not enter unless and until the Federation gets Dominion Status, and also that our entry into the Federation should be dependent upon a plebiscite. What I will concede as a matter of practice is that there should be a general election before British Guiana's entry into the Federation, and let Federation be one of the issues at the election. Let us not come here and say His Excellency said this and said that. The Governor cannot dictate what the electorate will do or can do. All that I will concede is that there should be a general election, and that Federation should be the issue.

But my Motion does not urge British Guiana's immediate entry into the Federation just like that. As the Hon. Member for North-Western District, Mr. Campbell, pointed out, the Motion calls for talks. Let the Members of the Majority Party continue to have their ideas about Dominion Status; let them forget the advice of Lenin and forget the ideology of Marxism. Why shouldn't we enter into talks now? What is wrong about finding out now from the West Indian leaders what terms they are prepared to offer us? Are we afraid that we would be overawed by the same people who we say have forgotten to fight; they have not got our brains? If one were to follow the argument of some of the opponents of this Motion to its logical conclusion it would appear that we are afraid that we are going to be swamped out at negotiations.

At negotiations there is no taking of votes; all you have is discussion and agreement. What makes you think that a man like the Chief Minister of Trinidad, who has come out unequivocally in favour of a better Constitution for British Guiana would be backward in his approach? What makes you think that the West Indian leaders of this particular period are hostile? We have not had any flare-ups with them, and we have had to meet them on several occasions. What is the fear about negotiating? I cannot see. Maybe the Amendment was introduced because the Hon. Minister who moved it does not understand that all I was asking for in the Motion was that we enter into negotiations with a view to immediate entry into the Federation. In other words, that we go to the West Indian leaders and say "*what would be your terms if we were to enter immediately?*" and while discussing those terms we can put ours forward.

Let it be understood, since there is talk about courtship – that West Indian leaders are courting the P.N.C. – that the P.N.C. does not want to be the negotiators. We feel that it is a governmental job, and at the moment we cannot but have confidence in our Government until such time as the elec-

torate loses confidence. So let not the Majority Party be afraid. I plead with the Leader of the Majority Party (1) to see that we are not saying that British Guiana must enter the Federation now, but that we are asking that negotiations begin; (2) that he allows a free vote to his Ministers and back-benchers, and (3) that having come back, and then, if he wants, let us have a general election with Federation as the main issue.

The conditions which the Amendment seeks to impose, and the limitations upon the negotiations which it seeks to impose, are not the type of conditions and limitations that one wants to impose on one's negotiators. We want to give them plenipotentiary power and free scope, an opportunity to be able to give and take. Let the fears of the anti-federationists be allayed; the negotiators will not have power to commit British Guiana.

The refusal to vote for the Motion smacks of discourtesy. Yes, it does. It shows unwillingness on the part of this Government to go and talk with the Federal Ministers. Don't tell me any nonsense about the high salaries those Ministers are paid. I notice that the Minister of Trade and Industry was somewhat hesitant when he was giving us the salaries of the Federal Ministers, because he knew that our Ministers receive salaries of \$840 per month, a chauffeur allowance of \$50 per month, and commuted travelling allowance of \$120 per month, and that they get as much as the Federal Ministers who serve a larger territory and a larger population.

I do not know a single numeral called "*much more*." It is quite all right to speak of "*much more*" at a street-corner meeting. I would say that the B.G. Ministers receive a salary of \$840 per month; the same as the Federal Ministers without portfolio. I say that, and there is no questioning it. But what amuses me is that those who have a majority are so easily irritated.

I quote the figures. We expected to hear about the rice figures but we have not heard from the Hon. Minister of Trade and Industry who is Vice-Chairman of the Rice Marketing Board and President of the Rice Producers Association. This is not a matter for argument, like ministerial salaries; it is a matter for discussion. Of course we can today close the door on negotiations. We can by our vote close the door for a long time to come. British Guiana at the moment stands where two roads meet. We can be cowardly; we can be narrow. We can make concessions to pride and be the instruments of reaction. We can throw this Motion out and refuse to negotiate, or we can show some vision and some foresight and agree to go and negotiate, or invite the West Indian leaders to come here. We can play hosts to them. It does not matter where the negotiations take place, but it is my conviction that if we refuse to negotiate, if we refuse to enter into any discussion, if we show absolutely no inclination to join the Federation we would be in many respects a foreign country. I am not saying that the West Indies will be spiteful, but I am saying that there will be no incentive to the West Indians to give us any preferences, and their market is a big market and an important market.

There has been quite a lot of talk about the poverty of the West Indies. If nothing else, they have resources of human beings who can buy our products. A lot has been said against Federation by pulling out of its context the observation by Prof. Arthur Lewis that the West Indies will be developed industrially first, and British Guiana will, therefore, only be an agricultural appendage. A country does not become an industrial country merely because it has a few factories. Canada, in spite of factories, is still an agricultural country, but it can make loans to Great Britain which is an industrial country. There has been a lot of confusion of thought, a lot of concession to outworn ideas. Prof. Lewis himself will tell you, as he told us when we were students, that it is a fallacy to think that an agricultural economy means a poor economy, and in the context of Federation.

If the West Indies will be developed industrially and British Guiana will be developed agriculturally, it would still mean an improvement of our economy, because we would be assured then that our agriculture would not be developed in competition with the agriculture of the West Indian islands, and that our agricultural produce will have a ready market in the West Indies, of which we are a part. That is important since there are over three million people to be fed. Those who show a great deal of learning should remember that England itself was an agricultural country before it became industrial, and because a country is an agricultural country it does not mean that it cannot accumulate the necessary capital over a period of time to embark upon industrialisation. In fact, through a sound and rich agricultural economy a country may be able to accumulate capital.

There are some people who feel that Great Britain has a duty to give us money, but that is a childish attitude. Let us concede that the glory and grandeur that is Britain's have been achieved by profits from the Colonies. Let us concede that for the purpose of this argument. What good is it for us to be reminding ourselves of that when we cannot hold a pistol to Britain's head and say "*Give us the money*" whether she has it or not? It is only by careful planning, which we cannot afford on our own, that we will be able to make our own distinct contribution to the pooling of resources as well as a contribution towards our own industrial development.

Those who spend their time talking about what Britain has done, and how Britain owes us a duty, do not understand the modern world. They are like children. If you behave yourself well you will get an apple, but if you do not behave yourself you will get nothing. If they behave for a while they want the world. If they fail to behave themselves and get nothing, they start to give trouble.

If you behave or act like a communist, you will be termed a communist.

This is a grand opportunity to play our part in the building of the West Indies nation – to be partners in a great experiment and experience. The Hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Tasker, spoke about Guianese students who are taking up jobs outside of British Guiana. I do not know whether his experience is greater than mine, but I wonder whether he knows as much

about them as I do.

I know that 9 out of every 10 Guianese students going to the West Indies University are convinced West Indian federationists. They are sick and tired of this diddling attitude, and they prefer to stay in the West Indies and find their level where things are happening rather than in a place where we are only shouting.

In these days shouting cannot do very much. Something must be wrong. Why should there be this hiatus – this gap between those on whom we spend our money for education, and those on whom we spend our money to run this Government. Is it not time that those who run the Government begin to recast their ideas on this question of Federation?

An Hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Hubbard, says that British Guiana is not part of the West Indies. Dr. Eric Williams said at Christ Church School in 1955 that if British Guiana does not belong to the West Indies, it belongs to nowhere. And I prefer William's scholarship to Hubbard's demagoguery. Let us not attempt to put back the clock. Let us remember that if we close the door now to negotiation, we may well find that when we want to open it, it is closed to us.

As Tennyson said in his 'Palace of Art':

*"And he that shuts Love out, in turn shall be
Shut out from Love and on her threshold lie
Howling in outer darkness."*

Let not that be our predicament here in British Guiana.

Freehold Lands for Settlers: 15th October, 1958

Mr. Burnham: I really cannot see the necessity for so many emotion-packed words and sentiments on this question which, I submit, should be considered dispassionately and realistically. There seems to be too great a tendency to be doctrinaire. Some persons, because of a certain background or tendencies and class prejudices, are for freehold. Other persons, looking forward to the day when you can do what you like with people's holdings—collectivise them or Sovietise them—are in favour of the leasehold system because, in spite of all the talk about security of tenure, leasehold leaves the sanction in the hands of the landlord—in this case the Government.

It is, however, a pity that the Government has been so disappointing in its showing on this Motion—a Motion which it has had a year to consider, moving in its wisdom with the pace of the mills of the gods. The Minister of Natural Resources, Mr. Beharry, from whom we would have expected a definite statement of Government's policy, is satisfied to say that this Government does not favour freehold, but leasehold. And we see another Minister wandering outside the scope of his portfolio—not to prove that leasehold is superior to freehold; in fact I have noted a particular statement he has made: "*Land development is not related to the type of tenure*". That is what the Minister said. Therefore, if we start off from that statement we may consider whether or not this particular Motion is worthy of support.

What are the other factors that would make you come down definitely in favour of freehold or leasehold? In the first place, as I understand the Motion, it does not propose that in every case Government should insist that people should buy the land or occupy it on a freehold basis. Whatever sympathy I have with this Motion is based on the fact that it is intended to give such persons as desire to get freehold land the option of buying land absolutely. Therefore I feel that that is what we must consider. What is intrinsically wrong about persons being able to buy their lands absolutely or to have freehold grants? There can be no objection to that at all, as far as I can see, unless it is an ideological or doctrinaire objection.

This Government has amongst its Members persons who own land—persons who own property—and I take it that the Government, the Majority Party, has not removed from its ranks such land-owning members. In other fields, such as housing, one sees no objection to persons owning property and/or land. The possible objection which one would have expected the Government to develop fully was that freehold has a tendency to permit fragmentation. It is important to note that under the English law you can normally fragment leasehold also, unless you insert a clause in the lease against sub-letting or fragmentation, or transference of the holding or any part of the land. It is also noteworthy that, according to English law, leasehold is described as chattels real, taking on certain attributes of freehold.

I should have thought that unless Government could show that freehold was intrinsically bad it could have seen a way out by inserting in freehold grants certain restrictive provisions which are not alien to English Law – certain restrictive clauses or covenants which would guard against the evils of either aggregation or fragmentation or unproductive use of the land. There is no difficulty in dealing with freehold property by legislation. Right now he who owns his land absolutely – whether rice lands or lands for building houses – is restricted in the use of such land once he lets a tenant in. In the days before the 20th century such restrictions would have been considered sacrilegious and alien to the concept of free ownership. Therefore Government cannot tell us that it is impossible to guard against certain evils whilst permitting freehold lands to be held by people who want to hold them.

This Government always sings the song, with much more volume than previous Governments, that it has no money. Here is an opportunity, if people want to purchase freehold land, for the Government to get money which it can turn over for use in other sectors of this country's economy, or perhaps other sectors of our agricultural economy.

If "A" comes up and he wishes to buy a piece of land – first of all Government can decide on some policy or regulations so that land in the particular area will not be sold en bloc or in tracts of not less than a stipulated size – Government can say to "A": "*We are prepared to sell on certain terms and conditions.*" You have certain stipulations on housing estates where people own land absolutely, but they have to observe certain terms. If "A" is willing to buy subject to the terms and stipulations and he pays for his 15 acres of land, that means so much more money in the coffers of Government which can be properly, and I hope usefully, used for assisting other people so that there will not be this breaking up of land which has been referred to by the Minister.

Let the freehold title be defeasible in certain circumstances. Is not the freehold title with respect to some of the holdings under the Housing Department defeasible? What is wrong with that system unless, of course, one supports another point of view merely on ideological grounds? The Hon. Minister of Trade and Industry says "*land to the tiller and not to the landlord*". I can give you chapter and verse for that quotation, but it is not the catch phrase we want in British Guiana. We want action. You are starving for money, and here is an opportunity for Government to get money and use it in other sectors in the interest of agriculture.

Far be it for me to suggest that I would support unrestricted freehold or alienation. There is this further advantage. It is known in British Guiana that a mortgage on leasehold is a rare thing. Those who give mortgages on leaseholds usually ask for exorbitant rates of interest. He who purchases a freehold property might be able to mortgage the property and obtain the necessary capital for the development of his plot of land without creating a strain on the Government – a Government which is so severely taxed at the

moment to pay “proper” prices for rice and excessive trips abroad. Purchasing the land as freehold property will be a business proposition and the people will be doing a service to Government. They will not only be giving Government money, but they will be releasing Government of the responsibility of developing the land.

It has not been conclusively established that it is impossible to restrict freehold in such a way as to get all of the advantages which are alleged to flow from leasehold property. That being so, to quote the Hon. Minister of Trade and Industry once more: “*since land development is not related to the type of tenure*”. Let us ask ourselves which type of tenure in the present circumstances has the advantage over the other? I will submit freehold.

Let us be realistic; the particular psychological uplift which the Guianese peasant farmer gets from the pride of owning land is something which a politician should not underestimate. It is true that the demand at the moment is just for land, but do you deny the fact that the pride of ownership has not completely vanished from British Guiana? Maybe in this dynamic world of which the Hon. Minister of Trade and Industry is wont there may come a time when the pride of ownership may vanish but that time has not yet arrived.

I submit that when a farmer is working on land which belongs to him the land is likely to be more productive, and he will be much less of a semi-parasite. It will not be a question of complaining to the Minister or asking some politician or lawyer to make recommendations for farmers. I think independence will result from freehold ownership and create an independent peasantry in British Guiana. That is something which I think this Government should consider.

Let me say, on behalf of the Government, that undoubtedly this is not an easy question. One has to plan carefully, concede that there should be freehold and then say what restrictions should be introduced to guard against the evils of aggregation and fragmentation, etc. Consideration will also have to be given to the question of how these restrictions should be framed, what type of legislation has to be passed, what type of sanctions should be imposed and so on.

If there is any doubt that alienation will eventually lead to fragmentation, certain safeguards could be placed in the form of restrictive covenants. It may be necessary to take land from one man and give it to another who will be prepared to observe all of the restrictive covenants.

I admit that there are several difficulties in this matter which will have to be worked out by this Government, but to admit the presence of these difficulties is not to admit that there are impossible of solution save to those who are incompetent. In the circumstances, I would urge Government – rather than coming here and indulging in a lot of specious logic: one Minister saying leasehold is best and another Minister saying that land development need not have anything to do with land tenure and giving us the alleged evils of freehold – not to take a decision on this matter today, but let

Ministers return to their inner Council and apply their brains to these problems. They will then be able to prove themselves worthy of governing. This irrational opposition to freehold proves their incompetence and their inability to govern.

[**A Member:** Take care you are not called upon to apologise again].

Mr. Burnham: I do not have to apologise. I ask Government to consider the points in favour of restricted freehold. We know that the Ministers cannot do this between now and five o'clock, but I am sure that this Council will not object to an adjournment to enable the Majority Party to study the matter more carefully.

Tribute to the late Senator T. A. Marryshow: 22nd October, 1958

Mr. Burnham: It is my pleasure to second the Motion moved by the Hon. Minister of Trade and Industry. Mr. Marryshow was undoubtedly a great West Indian. I think everyone knows that he was one of the earliest protagonists of Federation and indeed he was fortunate in living long enough to see the new West Indian Nation born and himself appointed as a Senator in recognition, to some degree of the service he had rendered to the cause.

It is true that British Guiana is not a part of the West Indies Federation, but for so long have we been associated with men like Mr. Marryshow that when they die and they leave this scene we feel it as deeply as if a Guianese were to die. The depth of feeling evinced by the mover of this Motion is proof of my thesis and is further proof of the fact that though, perhaps, at the moment British Guiana is not politically a part of the West Indies Federation, that cultural tradition, that community of culture which holds us together makes us feel very deeply the loss of so fine a gentleman and so outstanding a West Indian.

Motion to Censure the Government: 22nd October, 1958

Mr. Burnham:

“Be it resolved:

That this Council expresses its lack of confidence in and censure of the Government for the failure of the delegation which left British Guiana on 17th June to obtain development finance”.

On the 13th of June of this year it was announced in this Council that a delegation would be proceeding to the United Kingdom to discuss development finance with the Secretary of State for the Colonies and with officials of the Colonial Office.

This delegation or, at least, the two Elected Members of the delegation left the Colony on the 17th of June on their mission. But even before the 13th June the Hon. the Minister of Trade and Industry had in a public statement announced the intention of his Government to send some person or persons abroad in search, so to speak, of development finance. I make particular reference to the earlier announcement because at a later stage of my remarks it will be necessary for me to refer to the fact that it was long before June of this year that the Government decided that development finance should be sought to remove the possible excuse on the part of the Government that the time it had for preparing its case was too short.

We have had the advantage of being circularised with a cyclostyled copy of a statement by the Hon. Minister of Trade and Industry and I shall have reason to refer, with Your Honour’s permission, frequently to that document.

As far as we have been able to learn the sum of approximately \$28.3 million was required for the Development Programme up to the end of 1959. As far as we have been informed Her Majesty’s Government proposed to make available the sum of \$26.4 million for the Development Programme over the said period. There have been some reasons advanced for making available a sum of \$1.0 million less than that required and I must confess that I am in entire agreement with the Minister of Trade and Industry who spoke quite feelingly of the impact upon the standard of living and employment this miserly sum, this inadequate sum, will have.

I am also disposed to agree with the said Minister when he says that in his opinion – and such opinion he said he represented to the Secretary of State for the Colonies – Her Majesty’s Government was neglectful of its obligations to British Guiana, one of Her Majesty’s possessions.

The situation undoubtedly is grave and it must be conceded that we share the concern of the Minister of Trade and Industry over the ability of our Government to provide from surplus revenue or general revenue bal-

ances the sum of \$2 million for the year 1958-59 - \$2 million per year. We are also very concerned over the fact that we may be still \$5.9 million out at the end of 1959, and that of course is merely on the calculation with respect to the Programme as is, not with respect to any accelerated Programme or the beginning of any new projects.

I can now see why the Hon. Minister of Trade and Industry when he returned to this Colony was of the opinion that we had been very badly treated – we had sent a delegation which had got virtually nothing.

I say “*virtually nothing*” because I am inclined to the view, though there are instances when I question their sincerity, that Her Majesty’s Government who in conjunction with the Interim Government drafted the present Development Programme would in any case have considered it their obligation to have made provision for a sufficient amount of money to complete the Programme up to 1959, for that programme was not the responsibility of the present Elected Government but the responsibility of Her Majesty’s Government themselves working with and through the Interim Government.

But though I agree that Her Majesty’s Government has apparently not lived up to its moral responsibilities, I am however of the opinion that the delegation which left this Colony on the 17th June so mishandled its case, presented so poor a case and in such a fledgling manner that has permitted Her Majesty’s Government to be in a position where it can pontificate and where it can with casuistry worm itself out of its own embarrassing situation.

First of all may I refer to this fact, that the Minister of Trade and Industry himself, in a statement which he made in this Council, admitted that they went up to London with what a series of additions which any school child could have made. Says the Minister of Trade and Industry, obviously in an attempt to show that with care they had prepared their “*demands*” – in inverted commas – for development finance, all the major Heads of Departments were requested to state sums for an expanded Development Programme for 1959-62, in addition to the Programme for 1956-60. I should have thought that it was obvious to the merest political tyro, that merely getting together Heads of Government Departments and asking them “*What do we want?*” and “*What do you think X will cost?*” and putting figures together is no alternative to a proper economic survey and the putting up of a decent programme.

Furthermore, says the Minister of Trade and Industry, in confession, so to speak, of the ineptness shown by his Government, “*there was not time for them to be coordinated and considered by the Financial Secretary and the full Executive Council.*” In other words, the full Executive Council did not have an opportunity, if we are to understand English as it appears in this Statement, to consider the plans and to coordinate them. We can excuse the absence of the Financial Secretary if the references here are to the holder of the substantive post, but, as I understand this Statement, it is a reference to the

post itself – the person for the time being carrying out the duties of the Financial Secretary.

It is a little disconcerting to find, when a Government undertakes the responsibility to go abroad to seek development finance, that first of all not all the Members of that Government are apprised of what the plans are. I thought the lot of being kept in the darkness was left to the “*Opposition*” – not to other Members of the Executive Council. The Financial Secretary, whether he be competent or incompetent, is certainly the Government’s adviser on finance. He was not given an opportunity to consider this plan. “*As a result of this,*” says the Minister of Trade and Industry in his Statement, “*the Ministers were able to present to the Secretary of State outline proposals, with estimates of expenditure for each year and with preliminary supporting data in justification of each project.*”

It was late last year, or early this year, that the public knew that the Government intended to send a delegation abroad to raise development finance, and even if we assume that the Government did not know its own intention before the public announcement by the Minister of Trade and Industry, there was a long period of months during which there could have been some attempt not to go with “*guesstimates*” – and it does appear that the delegation went with “*guesstimates*,” because the leader of the delegation, His Excellency the Governor, in a public statement referred to the impossibility of raising finance on the money market on “*guesstimates*” and demands, and unless he was speaking on some academic subject, those remarks must be related to the delegation – the doings of the delegation of which he had been a member.

In the circumstances it is clear that the Government delegation, though it had wonderfully rosy ideas of asking for and raising, perhaps by pious hopes, \$200 million, had no plan which could stand the light of day. Months ago, speaking from this side of the table, I did suggest to the Government that if it wanted to raise money for development finance – and we are agreed that that development finance was urgently needed – the first step that should have been taken was an attempt to obtain the services of an economic expert, or economic experts, who would carry out a survey and make recommendations. That advice was not heeded because it came from the “*Opposition.*”

It took thousands of dollars of taxpayers’ money for this Government to learn the obvious – to learn what Trinidad had shown it before; what Jamaica and Ghana had shown. This Government must have known that there was a shortage of development capital. Every member of that delegation ought to have known that and every member of that delegation and of the Government ought to have been intelligent enough to understand that if you are going out competing in a difficult market you cannot go out with a series of additions got from Heads of Government Departments and a lot of talk about “*We demand this and we demand that.*” That is childish; that is comparable to the attitude of the little child who is told “*If you misbehave*

yourself you are going to be spanked. If you behave yourself you will get an apple or a tart." Having behaved themselves, perhaps as they saw fit, they went up there and thought that by merely asking for a spot of \$200 million they would have got it.

But a more distressing aspect of the failure of the delegation which must fall on the shoulders of the Government for not having expert economic advice beforehand, is the fact that not only were the members of the delegation made to look stupid, but the whole country was made to look stupid. It is no sense referring to the statement of Mr. Lyttelton, as he then was, that schemes of development would not be held back for lack of money. By their incompetence the members of the delegation have put the British Government in this position – and I shall refer later to what Mr. Lennox-Boyd said – that it can contend that Mr. Lyttelton meant what he said in the House of Commons in 1954 – that worthwhile schemes of development would not be held up for lack of money – and in that context I can see them arguing that such schemes must not only be borne out by estimates but by expert opinion. This is what Mr. Lennox-Boyd is able to throw into the teeth of our delegation. With a considerable amount of suavity and politeness but nevertheless suggesting incompetence on the part of our Government, referring to the delegation he said:

"In the time available it had not been possible to reduce their departmental plans to an integrated programme of development drawn up with proper regard to the ability to meet the servicing charges on loans of the magnitude which the plans would require. Much as I sympathise with your Ministers' anxiety to proceed urgently with expanded schemes of economic value to the Colony, I could, therefore, give no more than preliminary consideration to the plans as they stood ..."

I am not for one moment going to hold a brief for Mr. Lennox-Boyd or for his Government. What I am saying is that if you have to fight a battle you should put yourself in a position where your enemy would have no excuse. That is what did not happen here. The delegation went there with a number of figures, sending telegrams backward and forward asking for data on this, and details of that and Mr. Lennox-Boyd was able to say, with the politeness that we always admire in the British, that he sympathised with our Ministers who were unable to say exactly what would be the impact of a loan on the economy of British Guiana – whether the Colony would be able to repay it, or whether the economy of the country could stand it. Those are details with which the delegation should have been armed before it left the shores of British Guiana. It is no use arguing that because the situation was one of urgency it called for urgent stupidity; they went and in any case did not get what they wanted. If they had stayed longer and had learnt their lesson before they left, and had got an economic adviser to report and recommend, they would have been no worse off now, and at least the Secretary of State for the Colonies would have had no excuse – no ex-

cuse similar to the one which he sets out in his dispatch.

The delegation having toured and returned to the Colony, the Minister of Trade and Industry now agrees:

“...that the Government of British Guiana would arrange for an economic survey to be undertaken by visiting economic experts. Subject to his release by the Government of India for his assignment, Professor P.C. Mahalanobic, F. R. S., President of the National Institute of Sciences of India, will visit British Guiana for this purpose.”

If the Government were able to tell us that before they drew up their hasty plans, they had made efforts to obtain the services of economic experts, we would have been more sympathetic with them. We hear that a loan was in the offing from the Swiss Bank, but that H. M. Government was not prepared to underwrite or guarantee such a loan. What were the reasons? H. M. Government could have the excuse – and in this respect I am not absolving H. M. Government at all – of saying “*Are we going to guarantee a loan to these people who do not know exactly what they are about? Are we going to guarantee a loan for these people who do not know exactly how to prepare a plan?*” The plans, they say, were discussed and vetted in the Ministries, but when I look at the Ministers I am yet to see an economic expert amongst them. They all follow noble callings and vocations but none of them has ever been an economic expert and if it takes time to qualify in other professions, why should our Ministers imagine that because of their agitational ability they have been automatically transformed into economic experts? They have learned their lesson, but at the cost of thousands of dollars of taxpayers’ money spent to send them to the United Kingdom and the USA.

But as if they were not satisfied with the difficulties over which they had no control and the difficulties which they might have avoided, the delegation through one of its members proceeded to weaken its case still further. Interviewed on the television, a re-broadcast of which interview I heard, the Minister of Trade and Industry when asked if he would go behind the Iron Curtain to get money, said that he would go in front or behind the Iron Curtain. Perfectly humorous, it shows great promise if our Minister of Trade and Industry were part of a vaudeville show, but it must be understood that if the individual is the Leader of the Government, if the individual represents the Government, he cannot afford to indulge in that type of humour particularly in the Western World when he is going to ask for development capital.

If the Minister of Trade and Industry were able to assure us by deeds and successes – not by words – that he could and did get money from behind, or in front of the Iron Curtain, well then it would not have been a humorous statement by him. If instead of turning westward after he had left London he had gone eastward and come back with roubles, then we would have congratulated and credited him with the utmost statesman-

ship in making that remark when interviewed over T.V.

An individual is entitled to his idiosyncrasies, political or otherwise; he is entitled to his personal beliefs or disbeliefs; he is entitled to his ideological peculiarities, but when that individual becomes a Minister of Government, when he is the leader of Majority Party which controls the Government, he should not go around leaving that shiftiness about communism in the minds of the western world where he is going after development capital.

Let me concede for argument's sake that communism is a good thing, but so far as those people from whom you hope to get development finance are concerned it is an awful thing. You will have to decide whether you want to indulge in your individual and personal idiosyncrasies, or you want to get development capital to improve British Guiana over which you shed so many crocodile tears when you repeat that there are 16.3 workers in every hundred who are unemployed. Are you seeking mere international notoriety, or do you wish to help the people who sent you there? Are you, deliberately by your ineptness, stupidity and indulging in your personal idiosyncrasies, making sure that the people do not get any more development capital to improve the economy of the country, provide more employment and raise the standard of living of the people?

It is all right to get at the street corner and weep about the lot of the poor worker, but some people seem to be in the habit, or seem to have the capacity to achieve the exact opposite of what they say they want to achieve. In that category of persons I shall put this Government. I cannot differentiate between one and the other. It is the whole Government that is responsible. If, perchance, the elected section of this coalition between the Colonial Office and the P.P.P. – if the Members of the P.P.P. feel that they were fooled by the official section let them tell us so, but so far as I am aware they must hang together and not separately.

Now this same delegation took upon itself to open discussions on the question of Constitution Reform. This delegation covered three subjects. I have not described the subject matter of the delegation; I have described the delegation according to what it was described as before. According to the Minister of Trade and Industry the delegation covered three phases: (i) The Development Programme between 1956-60, (ii) The Programme between 1959-62, and (iii) Constitutional Reform. I will refer Your Honour to page 2 of the cyclostyled statement issued by the Minister of Trade and Industry when he was reporting on the activities of the delegation.

I would submit, Your Honour, that those are not the important words; those are descriptive of the delegation and not descriptive of what discussions the delegation undertook. I will refer Your Honour to page 1 of the said cyclostyled copy of the 13th June. The Minister of Trade and Industry states:

“On the 13th June, it was announced in this Council that a delegation would be proceeding to the United Kingdom to discuss development finance with the Secretary of State for the Colonies and with officials of the Colonial office ...”

That is why I described the delegation in those words. I intended to discuss certain activities of this delegation and I would ask Your Honour to agree with me and rule that I am in order. As a matter of fact there might have been other delegations to London.

This delegation which went ostensibly – on page 2, paragraph 5, of the cyclostyled copy Your Honour will see the range of the discussions. It states:

“The delegation’s discussions in London can conveniently be divided into three phases ...”

May I now, in support of my motion, refer to the three phases of the discussions held in London by the delegation?

[On a point of order! That is not the proper way.]

Mr. Burnham: I thank you, Sir. Referring to the three phases of the discussions by this delegation in London, I desire to make, first of all, this observation: the delegation or part of the delegation suddenly became schizophrenic. They went up there to represent the Government of British Guiana, but then, having gone to London on taxpayers’ money to discuss certain things – says the Minister of Trade and Industry in his statement:

“Speaking on behalf of the P.P.P. the Minister of Natural Resources and I expressed the view that the British Government should accept the principle of self-government.”

I do not blame them for economising and attempting to kill two birds with one stone, but what I would rather criticise is the lack of skill they have shown in dealing with certain important matters.

You will recall that there was passed unanimously in this Council a Resolution with respect to full self-government for British Guiana. That was an expression of opinion and a decision on principle. It was further agreed in that Resolution that a delegation appointed by and from the Legislative Council should seek an interview with Her Majesty’s Secretary of State for the Colonies to discuss concrete proposals.

This Development Finance Delegation, lacking expertise in the field of finance turns its attention to the field of Constitutional Reform. In the first place the members of this delegation did not leave here to talk about Constitutional Reform. They were not the accredited delegation for raising the question of an advanced Constitution and they once again gave her Majesty’s Secretary of State an excuse which he welcomed and accepted with

alacrity. Because, first of all, with the vagueness which is typical of them they asked the British Government "*to accept the principle of self-government as set out in the Resolution and immediately set into motion all measures necessary for the holding of new general elections as early as possible.*"

When a delegation of that type goes up it must not only go with expressions and broad demands, but with details. When the Jamaica Delegation went to the UK to get Constitutional Reform, the delegates took with them detailed recommendations for the required advance. Her Majesty's Secretary of State had to agree with the recommendations. The Minister of Trade and Industry had no concrete recommendations, so he has given the Governor an opportunity to appoint a Committee which will sit for some time – heaven knows how long it will sit – and then make recommendations. If the P.P.P. Ministers had not jumped the gun, the Legislative Council would have worked out what was required and Her Majesty's Secretary of State would have no excuse in the circumstances.

But you go there with all your airiness and vagueness about the principle of self-government – a principle accepted by us. We do not want you to tell them that we accept the principle of self-government: we want you to send a delegation from this Legislative Council which is able to say, XYZ should be deleted from the Constitution and ABC should be inserted, certain powers of the Governor should be removed, for instance the Governor should no longer preside over the Executive Council. Those are the things you should go and tell Mr. Lennox-Boyd. But no, you jump the gun and represent the P.P.P. there and allow him to say that a Committee should be appointed. We know how long these committees sit; we have allowed to slip out of our hands the opportunity afforded other places and all through the ineptitude of the delegation. Trinidad did not make representations but recommendations. That is the result of the efforts of this delegation that left these shores on the 17th of June.

So far as obtaining development finance is concerned, they have failed. In fact they ensured their failure before they left here. So far as obtaining any constitutional reforms are concerned, they have failed. Of course, they may be excused for the latter. It was a self-imposed task, but the former was an official task, and I move that this Council express its lack of confidence in and censure of the whole Government for the failure of this whole delegation which left here on the 17th of June, returning here several weeks after with empty hands and so much talk.

Motion to Censure the Government: 23rd October, 1958

Mr. Burnham: (*Replying*)

This Motion has had, during the course of its discussion, certain aspects which, in other circumstances, might have been described as comical if it were not a matter of such grave importance to the people of British Guiana. The Hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Fredericks, in his contribution started the confusion between the opponents of the Motion, which confusion spread as far as the Minister of Trade and Industry, the Minister of Natural Resources and the Financial Secretary, three members of the delegation who have said different things and spoken from entirely different and divergent points of view. These divergences and this confusion are what might have been comical in other circumstances.

For instance, the Hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Fredericks, points to the solid achievement of this delegation. He is at pains to enumerate the facts upon which he bases his statement that their achievements were solid. What are they? The Puerto Rican Government promises to give whatever technical assistance it can! I was not aware of the fact, when the announcement was made in this Council on the 13th June that the delegation was going to seek development finance that part of what it was going to do was to fly a few hundred miles to Puerto Rico to persuade the Puerto Rican Government to loan us experts, or give us assistance. So far as I am aware the Puerto Rican Government has given assistance on previous occasions. Does it take two plane passages to persuade the Puerto Rican Government to accelerate such assistance to British Guiana in the technical and organization fields?

I am sure that the Minister of Trade and Industry, in whose defence the Hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Fredericks, rose so gallantly, is a little embarrassed by the latter's referring to that as one of the achievements of the delegation.

Another achievement to which Mr. Fredericks alludes is the fact that there will be a further meeting between representatives from the Government of British Guiana and representatives of the Colonial Office some time during next year to discuss the Development Plan for 1959. The Hon. Minister of Trade and Industry never referred to that as an achievement at all. The Minister of Trade and Industry referred with understandable disappointment, which I share, to the fact that he could get nothing out of the Colonial Office, or H.M. Secretary of State with respect to the Development Programme subsequent to the year 1959.

Another achievement says Mr. Fredericks, is the fact that the World Bank will be sending down experts to British Guiana to investigate and make recommendations.

I was not aware of the fact that that was the purpose for which the del-

egation left. Perhaps I was in utter darkness whereas Mr. Fredericks was right in the centre of things and perhaps a member of the cabal which planned the delegation.

According to Mr. Fredericks there has been no failure. According to the Minister of Trade and Industry there has been failure; but with skill he says that the failure was not due to any mistakes made by the delegation. Admittedly, the Hon. Minister's attitude, up to a point, is very intelligible, even if one does not agree with him. We however see the confusion of thought that has arisen in the midst of the delegation – we hear the Minister of Trade and Industry saying, “*don't attack us; attack Her Majesty's Government*”. We hear the Financial Secretary speaking ably and with feeling on the concessions made by Her Majesty's Government though the amount is \$1.9 million less than that which the delegation sought from the same H. M. Government. We heard the Financial Secretary say that no discussions took place with respect to the Programme between 1960 and 1965, but one hears the Minister of Trade and Industry stating that there were three phases discussed and that one of these phases referred to 1959-62.

I am not a public financier, no economist, but I would have thought that 1960 to 1962 fell within 1960 to 1965; I must be mistaken, but I see discrepancies and confusion in the ranks of the Government when they ought not to exist.

One wonders at the part played by the Minister of Natural Resources. He speaks diplomatically, convincing neither side, persuading us, he hopes, that H. M. Government was good enough as a result of the persuasive powers of the delegation to make a \$26.4 million loan. The members of the delegation appear not to be *ad idem* – they merely happened to be members of the same delegation because they happened to be Members of the same Government. Certainly there was no coordination – at least between these three Members: I cannot speak of the fourth Member because he has not been present in this Council to give his impressions of the success or otherwise of the delegation's effort.

The Hon. Minister of Natural Resources referred to the fact that Jamaica had only 40 percent of the loan she wanted subscribed on the market. That is what the people on the Corentyne would say is “*a true fact*”, but he does not mention this fact, that the undertakers of the Jamaica loan saw to it that they subscribed the remainder. Could we find an undertaker to see that if we get only 40 percent the other 60 percent would be made up by the undertaker?

The Hon. Member for Central Demerara, for whose contributions I have the greatest respect, puzzled me, but that is not surprising for he was not here when I opened. His point was, not the B. G. Government should be castigated, but Her Majesty's Government. If he had heard me he would have heard that I held no brief, for I was no defender of Her Majesty's Government. I joined with the Minister of Trade and Industry in observing that Her Majesty's Government was apparently forgetful of its moral obliga-

tions and responsibilities so far as the people of British Guiana are concerned. That I conceded very early in the course of my debate, and I did so seriously and honestly.

The point I was making was this, that this delegation either made out a bad case or revealed such confusion as to give Her Majesty's Government an opportunity to appear to be morally blameless. That is what happened, and it is my contention, that nothing that has been said on the other side can possibly convince anyone who approaches this subject with an open mind and passes an objective judgment.

I confess, as the Hon. Minister of Natural Resources remarked, I have no knowledge in the field of economics; perhaps that is the difference between the Members of the Government and the Members of the "*Opposition*"; we know not and know that we know not, but they know not and know not that they know not; they are fools and should be shunned.

We have the pontifical statement from the Minister of Natural Resources that it is all right to have a plan, but no plan can be executed unless you get the money. Is this a Columbus in our age? Is it not equally true, or has he forgotten, that you are not likely to get the money on the external markets unless you have a fool-proof plan? It is true that you may have a plan and get no money, but it is also true that you will get no money if you have no plan, and it was a question in their case of putting the cart before the horse.

Yes, says the Minister of Natural Resources, who has an ability for persuading large crowds, "*guided them to bring the Plan down by one year to four years, to telescope the funds available or those that should have been available for five years into a shorter period of four years.*" Said the Minister of Trade and Industry – may I quote directly: when the delegation sought to persuade the Secretary of State for the Colonies to do what the Minister of Natural Resources succeeded in getting them to do "*we met with a stone wall.*" Now, who is speaking the truth? Who is accurate? If nothing else, this delegation is persuading this Council that the delegation was incompetent, because we have one Minister saying that "*we succeeded in doing this*" and the other Minister saying "*when we attempted to do this we met with a stone wall.*" I am sure one is not lying. One must be inaccurate. I prefer to give the most favourable construction to their remarks.

Let us deal finally with the contribution made by him who is undoubtedly the spokesman on behalf of the Government, the Minister of Trade and Industry. The first thing that strikes one listening to his contribution is that he has no pluck. Says he: "*in May a cable came telling us no funds were available, and at first I was disposed to say, this is the Colonial Office's baby and they should look after it,*" but thinking that people like us would criticise him for not governing, he went and plunged into it, coming out in a worse condition than he was in when he entered the mess. If he as Leader of the Government felt it was the Colonial Office's baby he would have been justified in saying. "*I am not going to discuss this matter at all, as it is your child, abortion or otherwise; you conceived the Plan, you have been executing it, you*

have been financing it, therefore continue to finance it; I am not going to touch it with a ten foot pole and I am not going to jump headlong into it."

But they played into our hands throughout the debate and despite the attempts of Sir Galahad, the Hon. Member, Mr. Tasker, who said that remark was not wise or this remark was not wise, the query remains, "*if the Plan were not their baby, why did they adopt it?*" Are they so generous as to go around adopting other people's children, doubtful or otherwise?

It may be accurate that a cable came in May saying there was no development finance likely to be got by B.G. But it was last year that the Leader said at Bourda Green that he was going on a world tour to get finance. He did not say he would wait on a cable from the Secretary of State for the Colonies. If he found that by May there was no money available he should have considered going back to the people and saying, "*look here, last year I said I was going to get money but I have learnt that there is no money, and therefore I will not go.*" But do not come here and tell us about the cable when even after the cable a delegation was still leaving and through the Government's usual medium of information – the daily press – we learnt that the Government was going to seek a loan of £40 million or \$192 million.

Unless they wanted us to feel that it was their baby, they should have said publicly, "*we understand there is no development capital available for us to get this \$200 million, and we shall have to tie our waists*"; they should have considered the possibility of raising local loans, they should have called upon the patriotism of the country, of those who support the P.P.P. Government. They could have said: "*We shall call upon them to contribute; we shall tax the people more. We shall tax the bachelors as we did last year; we shall tax rum more, as we did last year, to get money, because there is no money on the London market*". They fooled the people and now they come back and say "*do not attack us for deceiving you; do not attack us for our incompetence or for our ineptitude, but attack the British Government.*" I agree, but it is a coalition, and we cannot attack one without attacking the other for allowing itself to be used. The P.P.P. has admitted that it was used by H.M. Government. I do not know if that is so. It says so and I am not prepared to enter into any disputation with those who are in the inner councils and should know.

The Minister of Trade and Industry says that the main purpose of the delegation's visit to London was to discuss ways and means of implementing the existing Development Programme. That is what he says in this Council but, unfortunately for us, we are still literate and the record is not old enough to have been lost because in the statement he read to this Council he said that they went to obtain development finance. Then he says that the discussions were divided into three phases and the second phase was the proposals for an expanded programme for 1959-1962. If your purpose was merely to discuss ways and means for implementing the existing programme, why do you burden us with all this; why do you tell us about what you were doing with respect to 1959-1962?

Obviously – and one does not have to run to read this; it is clear – the

Secretary of State envisaged that all he was inviting the delegation to do was to discuss the existing programme, but the delegation had bigger ideas and I agree with them that they should have had bigger ideas. I agree with them that so terrible are the economic conditions in British Guiana; so grave the problem of unemployment that it befitted and was incumbent upon them to go further than what the Secretary of State envisaged. But if you go further and you fail to get what you want, do not return here, and with your tongue in your cheek say in this Council that you did not go for No. 2 but merely for No. 1.

But there is one thing, on which the spokesman of the Majority Party should be congratulated – that in his speech he has admitted failure, but he says that the failure was not due to any fault of the delegation, but to H.M. Government's hard-heartedness. Those who say that the delegation succeeded had better note that point – that while you are saying that they did not fail they say that what they have got is a flea bite. I agree that you do not have to get an economic expert to tell you that you need internal drainage for the Boerasirie project. But it is quite obvious that the delegation has come back wiser; it has come back with the realization that it is necessary to have experts. It is true, they say, that you do not need an expert to tell you that you need internal drainage, but they have confessed their previous error by announcing, as one of the things they have done, that they may be able to persuade the Indian Government to release Professor Mahalanobis. I understand that he is a statistician rather than an economic planner, so perhaps they had better get another expert, because a statistician is not enough for preparing an economic programme.

Her Majesty's Government was able to say "*Wait until next year; we cannot consider it now. You have no plans.*" The delegation had no plans but I do not for one moment say that they had no figures. I said they had no plans. Of course we know that the P.P.P. is still strong enough in the Legislative Council, with the other Members of the coalition, to throw out this Motion, but it will have served one purpose – the purpose of discussing the achievements and failures of the delegation. But it is a little illogical for the Majority Party to sit there and vote against this Motion when its spokesman says there was a failure because of the attitude of the Colonial Office, or H.M. Government.

They admit there was a failure. We on this side are not interested in dividing the two parties to the failure. If the Majority Party finds that this marriage is too uncomfortable it should do the next best thing – get a divorce, come out of the coalition and continue a militant stand on behalf of the people of British Guiana, criticising here and there. Instead of sitting there and growing grey with the worries of the coalition, continue your agitation where you have some ability, instead of playing at Government, and every time there is any failure, "*passing the buck.*" Little does the Colonial Office and/or H.M. Government know that this restricted Constitution is a godsend to the Majority Party; when they succeed they can strike their

chests and say "*We will go out and distribute land,*" but when they fail they say it is the coalition. Little does the Colonial Office know what a godsend this restricted Constitution is to the incompetent Majority Party?

Now there is the question of the alleged representation made by the two elected Members of the delegation with respect to constitutional reform. With an admirable bit of sophistry the Minister of Trade and Industry said that the representations were made by himself and his colleague because they were the political members of the delegation. I do not know whether the Financial Secretary has a political outlook, but he votes on political questions in this Council. The Minister of Trade and Industry has been unable to tell us why at page 11 of his unusually carefully prepared statement he referred to the fact that he and the Minister of Natural Resources spoke on behalf of the P.P.P. It is there in black and white, and my vision is good. If the P.P.P. wanted to send a separate delegation to London to discuss and make representations with respect to constitutional reform it was free to do so, not using taxpayers' money, and let it be known that they were speaking for the hare-brained P.P.P.

It was my good fortune during the course of this debate to have had the homely reference to the pot reminding the kettle about its blackness and I think that that reference is significant. I wonder how much the Minister of Trade and Industry appreciates that the kettle has a black bottom and so does the pot and the fact that it has a black bottom does not prevent the pot observing that of the kettle. This reference amounts to an admission that my criticisms are accurate, although he suggests that I suffer from the same "*ills*" as he. The Hon. Minister referred to my Motion as dealing with generalisations, but his remarks about generalisations may be regarded as childish and idle. It is my contention with respect to constitutional reform, that they went to the Colonial Office with a lot of airy nonsense and said "*We want the same thing that the P.N.M. got.*" But the P.N.M. have not got it by merely going to the Colonial Office and saying "*We want self-government.*" They got it by resolving the Legislative Council into a Committee to take evidence and they went to the Colonial Office with every detail set out with principles. Principles are accepted and the Colonial Office will always accept the principle of self-government. It is easy for them to say "*Yes, we accept it.*" They have been accepting it since I was a boy and perhaps since my father's boyhood. You have to put them in the position where they have to say "*Yes*" or "*No*" to certain concrete details.

What ideas did you have in mind when you went to London, about the Governor's reserves powers? What ideas did you have about the number of Ministries? What ideas did you have on the question of defence to be put into the Constitutional Instrument? The Colonial Office thinks in terms of Constitutional Instruments. If you intended to raise the question of constitutional reform you should have told us about it. You should have consulted this Council so that it could make you plenipotentiaries. We unanimously agreed in this Council on a particular line of action, but you sneaked

around the corner hoping to get political kudos for the P.P.P.

When we told you that you went up on generalisations you said you wanted the same thing as the P.N.M. But P.N.M. took care in preparing its memorandum and appointed a Committee to frame proposals which it wanted to put into the Constitutional Instrument. If you had plans we would have been the happiest people to hear of them and perhaps we would have saved taxpayers' money, and instead of sending a separate delegation to London, appointed you and your colleague, together with other members of the financial delegation, as our spokesmen for constitutional reform.

Not only has this delegation misled the people, as we now understand, but the Ministers said that they were going to get \$200 million when they knew they could not get 200 cents. They got what the British Government was going to give British Guiana in any case. Do you think the British Government would not have given them that amount? They misled the people. We sympathise with the Financial Secretary.

I am pressing the elected Government, Members who are responsible to the people as I am – the people in the streets who are starving and unemployed. If they want to allow officials who are responsible to the people directly to mislead or embarrass them that is their own business. Not only did they mislead and delude the people as to the possibility, but they came here and misrepresented the facts when they gave us the impression that the first time they thought of going abroad for money was in May, while the Party was telling people since last year about touring the world.

They now know that they must get Professor Mahalanobis from India and experts from the World Bank to come here and investigate matters. They have come back now to burden us with a Constitutional Committee which we all think is a waste of time, but they have jumped the gun and given the Secretary of State an excuse for appointing a Committee. What manner of Government is this? Indeed it has been clearly proved that one's ability on a soap box is no guarantee of one's ability in Government.

Motion on the Protection of Hire Purchasers: 29th October, 1958

Mr. Burnham: I beg to move the Motion standing in my name which reads:

“Be it Resolved:

That this Council recommends to Government the introduction of legislation to provide for the protection of hire-purchasers.”

The Motion which I propose this afternoon is non-political, and I do not anticipate much or any opposition at all. It seeks to recommend to Government that legislation be enacted to give protection to hire-purchasers. I think it was the jurist Maine who said that the trend in modern society is from status to contract, and various legal systems have boasted of the freedom of contract which is permitted, but this freedom of contract has got to be limited because of the complex society in which we live. Legislation in various parts of the world has already imposed certain limitations on this alleged freedom of contract, because in many cases the freedom is theoretical rather than real, and I would submit that in so far as hire-purchases are concerned there is really no freedom of contract as such, and this is one respect in which the alleged freedom of contract should be limited by legislation.

I do not propose to go into any great detail on the law of hire-purchase, but I wish to make just one or two observations on the hardships suffered by hire-purchasers of goods, commodities or articles. Within my personal knowledge there have been cases where an individual who requires a particular article gets it from the owner on a hire-purchase agreement which stipulates that a rental of a particular sum should be paid on a particular day of each month, and any failure on anyone of those occasions to pay the amount set out in the agreement makes the article liable to seizure by the owner, and I have known of some instances where articles costing several hundreds of dollars have been seized though the hirer has paid all but a few dollars of his instalments, but the time for paying one instalment had passed a day or two before. Some of the more rapacious owners or creditors, having seized the particular article or articles, usually insist that the hirer should sign a new hire-purchase agreement, the price of the article is re-fixed, and that price is higher than the arrears, or what was left to be paid on the original price of the article.

There is no freedom of contract in those circumstances, because the hirer invariably is, if not in straightened circumstances, certainly not financially so well placed as to bargain at arm's length with the owner of the particular article or articles. There are other creditors, perhaps less rapacious than those to whom I refer, who, though they may not insist on a new agreement, insist that an exorbitant seizure fee be paid, carrying up thereby the

price at which the article was sold to the hirer.

The law in British Guiana pertaining to hire-purchase agreements is simply the law of contact. Therefore, when a poor hirer in a number of cases appends his signature to a hire-purchase agreement, which is usually involved, he is in many cases signing something as serious as his death warrant.

In the United Kingdom the legislature has seen fit to include certain terms in such hire purchase agreements, and to give a great measure of protection to the hirers and purchasers. The protection that has been given to the hirer has not been at any substantial cost to the owner. There is one particular restriction which occurs to me immediately, that is, the restriction which precludes the owner from seizing the article if one-third of the purchase price is paid without thereby committing a breach of the agreement.

In these circumstances, if one-third or more was paid and the owner seized the article the whole agreement becomes void, and the hirer can sue the owner for the recovery of whatever instalments have been paid prior to the seizure. The owner on the other hand, however, still has his remedy at law and can recover, by an action in court, the amount of money owing by way of arrears. That seems to me a perfectly equitable way to deal with the situation. It offers protection to the hirer and, at the same time, the owner does not lose his rights, for were he to recover the money by way of judgment, he can then proceed by execution against the same article if necessary.

The Hire Purchase Act in the United Kingdom is rather involved and technical and I can see no purpose to be served by attempting to paraphrase it or to offer a précis, but it is significant that other countries like British Honduras and Trinidad have seen fit to adopt certain provisions from the Hire Purchase Act in the United Kingdom. I am not necessarily suggesting that we should copy word for word from the United Kingdom Hire Purchase Act.

For instance, I am not necessarily in agreement with the limitation of £1,000 for bringing a particular agreement within or without the Act, and there are other points which do not earn my full approval. But I shall recommend to Government that, after a careful study of the situation with respect to hire purchase agreements in British Guiana and, perhaps, a study of comparable legislation in other parts of the world, the necessary legislation be introduced here.

At first I was inclined to feel that this is one subject which might easily have been referred to the Law Reform Committee which is proposed. But without casting any aspersions on the Government or on the swiftness with which it works, I feel that the Law Reform Committee will take some time to be set up. I also feel that if this subject is referred to that Committee, it may be quite a long time before its recommendations will be made to the Government and before Government can consider the advisability of en-

acting legislation.

Therefore I shall urge upon Government on its own to put up legislation to protect hire purchasers who, at the moment in many cases, are entirely at the mercy of owners of articles which the hire purchasers seek to acquire. I cannot, at the moment see the necessity for being any longer on my legs, and I commend the motion to this Council.

Mr. Burnham: (*Replying*)

I am happy to see that there is general agreement on the principle of the Motion, and to give reality to that general agreement I am prepared to accept the Amendment proffered by the Hon. Nominated member, Mr. Tasker, and incorporate it in the original Motion with the consent of the Speaker. I may observe, however, that after all a Bill has been brought to this Council, and we will see to it that no hardships are imposed on the owners of articles. The original intention of the Motion was really to protect hire-purchasers who at the moment, from my experience, are the people who suffer, but perhaps Mr. Tasker, with his wider experience and knowledge of these things, does know of instances where the owners suffer. Well, we shall have to compromise and leave the Motion to appear objective and merely for the control of hire-purchases, and see what the Government will do in the legislation which it proposes to this Council.

I am grateful to Mr. Tasker in another respect, for his observation with regard to the £300 limit in the United Kingdom. I did not appreciate that I would have been speaking to persons who were acquainted with the English provisions. Really, the provisions in England are £1,000 in cases of livestock and £300 in other cases. I thought it was sufficient merely to refer to one of the limitations rather to both, and I am very grateful to the Hon. Member for forcing me to be absolutely accurate.

Motion on the Second Reading of the Municipal Councils (Postponement of Elections) Bill: 5th November, 1958

Mr. Burnham: I am sorry I did not have the advantage of hearing the Minister's explanation and remarks on the Second Reading of this Bill, but by and large I am in agreement with the principle and necessity of keeping the Town Councils of Georgetown and New Amsterdam in existence until such time as the Greater Georgetown Plan is implemented – not because it would give a certain number of individuals a longer lease of life on those Councils but I think it is administratively necessary. But what I am somewhat concerned about in this Bill and at the moment I am opposed to, is the principle of nomination in cases of vacancies arising and ties for the Mayoralty during the period for which the life of the Councils is prolonged. If I understand clause 6 of the Bill correctly, it means that where in the past when two Councillors contesting for the seat of the Mayor poll an equal number of votes in the Council the electorate, such as it is, decided the issue, it will now be left to the Governor to nominate a Mayor. This principle of nomination seems to be carried further in clause 4, where it is proposed that in case of a vacancy on the Council there shall be no election, but the vacancy shall be filled by the Governor's nomination.

As I understand it, and as I quite foresee, it is not likely that the elections under the Greater Georgetown Plan will take place before the end of 1959 or early in 1960, and I cannot for the life of me see why it should be necessary to fill vacancies by nominees. The Georgetown Town Council has a live voters list. It is true that that list is not on the basis of adult suffrage, but I am a little surprised that the Majority Party, which has always been the most vehement opponent of nomination to any council, should be prepared to permit a nominee to fill a vacancy for 12 months, I cannot see that the Governor's nomination should be interposed to replace the choice of the electorate if there is a tie for the Mayoralty. I think it is contrary to the democratic principles of which we have heard so much from the Majority Party, and with which I agree. I feel that this Bill, which is intended to prolong the life of the present Council, with which I agree, should be amended to leave to voters the right to decide a tie between two or more contestants for the Mayoralty. Apart from these criticisms the measure seems necessary in all the circumstances.

Motion on the Second Reading of the Shops (Consolidation) Bill: 6th November, 1958

Mr. Burnham: It is a good thing for a Government to show such interest in shop assistants as to introduce this Bill, but at the same time one cannot help remarking on the dilatoriness of this Government which has waited until now, a few weeks before the Christmas Season starts, to rush this Bill through the Council and also on the failure of the Ministry concerned to have circulated the Report of the relevant Committee which I found on my desk only this afternoon, that is after the Second Reading started, and which I know is dated June, 1956. What slumber is this going on in the Ministry of Labour, Health and Housing? This attempt to rush legislation through is unfortunate and is not conducive to a proper study of the proposals and principles with respect to this type of legislation.

What is even more disconcerting is the fact that not only does this Bill come late, but at this late stage on the *ipse dixit* or unofficial advice of one Mr. Hubbard, it is decided to exclude from the definition of shop assistants, delivery boys. Very well, I shall be extremely technical and say no, it has not been decided to exclude delivery boys, but I shall observe that if the amendment proffered by the Minister yesterday is to be adopted, clause 17 will then read thus:

"17. Nothing in this Ordinance shall extend to – (1) the delivery of goods."

I am grateful, but my eyes are quite good.

"Provided that the occupier of any shop shall conform to the requirements of the provisions of paragraphs (b), (c) and (d) of section 11 of this Ordinance."

I cannot for the life of me understand why there should be an exemption with respect to the delivery boys or persons engaged in the delivery of goods; maybe the Minister in her reply will inform us rather more fully as to the purpose of this exemption.

I see here, the only applicable sub-paragraphs or relevant sub-paragraphs of clause 11 are sub-paragraphs (b), (c) and (d): now (d) deals with the keeping of a list, (c) deals with the liability at the request of an Inspector or Assistant Inspector of Labour to produce and (d) reads:

"...shall not permit a shop assistant to work in the shop on any day for more than four and one-half consecutive hours without an interval from work of at least one and one-quarter hours nor for an aggregate period exceeding seven and one-quarter hours on any day or forty and three-quarter hours in any week."

It happens to be a disadvantage to be a lawyer. If a delivery boy is sent

out, is he on the premises? Is he working in the shop? As a lawyer I can easily foresee, in spite of paragraph (d) of clause 11, an employer making sure he does not permit a delivery boy to be employed in his shop for a period exceeding the aggregate stated in paragraph (d), but he can make him work for the shop outside of the shop for a period beyond the stipulated hours. I shall be happy to learn that this possibility does not really exist under the Ordinance, and I shall immediately withdraw my strictures if I am so informed and convinced.

I heard part of the reference which was made to cleaners by the Hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Tasker, with whom I agree absolutely. Cleaning, sweeping, etc. may best be done after closing hours, but I also understand that it is the custom of a number of business houses, firms and employers to have their cleaning staff on duty throughout the normal hours worked by other employees, for instance the shop assistants who serve customers. I had hoped that the definition of "*shop assistant*" would have been so wide as to include cleaners, because there is the possibility of their not coming within that definition, for it may be argued that cleaners are not necessarily employed in connection with the service of customers. Since it is accepted that under normal conditions the cleaning staff does not have to work during the ordinary hours, we may well have cleaners who work after the normal hours, but whose aggregate in any given month does not offend this Ordinance.

I am afraid I cannot share Mr. Tasker's solicitude for those employers who happen to employ cleaning staff. I have not had the advantage of being able to read the Committee's report which was submitted in June, 1956, because I only found it on the table a few minutes ago. I have already referred to the palpable dilatoriness of the Government, but I have had some opportunity to study the Bill and one thing that has struck me is that there are exemptions which can be granted by the Competent Authority in the case of sanitary conveniences, that Competent Authority being the Authority under the Public Health Ordinance and there are exemptions so far as the Police and the Department of Labour are concerned. It is my experience that all of those Departments are overworked. I desire to cast no aspersion whatsoever on the honesty and integrity of the officers of those various Departments but it certainly is not right to put discretion in the hands of those officers who, because of the fact that their Departments are under-staffed, may not on every occasion be able to apply their minds fully to the circumstances and facts to which employees may direct their attention, and in any case the leaving of this discretion with those officers opens them to all types of unfavourable criticisms and suggestions.

If we are going to prescribe certain minima those minima must be prescribed after reference to conditions as they exist. If there is to be any discretion exercised in cases where those minima are not observed I would prefer to see such discretion reposed in the Courts rather than in the breasts of Government officers, for whom, incidentally, I have the highest regard,

but who, after all, cannot bring to bear that judicial and discriminating mind which a Court can, and I think they should be saved from themselves. They would then be able to emulate Caesar's wife and be above suspicion.

I find also that the penalties proposed in this Bill are not sufficiently severe, and when the particular clauses come up for consideration in the Committee stage I shall move the necessary amendments. My stricture with respect to inadequate penalties is not for one moment dictated by an attitude of hostility to the employers, but is motivated from personal knowledge of many malpractices which are the order of the day so far as some employers are concerned, and I can see no reason for any employer or employer's representative objecting to heavier penalties. The penalties in these cases should be a deterrent, I think. If an employer, an individual or a firm, keeps within the law – and I see no provision in the Bill of any penalty for mere negligence – there is no fear. The penalty for murder at the moment is hanging, but I am not worried by the severity of that penalty because I do not propose to commit murder. I do not expect that I shall ever commit murder.

Therefore we can impose much heavier penalties for breaches of this Ordinance without offending the rights of employers. Those who will oppose heavier penalties are the rascals and villains of the peace. I know some of them who put \$11 in a pay packet and get their employees to sign for the receipt of \$13. I know them. I also know those who employ watchmen and describe them as gardeners. We want to get at those people. We do not necessarily want to send them to goal or to mulct them in heavy fines, but if they realise that the game is not worth the candle – as happened during the days of commodity and prices control, when people were sent to goal – they will realize what serious consequences can flow from any deliberate breaches of the provisions of the Ordinance, I feel that we would be carrying further our desire to save the shop assistants from pressure and from unscrupulous employers.

I cannot see any reason for the Government not making peremptory imprisonment the penalty in some cases of a second offence, cancellation of licence or the right to hold a licence. After all, if tomorrow I am found driving my car without the vehicle being covered by third party insurance I am liable to be told that I cannot drive a motor vehicle for 12 months. The same sort of thing should be introduced for employers to recognise with what seriousness the Government and the Legislature view breaches of this law.

As I have said before, employers need not worry. All they will have to do is to observe the provisions of the Ordinance. If the Ordinance says that you must close at a particular time, then close at that time. If the Ordinance says that you must not employ a person for more than a certain number of hours, then for goodness sake do not do it. But if the penalties are small and a business is attractive and lucrative we are encouraging some employers to break the law. If the fine is \$50 and I can get away with this over a

period of time it does not matter; I can afford to go to Court, enter a plea of "guilty" and pay \$50, and still come out on the right side. But if such an employer had to suffer the possibility of going to gaol and the stigma which attaches to a gaol sentence; if he also had to risk the possibility of being put out of business for a few years he would think twice and would become a law-abiding citizen in the circumstances. Many of us do not steal – not because of any high moral sense but because we are afraid of going to gaol, and with a businessman that is important. There are moralists who will not commit an offence or do wrong because they know it is wrong to do wrong or to commit an offence, but there are others who have to be deterred.

There is another criticism of the principle of this Bill which I desire to make. That is with respect to leaving with the respective authorities, especially the Labour Department, the sole power to bring prosecutions under certain provisions of the Ordinance. I am aware that the present provisions carry on the principle which was embodied in Chapter 180, but my criticism is based, first, on the fact that I know that the Department is not as generously staffed as it may be.

Secondly, to leave with that Department the sole right to bring prosecutions is to leave with the Department and its officers the discretion as to whether or not a particular breach in this Bill is serious. I am always loath to transfer the discretion of the court into the hands of Civil Servants, who are a most unfortunate group of people, who can so easily be attacked when they are exercising their discretion albeit *bona fide* in certain matters.

Then, of course, there is the question of whether the Labour Department alone, with the staff at its disposal, can prosecute the cases of all persons who are aggrieved. I should rather suggest that the Labour Department be given the right, since virtually it is a third party, to bring prosecutions without prejudice to the rights of the persons aggrieved or their agents being able to bring prosecutions. I am not seeking to remove from the Labour Department the right to bring prosecutions, but I would like to see the right of the private individuals who are aggrieved protected so that they, too, can bring prosecutions in cases where, perhaps, the Labour Officer may want to exercise his discretion against the prosecution of a proprietor because he feels that there are not sufficient evidence and facts to gain a conviction. That is where the danger lies, because the Labour Department will then be setting itself up as a Law Court.

I feel, therefore, that in the majority of cases, instead of leaving the exclusive right to bring prosecutions with a particular Department or Departments, it would be better to give the various Departments the right to bring prosecutions without prejudice to the right of a private party who is aggrieved to bring prosecutions on his or her own behalf. Those are the major observations and criticisms which I desire to make with respect to the principles of this Bill.

May I repeat that I am very concerned over the haste with which this

piece of legislation is being rushed through this Council. Really, this sudden desire to assist shop assistants before Christmas 1958 should have been displayed earlier. Only last year, Christmas 1957 passed with a Minister in office; January to November the same Minister is still in office, but today we are asked to rush this Bill through!

Definitely I fear that if this bit of legislation is rushed through today – you say that the intention is to protect shop assistants, and I know that you have the votes to carry the Bill through – we will have to amend it very shortly because of the absence of a thorough consideration and study of the Bill. No, I am not going to ask Government to postpone this debate. Earnestly, and for the purpose of record, I am merely saying that they are beginning to run too late. Yes, they are like the hare; they had a whole year and they waited until the month before Christmas to bring this legislation, the implications of which they have admitted in passing they did not recognise until Mr. Hubbard spoke to them. Likewise, as far as I am able to ascertain, some parts of this Bill are at variance with the recommendations of the Committee's Report.

I should have desired to hear the Hon. Minister of Labour, Health and Housing, after an erudite consideration of the Report, telling us why "A" was accepted and "B" rejected. Verily, we should have liked to hear why the Minister rejected certain recommendations of the Committee when the Commissioner of Labour was the Chairman of the Committee. Edifying it would have been to learn certain things, so that we would have been convinced that she had applied her acute mind to all of the problems relating to such legislation. Such, however, is not forthcoming and if it is, I fear things will be altered to indict my character.