

National Assembly Debates

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF
THE SECOND SESSION (2002-2005) OF THE EIGHTH PARLIAMENT
OF GUYANA UNDER THE CONSTITUTION OF THE CO-OPERATIVE
REPUBLIC OF GUYANA HELD IN THE PARLIAMENT CHAMBER
PUBLIC BUILDINGS BRICKDAM, GEORGETOWN

Part I

54TH SITTING

2.00 PM

Tuesday, 8 March 2005

MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (68)

Speaker (1)

The Hon. Hari N. Ramkarran, S. C., M. P. - *Speaker of the National Assembly*

Members of the Government - People's Progressive Party/Civic (34)

The Hon. Samuel A. A. Hinds, M.P.

- *Prime Minister and Minister
of Public Works and Communications*

The Hon. Reepu Daman Persaud, O.R., J.P., M.P.

- *Minister of Parliamentary Affairs*

The Hon. Clement J. Rohee, M.P.

- *Minister of Foreign Trade and
International Co-operation (Absent)*

The Hon. Harripersaud Nokta, M.P.

- *Minister of Local Government
and Regional Development*

The Hon. Gail Teixeira, M.P.

- *Minister of Culture, Youth and
Sport*

The Hon. Dr. Henry B. Jeffrey, M.P.

- *Minister of Education*

The Hon. Saisnarine Kowlessar, M.P.

- *Minister of Finance*

The Hon. Shaik K. Z. Baksh, M.P.

- *Minister of Housing and Water*

The Hon. J. Ronald Gajraj, M.P.

- *Minister of Home Affairs;
Region No. 3-Essequibo Islands/
West Demerara (AOL)*

The Hon. Rev. Dr. Ramnauth D.A. Bisnauth, M.P.

- *Minister of Labour, Human
Services and Social Security*

The Hon. Clinton C. Collymore, M.P.

- *Minister in the Ministry of Local
Government and Regional Development*

The Hon. Satyadeow Sawh, M.P.

- *Minister of Fisheries, Other
Crops and Livestock*

(Region No. 5-Mahaica/Berbice)

*The Hon. S. Rudolph Insanally, O.R., C.C.H., M.P.

- *Minister in the Office of the President
with responsibility for Foreign Affairs*

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- *The Hon Doodnauth Singh, S.C., M.P.** - *Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs (Absent)*
- The Hon. Dr. Jennifer R.A. Westford, M.P. - *Minister of the Public Service*
- The Hon. C. Anthony Xavier, M.P. - *Minister of Transport and Hydraulics*
- The Hon. Bibi S. Shadick, M.P. - *Minister in the Ministry of Labour, Human Services and Social Security (Region No. 3 - Essequibo Islands/ West Demerara)*
- **The Hon. Manzoor Nadir, M.P.** - *Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce*
- The Hon. Carolyn Rodrigues, M.P. - *Minister of Amerindian Affairs*
- The Hon. Dr Leslie S. Ramsammy, M.P. - *Minister of Health*
- Mr S. Feroze Mohamed, M.P. - *Chief Whip*
- Mr Cyril C. Belgrave, C.C.H., J.P., M.P. - *(Region No. 4 - Demerara/Mahaica)*
- Mr. Donald R. Ramotar, M.P.
- Mr Husman Alli, M.P. - *(Region No. 7 - Cuyuni/Mazaruni) (Absent)*
- Mr. Komal Chand, C.C.H., J.P., M.P.
- Mrs Indranie Chandarpal, M.P.
- Mr Bernard C. DeSantos, S.C., M.P. - *(Region No. 4 - Demerara/Mahaica) (Absent)*
- Mrs Shirley V. Edwards, J.P. M.P.
- Mr Odinga N. Lumumba, M.P.
- Mr Heeralall Mohan, J.P., M.P. - *(Region No. 2 - Pomeroon/Supenaam)*
- Mr Ramesh C. Rajkumar, M.P. - *(Region No. 6 - East Berbice/Corentyne)*
- Dr Bheri S. Ramsaran, M.D., M.P.
- Mrs Philomena Sahoye-Shury, C.C.H, J.P.M.P. - *Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Water*
- Mrs Pauline R. Sukhai, M.P. - *(Region No. 1 - Barima/Waini)*
- Mr Zufikar Mustapha, M.P.
- Mr Neendkumar, M.P. - *(Region NO. 4 - Demerara/ Mahaica) (Absent)*
- Mr Khemraj Ramjattan, M.P. - *(Region No. 6 - East Berbice/ Corentyne) (Absent)*

* *Non-Elected Minister*

** *Elected Member from The United Force*

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Members of the Opposition (30)

i) People's National Congress/Reform (27)

- Mr. Robert H. O. Corbin, M.P.
Mr. Winston S. Murray, C.C.H., M.P. - (AOL)
Mrs Clarissa S. Riehl, M.P. - Deputy Speaker of the N.A
Mr. E. Lance Carberry, M.P. - Chief Whip (AOL)
Mr. Ivor Allen, M.P. - (Region No.2-Pomeroon/Supenaam)
Mrs. Deborah J. Backer, M.P.
Mr. Deryck M.A. Bernard, M.P.
Mr. C. Stanley Ming, M.P.
Mr. Raphael G C. Trotman, M.P.
Mr. Vincent L. Alexander, M.P. - (Region No.4-Demerara/Mahaica)
Mr. Basil Williams, M.P.
Mrs. Volda A. Lawrence, M.P. - (Absent)
Dr Dagleish Joseph, M.D., M.P.
Miss Anna Ally, M.P. - (Region No.5-Mahaica/Berbice)
Miss Sandra M. Adams, M.P. - (Region No.10-Upper Demerara Berbice)(AOL)
Mr. Jerome Khan, M.P.
Dr George A. Norton, M.P.
Miss Myrna E. N. Peterkin, M.P. - (Region No.4-Demerara/Mahaica)
Mr. James K. McAllister, M.P. - (Region No.3-Essequibo Islands West Demerara) (Absent)
Dr Carl Max Hanoman, M.P.
Miss Lurlene A. Nestor, M. P. - (Region No.4-Demerara/Mahaica) (AOL)
Mr Abdul Kadir, J.P., M.P. - (Region No.10-Upper Demerara/Berbice)
Mr Ricky Khan, M.P. - (Region No.1-Barima/Waini)
Mrs. Rajcoomarie Bancroft, M.P. - (Region No.8- Potaro/Siparuni)
Mr Nasir Ally, J.P., M.P. - (Region No.6-East Berbice/Corentyne)
Miss Judith David, M.P. - (Region No.7-Cuyuni/Mazaruni)
Miss Genevieve Allen, M.P. - (Region No.4-Demerara/Mahaica)

ii) Guyana Action Party/Working People's Alliance Party (2)

- Mrs Sheila V.A. Holder, M.P.
Mrs Shirley J. Melville, M.P. - (Upper Takutu/Upper Essequibo)

iii) Rise, Organise and Rebuild Party (1)

Mr Ravindra Dev, M.P.

OFFICERS

Ms Lilawtie Coonjah, Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly

Mr Maurice B. Henry, Head Committees Division

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PRAYERS

The Deputy Clerk reads the Prayer.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER

International Women's Day

Honourable Members, I would like to extend my and the National Assembly's warmest greetings and felicitations to women Members of Parliament on International Women's Day. I look forward to the continuing contributions of, and the rich dimensions added by, women Members of Parliament to the deliberations of the National Assembly.

I take this opportunity, on behalf of the National Assembly, to wish all women of Guyana and of the world best wishes on International Women's Day, and great success in the fight against discrimination and violence.

I should like to give special recognition and solidarity to women suffering unspeakable brutalities in conditions of war and hope that the efforts to relieve their and their children's conditions would be met with early success. *[Applause]*

QUESTIONS TO MINISTERS

Honourable Members, there are four questions on the Order Paper by the Honourable Members Mr Raphael Trotman and Mr Khemraj Ramjattan. All these questions are for written replies. These answers have therefore, in accordance with our Standing Orders, been circu-

ted.

SOLID WASTE TRANSFER AND DISPOSAL IN GUYANA

By Mr Raphael Trotman:

Can the Honourable Prime Minister say:

- (i) Whether the Government of Guyana received a written project proposal from MRFG for solid waste transfer and disposal in Guyana?
- (ii) If a written project proposal was received, when will it be provided to Members of the National Assembly?
- (iii) If the Government of Guyana and the MRFG signed a Memorandum of Understanding for the disposal of solid waste in Guyana, and if so, when?

Written replies submitted by the Honourable Prime Minister:

- (i) A written project proposal from MRFG Ltd.' was submitted to the Guyana Office for Investment (GO-Invest).
- (ii) It is not considered useful for this document to be tabled in the National Assembly at this early point in time. We understand that the investors are considering embarking on a feasibility study and an Environment Impact Assessment with the Environmental Protection Agency.
- (iii) The Guyana Office for Investment (Go-Invest), on behalf of the Government of Guyana, signed an initial Memorandum of Understanding with the MRFG Project Management Ltd.' for the disposal of solid waste in Guyana. This document indicates that the Government of

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Guyana is supportive of the establishment of a Material Recovery Facility in Guyana, contingent on MRFG Ltd., fulfilling the conditions of the Environmental Protection Agencies of the United States and Guyana. This Memorandum of Understanding was signed on the 4 December, 2003.

2. BOOSTING OF THE COAST GUARD'S ABILITY

By Mr Raphael Trotman:

What plans, if any, are in place to boost the Coast Guard's ability to perform interdiction duties?

Written reply submitted by the Honourable Prime Minister:

It is quite common that there is caution in disclosing plans for security forces in detail. Honourable Member can be assured that the Government of Guyana will continue the programme of appropriate improvements of the capability of the Coast Guard within our means.

3. ACQUISITION OF PATROL BOATS AND AIRCRAFT FOR THE GUYANA DEFENCE FORCE

By Mr Raphael Trotman:

What plans are there to acquire patrol boats and aircraft for use by the Guyana Defence Force?

Written reply submitted by the Honourable Prime Minister:

It is quite common and quite understandable that there is caution in disclosing plans for defence and security forces in detail. Honourable Member can be assured, however, that the Guyana Defence Force has serviceable patrol boats and aircraft, and that the Government of Guyana would continue its programme of appropriate improvement of the

capability of the Guyana Defence Force within our means.

4 NATIONAL FREQUENCY MANAGEMENT UNIT

By Mr Khemraj Ramjattan:

- (i) Is it true that Mr K Nascimento, CEO of a company, PCCL, is paid in excess of \$237,000.00 per month out of the accounts of the National Frequency Management Unit?
- (ii) What services does Mr K Nascimento, or his company, provide to this Unit as consideration for such a monthly sum?
- (iii) Is this arrangement in any written agreement?
- (iv) How much monies have been so paid to Mr K Nascimento and/or PCCL out of National Frequency Management, and for what period. How long will this continue for?

Written replies submitted by the Honourable Prime Minister:

Mr Christopher A Nascimento, through his company Public Communications Consultants Ltd. was retained by written Contract by the Office of the Prime Minister, on behalf of the Government of Guyana, as Public Communications consultant. His tasks including advising on public communications and public relations matters concerning the telecommunications sector (including the Modernisation of Telecommunications Sector Project) and the broadcasting sector, for which services he was paid a monthly sum of \$237,500 by the National Frequency Management Unit.

Mr Nascimento was first engaged in September, 2003. His Contract expired on January 31, 2005 and consideration is being given to its

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renewal as the Office of the Prime Minister conducts a review of its needs in the areas of public communication.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

MOTION

BUDGET 2005 - MOTION FOR THE APPROVAL OF THE ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURE FOR 2005

The Speaker: Honourable Members, the Assembly will now resolve itself into Committee of Supply to begin consideration the Estimates of Expenditure for 2005.

IN COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

The Chairman: Honourable Member, we are now in the Committee of Supply. We will now proceed, in accordance with the Sub-Committee's Resolution on the Schedule. Members, you may wish to turn to Volume 1.

Pages 28 and 29

AGENCY 01 - OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT, Programme 011 - Head Office Administration

Question is proposed that the sum of \$1,042,236,000 for Agency 01 - Office of the President, Programme 011 - Head Office Administration - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Mr Chairman, could the Honourable Prime Minister indicate to this House at Acct Code 6116 - Contracted Employees, the functions that the ten persons employed as contracted employees are performing?

The Chairman: The Honourable Prime Minister.

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Among the ten, there are two Research Assistants, two Administrative Secretaries, one Permanent Secretary, and one Stock Verifier who had reached the age of retirement and was re-employed.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: A supplementary question, please. Could the Prime Minister indicate whether it was not possible, and I am specifically speaking about the two Research Assistants, for them to be filled from the authorised staff?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: No, Sir, it was not possible.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Mr Chairman, are we going from page 28 and then to page 29, because I had a question for page 29. I honestly thought that the House was still on page 28

The Chairman: I would not go page by page, Honourable Member. As is the normal practice, I will go head by head.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Mr Chairman, your predecessor went page by page, but I understand your ruling, but I just want to know ... [*Interruption*]

The Chairman: Your memory is very ...

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Well, it might be a memory lapse

The Chairman: ... accurate. I have never gone page by page.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: And I would expect that, since it is International Women's Day, this oversight by me would be overlooked. [*Laughter*]

The Chairman: You may proceed with your question, Honourable Member.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Thank you very much. On page 29, Acct Code 6321 - Subsidies and Contributions to Local Organisations, could the Honourable Prime Minister say to the House which local organisations will benefit from the \$615,386,000 subsidies and/or contributions?

The Chairman: What code is that, Honourable Member?

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Acct Code 6321 on page 29.

The Chairman: That is correct.

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: It is listed on 382 for all to see.

The Chairman: Just one minute. [*Pause*]

The Honourable Member, Mr Jerome Khan.

Mr Jerome Khan: Mr Chairman, we are still ...

The Chairman: ... on the first Programme 011.

Mr Jerome Khan: Thank you, Sir. I refer you to page 29, Acct Code 6262, headed Overseas Conferences and Official visits. Sir, as we can see from this Code, there is no historical information for the Actual in 2003; the Budget in 2004; the Revised in 2004, or the proposed Budget in 2005, and therefore, I am asking the Prime Minister if he can explain this, because, if we are to check, and I would not go forward, in other ministries, the same pattern appears, and therefore the House is no wiser as to what are the budgeted amounts, ministry by ministry, for overseas

conferences and official visits.

Hon Reepu Daman Persaud: Mr Chairman, I rose on a point of order, when there is no figure appearing on the Estimates, there is no answer. You do not have to ask anything, you are answering to what have been proposed, in terms of money, and if there is no position, there is no question.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, in relation to Acct Code 6321, and its Annexe on page 382, specifically allocation for the Guyana Information Agency, I wish to be advised - under this allocation for the Guyana Information Agency, is there information on the establishment on that agency, what is the staff complement, and how is the sum provided here would be for staff, as opposed to other charges?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Mr Chairman that information can be provided later in writing.

The Chairman: Are there any other question on Programme 011?

Mr Jerome Khan: Yes, Mr Chairman. I refer to page 29, Acct Code 6272- Electricity Charges, the Actual in 2003 was \$40,100,000; Budget 2004 \$50,810,000 and Revised in 2004 \$37,907,000, but there is a substantial increase budgeted for 2005 for \$63,513,000. Could the Prime Minister provide an explanation as to why this significant increase is budgeted for?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Mr Chairman, the Ministry of Finance, from time to time in the past year or two, made some direct payments to GPL on behalf of various Government ministries and in this year's budget, there is an attempt to avoid that and have an assignment in each agency to remove the need for any make-up from the Ministry of Finance.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Khan.

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Mr Jerome Khan: Yes, Mr Chairman, again on page 29, there is no code here, but there seems to be a subhead to the general head - Other Goods and Services Purchased ...

The Chairman: Which page?

Mr Jerome Khan: Page 29, just below Acct Code 6273, there is a figure here, and I am not sure, so I am asking for guidance from the Honourable Prime Minister, for an explanation, because there is an amount budgeted for of \$106,031,000, and what, exactly, are these other goods and services to be purchased?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: That is a subhead that includes the numbers below it, and in particular, at Acct Code 6284, there is Other for \$90,374,000, which covers, largely, to a great part, the printing of the Official Gazette.

Mr Jerome Khan: Mr Chairman, a supplementary question. Therefore, the increase from the historical record of 2003 of \$47,257,000, are we to understand then that, under the category of Other Acct Code 6284, this increase from \$47,257,000 to a budgeted amount of \$90,374,000 is for the printing of the Official Gazette?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: I am told, also, for Acts and some other official documents - a number of official documents.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Shirley Melville.

Mrs Shirley J Melville: On page 33 ... *[Interruption]*

The Chairman: We are not there as yet, Honourable Member.

The Honourable Member, Mrs Riehl.

Mrs Clarissa S Riehl: Mr Chairman, I wish to ask a question on Acct Code 6302 - Training including Scholarships, there is a big jump there from \$59,514,000 to \$91,999,000. I wish to ask why the jump, and

what nature of scholarships the Office of the President offers? What are these scholarships that come from the Office of the President that warrant \$91,999,000?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: I think this covers mainly the increasing number of students who are studying in Cuba, and their maintenance is provided from this Code.

Mr Jerome Khan: A supplementary question - is that a sure answer, or is that a thinking answer?

The Chairman: That is not a proper question Honourable Member. Honourable Members, are there any other questions on Programme 011?

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Yes, Mr Chairman, on page 29, under Acct Code 6284, is it my understanding that the printing of the Official Gazette is the sole responsibility of the Office of the President?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Yes, it is.

Agency 01 - Office of the President, Programme 011 - Head Office Administration - \$1,042,236,000 agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

Pages 30 and 31

AGENCY 01 - OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT, Programme 012 - Presidential Advisory (Cabinet and Other Services)

Question is proposed that the sum of \$139,418,000 for Agency 01 - Office of the President, Programme 01 2 - Presidential Advisory (Cabinet and Other Services) - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Code 6116 - Contracted Employees - Could the Honourable Prime Minister share with this House what positions these 41 contracted employees hold, or the majority thereof? I would

not expect him to be able to tell us all 41, but if we can have a proper sampling?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Amongst these we have the Head of the Presidential Secretariat, Deputy, Special Projects Officer, Cabinet Monitoring Officers, Protocol Advisers, and a number of Political Advisers.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Under Acct Code 6117, in relation to Acct Code 6116, advise what is the fundamental difference between contracted employees and temporary employees?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6117 is constituted mainly of ministers' household staff.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Kadir.

Mr Abdul Kadir: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6243 - Janitorial and Cleaning Materials - there seems to be a 200 percent increase in the expenditure projected in the revised 2004 to 2005, would the Honourable Prime Minister care to explain if there is a relatively increasing number of employees, or if the number of buildings have been doubled?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: It is an increase in the use of janitorial and cleaning items.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Holder.

Mrs Sheila VA Holder: Would the Honourable Prime Minister look at Acct Code 6261 - Local Travel and Subsistence - there is a significant increase under the 2005 Budget from the revised. Could the Honourable Prime Minister explain the reason for this, Budget 2005 is \$3,750,000 compared to \$551,000?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Mr Chairman, this is to cover the costs of local travel, including interior travel.

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The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Holder.

Mrs Sheila VA Holder: The question was the reason for the significant increase, because there was travel before.

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: I think there would be increased costs and increased service to interior areas.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Khan.

Mr Jerome Khan: Yes, Mr Chairman. I wish to direct your attention to page 33, Acct Code 6281 ... *[Interruption]*

The Chairman: Hold on! Just a minute, we have not reached there as yet.

Mr Jerome Khan: Okay, sir.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, I wish to direct the Honourable Prime Minister's attention to page 31, Acct Code 6281, and I ask what security services are covered under this provision, given the earlier provisions for security services under this Code.

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: This is to pay to provide security services to ministers' residences.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: I wish to go back to Acct Code 6117 - Temporary Employees - to ask the Honourable Prime Minister to give the categories of staff of the ministers' who are employed as temporary employees.

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Housekeepers, senior maids, junior maids, gardeners of various grades.

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The Chairman: Honourable Members, I am not going to ask if you have any other questions. If you have other questions stand up, if you do not stand up, I will put the item.

Agency 01 - Office of the President, Programme 012 - Presidential Advisory (Cabinet and Other Services) - \$129,418,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Pages 32 and 33

AGENCY 01 - OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT, Programme 013 - Amerindian Development

Question is proposed that the sum of \$133,339,000 for Agency 01 - Office of the President, Programme 013 - Amerindian Development - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: The Honourable Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Acct Code 6111 - Administrative - If we look at the Staffing Details, which is really on the next page at the bottom, we see 6111 Authorised for 2004 2; Authorised for 2005 3, but we have filled for 2005 19 and I am wondering if this is a typo. If not, could the Minister please explain?

Hon Carolyn Rodrigues: It is a typographical error.

The Chairman: What is the correct number? Do you have the correct number? That is a supplementary question that I am asking.

Hon Carolyn Rodrigues: It is just about 50.

The Chairman: 15?

Hon Carolyn Rodrigues: 50.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: I do not think that she understands the question.

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Hon Carolyn Rodrigues: The first one 3 persons.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Khan.

Mr Jerome Khan: I now direct attention to page 33, Acct Code 6281 - Security Services - historical information - Actual 2003 \$3,285,000; Revised 2004 \$4,333,000; Projected Budgeted for 2005 \$9,000,000, Sir, I would like to ask, how come we have 100 percent increase for the budgeted for 2005?

Hon Carolyn Rodrigues: We are moving forward, Mr Khan. We have a new building and we have extended the hostel, so we need more security.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Khan

Mr Jerome Khan: A supplementary question is, in this new building, this new facility that the Minister so advise us, are we saying that we need more security for that modern building? I would have thought that we need less security.

The Chairman: I thought the Honourable Member said more security.

Hon Carolyn Rodrigues: We need more security. We do not know how you are going to behave this year.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Thank you very much. Acct Code 6116 - Contracted Employees - 30 persons for this year, as against a full authorised strength of 20 ... *[Interruption]*.

The Chairman: Where you got 20 from? I am seeing 28 there.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: If you look at the Staffing Details, you will see that the total authorised staff is 20.

The Chairman: Okay.

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Mrs Deborah J Backer: ... but that the contracted employees for this year filled was 30, so I am just asking the Honourable Minister, as I have asked the Honourable Prime Minister, if she could help us as to what contracted work these people do?

Hon Carolyn Rodrigues: We have Community Development Officers, mainly in the hinterland.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, on page 33, under the Acct Code 6321 - Subsidies and Contributions to Local Organisations, there is a sum of \$670,000, the Annexe to that on page 382 shows the sum of \$630,000. May the relevant Minister indicate what makes up for the difference in that sum, and could I be advised on the basis for allocation of \$10,000 to the three organisations on the first part; what is the basis, and for what purpose are they given \$10,000? Equally, what is the basis and for what purpose is the North Rupununi Board be given \$600,000?

Hon Carolyn Rodrigues: There is a credit centre in the North Rupununi where small loans are given so that represents that amount. The subventions to local organisations should be based on request for small things that they have to do.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Riehl.

Mrs Clarissa S Riehl: Thank you, sir. I wish to ask on what authority does the Minister increase the staff, because I see Authorised for 2005 20 and filled 88, but she did say, in the earlier Acct Code 6111 - Administrative, that there is a typographical error, and it should really read 3. Well, even if you take that into account, there is an inflated number of persons, and I wonder what is the authority, because this occurs in a lot of ministries. On what authority are they increasing the staff?

The Chairman: The Honourable Minister Rodrigues

Hon Carolyn Rodrigues: It is a typographical error here. The entire

staffing complement should be just over 50.

Mrs Clarissa S Riehl: A supplementary question. The entire staffing should be just over 50, but your Authorised is 20. I just want to know the authority under which you employ persons.

Hon Carolyn Rodrigues: We hired some additional staff. Normally when you need them, you make a request to the Ministry of Finance.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member is asking under what authority you are increasing your staff?

Hon Carolyn Rodrigues: The Public Service Ministry. When we need, we ask for the additional staff.

The Chairman: Are there any other questions? The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, still under the Acct Code 6321, and the specific provision and the specific provision of \$600,000 for the North Rupununi Development Board, could the Honourable Minister please amplify the nature of the scheme that provides for the credits, if it is a revolving scheme or a grant scheme, what is the nature of the Scheme?

Hon Carolyn Rodrigues: Actually, it is a loan scheme.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Melville.

Mrs Shirley J Melville: Mr Chairman, on the same Acct Code 6321, could the Honourable Minister explain if this scheme was on last year? Last year's figure showed \$2.592 and this year \$630,000. Could you kindly explain the difference please?

Hon Carolyn Rodrigues: Part of the \$2.6 million was given to the Bena Hill Institute as a subvention, which is in the North Rupununi, and now this will be transferred to our capital budget.

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Agency 01 - Office of the President, Programme 013 - Amerindian Development - \$133,339,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Pages 34 and 35

AGENCY 01 - OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT, Programme 014 - Public Policy and Planning

Question is proposed that the sum \$629,000 for Agency 01 - Office of the President, Programme 014 - Public Policy - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Could I ask the Honourable Prime Minister to elaborate on page 34 Acct Code 6116 - Contracted Employees - what is the number of contracted employees and the nature of their employment.

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: One person

Mr Vincent L Alexander: What is the nature of the employment?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Administrative support.

Agency 01 - Office of the President, Programme 014 - Public Policy - \$629,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Pages 394 and 395

DIVISION 501 - OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Question is proposed that the sum of \$475,328,000 for Division 501 -

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Office of the President - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Under Division 501 ... *[Interruption]*

The Chairman: I am sorry, which one is that?

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Division 501 ... *[Pause]* Just one moment, Mr Chairman.

The Chairman: You can come back if you cannot find it at the moment, Mr Alexander. Are there any other matters? Honourable Member Mr Khan.

Mr Jerome Khan: I turn to page 394 under Details of Capital Expenditure. I notice under Project Code 34005 - GO-INVEST, there is a budgeted amount of \$3.678 million as part of Renovation of offices and purchase of equipment. I think this has been an ongoing exercise and I am not so sure if an explanation could be given and the question is: can an explanation be given as to the work that has started in 2004. Is this an ongoing exercise or something new.

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Mr Chairman, it is an ongoing exercise.

The Chairman: Did you find your bearings, Mr Alexander? *[Pause]*, I think we can move on?

Division 501 - Office of the President - \$475,328,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Pages 64 and 65

AGENCY 09 - PUBLIC AND POLICE SERVICE COMMISSIONS, Programme 091 - Public and Police Service Commissions

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Question is proposed that the sum of \$38,083,000 for Agency 09 - Public and Police Service Commissions, Programme 091 - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Thank you very much, Mr Chairman. Acct Code 6116 - Contracted Employees - five persons filled for 2005. Could the Minister share with this House the jobs that these contracted employees are carrying out?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Three new employees are on the roll this year, PPO and that level of persons.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Corbin.

Mr Robert HO Corbin: A supplementary question, Sir. Could the Honourable Prime Minister say whether these contracted employees do not fall within the traditional public service, and if so, what are the reasons for contracts being awarded?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: I am advised that one is over 55, and the other two are hired this way so as to attract them to the job.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Corbin.

Mr Robert HO Corbin: A supplementary question sir. Could the Prime Minister say what are the designations of these two posts that you have contracts to attract them to the job?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: One Principal Personnel Officer and two Senior Personnel Officers, people at that level.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Corbin.

Mr Robert HO Corbin: A supplementary question, Sir. Could the Hon Prime Minister inform the House whether this is a new policy direction that Principal Personnel Officers, who are now going to be em-

ployed by contract, is it a general rule or this is specific to the persons concerned?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Mr Chairman, I am told that these people are performing that type of work. I do not think that there is any policy position implied in this.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Vincent Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, a supplementary question. Principal Personnel Officers are on the establishment, how was the determination made that one should have contracted employees? Was the position advertised? Was the Public Service Commission unable to fill it?

The Chairman: Ask one question at a time.

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: I recall I said, one person is over 55, and I am advised that the two other persons are specialists who returned from abroad, with specialist training which was thought was required for this organisation.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, my question was specific. For the Principal Personnel Officer, was the position advertised?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: I understand it was filled directly.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, just for clarity, that means it was not advertised?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Yes.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

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Mrs Deborah J Backer: Mr Chairman, the Principal Personnel Officer, could the Minister indicate, under the Staffing Details on page 65 at the bottom, in which of those categories, between COA 6111 and COA 6115, would that person fall?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: As a contracted employee, that person is not included in those numbers

Mrs Deborah J Backer: No, let me try to be clear.

The Chairman: You asked him about the post, Honourable Member.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Yes, I am saying that if that person was filled from within, where is that person on the authorised strength? Where would the substantive post fall under? Is it COA 6111, or COA 6112, or COA 6113, or COA 6114, or COA 6115?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: I am advised COA 6111

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Dr Joseph.

Dr Dagleish Joseph: Is this person a contracted employee?

The Chairman: Yes. You had a busy morning, Dr Joseph.

The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: A supplementary question to the Honourable Prime Minister. Is it that the Public Service Commission determined that there was no one eligible in the Public Service to fill the position of Principal Personnel Officer that caused a contract to be done?

Hon Samuel Hinds: My understanding is that these were people who were desired in the organisation that were hired directly.

The Chairman: Are there any other questions, Honourable Members? Yes, Mr Alexander?

Mr Vincent L Alexander: A supplementary question, how did the ministry in question determine the list of the desirable persons that were to be hired?

The Chairman: I do not know if that strictly falls under our Estimates, but if you can answer the question, Honourable Prime Minister.

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Mr Chairman, generally my understanding has been that we have here from these listings contracted employees, temporary employees, and that in times when one cannot have a vacancy filled, or a need to fill with some particular persons, he can employ some contracted persons and temporary persons.

Agency 09 -Public and Police Service Commissions, Programme 091 - \$38,083,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Page 396

DIVISION 505 - CONSTITUTIONAL AGENCIES (Project Code 25002) PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

Question is proposed that the sum of \$1,200,000 for Division 505 - Constitutional Agencies (project Code 25002) Public Service Commission - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Mr Corbin?

Mr Robert HO Corbin: Mr Chairman, I noticed, under Project Code entitled 25002 - Parliament Buildings - Am I on the right page, Sir?

The Chairman: Yes.

Mr Robert HO Corbin: There is a sum there for the rehabilitation of buildings and purchase of furniture and equipment. Am I correct?

The Chairman: Yes.

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Mr Chairman ...

The Chairman: Just a minute, are we at Division 505? We will come back to that, Mr Corbin. We are at Project Code 25002 - Public Service Commission. My apologies

Division 505 - Constitutional Agencies (Project Code 25002) Public Service Commission - \$1,200,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Pages 68 and 69

AGENCY 10 - TEACHING SERVICE COMMISSION, Programme 101 - Teaching Service Commission

Question is proposed that the sum of \$43,458,000 for Agency 10 - Teaching Service Commission, Programme 101 - Teaching Service Commission - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Deryck Bernard.

Mr Deryck MA Bernard: Mr Chairman, could I ask the Prime Minister, with regard to Acct Code 6116, what categories of employees are included under that head for the Budget for 2005 and, if possible, what job descriptions are involved?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Mr Chairman, those five include: two drivers, one personal assistant to the chairman, one confidential secretary, and one assistant to the confidential secretary.

Mr Deryck MA Bernard: Listening to that reply, Mr Chairman, could the Prime Minister tell us whether it is now a policy in the Public Service for drivers and personal assistants to be recruited as contracted employees rather than through the relevant Public Service Commission?

The Chairman: The Honourable Prime Minister.

Hon Samueal AA Hinds: I certainly could not say that it is policy. There is a number of people who were employed as drivers directly, and some who were employed on contract.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Deryck Bernard.

Mr Deryck MA Bernard: Mr Chairman, could I go to Acct Code 6261 - Local Travel and Subsistence, and to ask whether he could give us an idea of what work programme of the Teaching Service Commission necessitates travel grant of \$2,515,000?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Teaching Service Commission intends to visit all across the country. I have seen the work programme. I do not have it here. I can send you a copy of the work programme.

Mr Deryck MA Bernard: I appreciate the Prime Minister's generosity in the matter. Could I ask one more question? On Project Code 6291 is a little sum for National and other events, and I want to know what national event the Teaching Service Commission is organising, or funding?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: That small sum of \$40,000 covers some participation in Education Week and Education month.

The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander

Mr Vincent A Alexander: Mr Chairman, under Acct Code 6302, there is a sum provided for training, including scholarships. Could the Honourable Minister indicate who are the intended beneficiaries of the training and/or scholarships?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Mr Chairman, the sum of \$100,000 is a provision for local training, in house and any other appropriate local training. It is very small

Agency 10 - Teaching Service Commission, Programme 101 - Teaching Service Commission - \$43,458,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Page396

DIVISION 505 - CONSTITUTIONAL AGENCIES (Project Code 25008) - TEACHING SERVICE COMMISSION

Question is proposed that the sum of \$2,594,000 for Constitutional Agencies (Project Code 25008) Teaching Service Commission - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, could I ask the Honourable Prime Minister to indicate on page 73, Acct Code 6302 - Training including scholarships ... *[Interruption]*

The Chairman: We are not on that page. Are you at page 396?

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Sorry, Mr Chairman

Division 505 - Constitutional Agencies (Project Code 25008) - Teaching Service Commission - \$2,594,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Pages 72 and 73

AGENCY 11 - ELECTIONS COMMISSION, Programme 111 - Elections Commission

Question is proposed that the sum of \$647,598,000 for Agency 11 - Elections Commission, Programme 111 - Elections Commission - stands

part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, could I ask the Honourable Minister to indicate on page 73, Acct Code 6302, who are the intended beneficiaries of the provision of \$60,000,000?

The Chairman: Could you please repeat the question, Honourable Member.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Page 73, Acct Code 6302, who are the intended beneficiaries of this provision of \$60,000,000?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Mr Chairman, could ask that this be deferred to a bit later - The Elections Service Commission?

The Chairman: That question!

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: This Agency, could I ask that Agency 11 be deferred to a bit later?

The Chairman: Is there any objection?

[Deferred]

Honourable Members, let us move to the next Agency.

Pages 220 and 221

AGENCY 53 - GUYANA DEFENCE FORCE, Programme 531 - Defence Headquarters

Question is proposed that the sum of \$2,945,571,000 for Agency 53 - Guyana Defence Force, Programme 531 - Defence Headquarters - stands part of the Estimates.

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The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Acct Code 6294 - Can the Honourable Prime Minister share with the House what the \$210,791,000 is for?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Acct Code 6294 covers clothing and kits for the Army, and also accommodation.

Agency 53 - Guyana Defence Force, Programme 531 - Defence Headquarters - \$2,945,571,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Page 394

DIVISION 501 - GUYANA DEFENCE FORCE (Project Code 12001)

Question is proposed that the sum of \$39,932,000 for Division 501 - Guyana Defence Force (Project Code 12001) - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Corbin.

Mr Robert HO Corbin: Mr Chairman, could the Honourable Minister indicate what percentage this sum represents as it relates to the original request from the Guyana Defence Force to carry out their constitutional duties?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: I think the number is known to the Leader of the Opposition. What was the question?

Mr Robert HO Corbin: I am afraid I am not privy to such information, but I am asking a simple question, the Army have made certain requests ... *[Interruption]*

The Speaker: How much was asked for?

Mr Robert HO Corbin: I think that was what was agreed on by the Government. I am trying to see if they can carry out their duties properly with what has been given to them. That is why I want to know what this represents. Is it ten percent of what they asked for, fifty percent, or what?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: At some stage of the Budget preparation, I am told that they were looking to get \$300,000,000 on this head

The Chairman: Yes, Mr Khan.

Mr Jerome Khan: Mr Chairman, what page is it?

The Chairman: Page 394, Project Code 12001.

Mr Jerome Khan: I am sorry, Sir. I am ahead of the pages.

Division 501 - Guyana Defence Force (Project Code 12001) - \$39,932,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: May I ask a question? I noticed that there were some other capital here against the GDF. Do we take them now, or were they taken already?

The Chairman: Honourable Prime Minister I have only Project Code 12001. I presume they will come later, but I do not know under what head.

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: I do not think so, Sir.

The Chairman: GDF would not normally come under another head.

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: I think this is it. I think they go all the way to Project Code 28007.

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The Chairman: I can see that there are several other items marked GDF, but they are not under this. I think the Minister of Finance should be able to answer that. They are not here.

Hon Samuel Hinds: Okay.

Pages 234 and 235

AGENCY 57 - OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN, Programme 571 - Ombudsman

Question is proposed that the sum of \$13,076,000 for Agency 57 - Office of the Ombudsman, Programme 571 - Ombudsman - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Honourable Member, Mrs Backer

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6116, one contracted employee, could the Honourable Minister indicate to the House the designation of that contracted employee?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Secretary to the Ombudsman.

The Chairman: Acct Code 6116 has employees there.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Yes, but the filled strength is one. I am looking down at the bottom of page 235, and there is one there.

The Chairman: Okay.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: My next question: Acct Code 6117 - Temporary Employee - again one filled for 2005. Could the Honourable Prime Minister please indicate to us the designation of that person?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: An Office Assistant and a cleaner.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Mr Chairman, a supplementary question to Acct Code 6116, to the Honourable Prime Minister, was is not possible to fill the position of Secretary to the Ombudsman under Acct Code 6114, which is the Clerical and Office Support for an authorised strength of five, but there is only three filled? Was it not possible to get that employee from there?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: No.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Could the Honourable Prime Minister share with this House why it was not possible?

The Chairman: Is there an answer to the question?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: The Ombudsman was granted the opportunity to choose his Confidential Secretary.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: One page 234 Acct Code 6011 - Statutory Wages and Salaries - if that head provides the salary for the Ombudsman.

Honourable Samuel AA Hinds: Yes.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: A supplementary question, is the Office filled at present?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: No.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: We do not see anywhere clear, at this point in time...

The Chairman: He said no.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: ... in Guyana ...

The Chairman: The answer is no, Honourable Member

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Mr Vincent L Alexander: ... there is no Ombudsman?

The Chairman: Honourable Member, you do not need to make a speech. The answer is no.

Honourable Member, Mr Kadir

Mr Abdul Kadir: Mr Chairman, will the Prime Minister care to explain Acct Code 6322? Which are these international organisations that will benefit from the nation's subsidies for \$165,000?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: An International Ombudsman Organisation in Canada.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, in view that there is no Ombudsman under Acct Codes 6011, 6111, 6113 and 6114 ... *[Interruption]*

The Chairman: You are going to confuse us, Honourable Member. I do not think that we can follow all those items at one time.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, under Acct Code 6011, is there an intention in the course of this fiscal year to appoint an Ombudsman.

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Yes.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Going back to Acct Code 6116 - Contracted Employees - if we have been told by the Honourable Prime Minister that there is no Ombudsman, when did he choose his Secretary? He is not there, so when did he choose his secretary?

Samuel AA Hinds: In June 2004.

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The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander

Mr Vincent L Alexander: A supplementary question, under the provisions of the Secretary of the Ombudsman, ... *[Interruption]*

The Chairman: Sorry, I did not hear you. Mr Corbin is disturbing me. *[Laughter]* Yes, Mr Alexander?

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Under the provisions for the Secretary of the Ombudsman, for what purposes has this person been paid?

The Chairman: Can you answer that, Honourable Prime Minister? I do not know if it is a question.

Hon Samuel A Hinds: The organisation continues until a new Ombudsman is appointed.

Agency 57 - Office of the Ombudsman, Programme 571 - Ombudsman - \$13,076,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Pages 238 and 239

**AGENCY 58 - PUBLIC SERVICE APPELLATE TRIBUNAL,
Programme 581 - Public Service Appellate Tribunal**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$18,347,000 for Agency 58 - Public Service Appellate Tribunal, Programme 581 - Public Service Appellate Tribunal - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Mr Chairman, Acct Code 6116 - Contracted Employees - We see that there are two contracted employees, and I would ask my usual question, what are the functions of these two contracted persons?

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The Chairman: Could you remind me what item that is, Honourable Member?

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Acct Code 6116 ... and if you look at the staffing details ...

The Chairman: Thank you.

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Contracted Employees - one is the Registrar and one is the Confidential Secretary.

The Chairman: Hon Member Mrs Backer

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Could the Honourable Prime Minister indicate whether the post of Registrar is included in the authorised staffing, which is eight.

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Yes.

The Chairman: Mr Corbin please. I will get back to Mrs Backer if necessary.

Mr Robert HO Corbin: Would the Honourable Prime Minister indicate whether there is indeed a Public Service Tribunal in existence?

The Chairman: The Honourable Prime Minister

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Yes, the term expired in February. It is being re-staffed, or re-appointed. Arrangements are being made to reconstitute ...

Mr Robert HO Corbin: I am not sure that I understand. Is there one or not?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: I would say yes.

Mr Robert HO Corbin: Could I ask the Honourable Prime Minister who are these persons, and how they were appointed? If the term of

office is at an end. I do not know how and when they were appointed.

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Arrangements are being made to reconstitute the tribunal.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Under Acct Code 6293, page 239, a provision of \$90,000 for refreshments for the Public Service Appellate Tribunal, I would like to ask on what occasions they utilised this head.

The Chairman: The question has stumped the Prime Minister.

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: I do not know whether the Honourable Member really wants an answer to that question. I think he is looking forward for five o'clock to enjoy some refreshments.

The Chairman: The question was asked. Answer it. If you can answer it, then answer it. If you cannot . . . Is there an answer?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: I am advised that at constituted meetings of the Tribunal refreshments are served.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Arriving out of that answer from the Honourable Prime Minister, I noted the budget for 2004, this is for the same Acct Code 6293 - Refreshment and Meals, it was \$80,000, and it was revised to \$56,000. It is now an anticipation that this Appellate Tribunal will be meeting regularly. It means \$18,000 per person, because only five is the filled staff.

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Yes.

Agency 58 - Public Service Appellate Tribunal, Programme 581 - Public Service Appellate Tribunal - \$18,347,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Page 396

DIVISION 505 - CONSTITUTIONAL AGENCIES (Project Code 25009) - PUBLIC SERVICE APPELLATE TRIBUNAL

Question is proposed that the sum of \$2,000,000 for Division 505 - Constitutional Agencies (Project Code 25009) - Public Service Appellate Tribunal - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Khan.

Mr Jerome Khan: Mr Chairman, I am looking at page 396, Project Code 25003 ... *[Interruption]*

The Chairman: We are dealing with 25009 only.

Mr Jerome Khan: I am just trying to keep ahead of the game, Sir.

Division 505 - Constitutional Agencies (Project Code 25009) - Public Service Appellate Tribunal - \$2,000,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Pages 38 and 39

AGENCY 02 - OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER, Programme 021 - Prime Minister's Secretariat

Question is proposed that the sum of \$48,229,000 for Agency 02 - Office of the Prime Minister, Programme 021 - Prime Minister's Secretariat - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Project Code 6116 - Contracted Employ-

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ees - Eight, could the Honourable Prime Minister share with this House the functions performed by these contracted **employees**.

Hon Samuel Hinds: They include four political assistants, one supervisor of household at the Prime Minister's residence, one secretary/typist at the Office of the Prime Minister.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander

Mr Vincent L Alexander: A supplementary question, what is the nature of the work of a political assistant in this office?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Some are in their offices and they hear people's complaints and they bring them to me, and they also advise me on the various things that are happening. Two are out of Georgetown.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Holder

Mrs Sheila VA Holder: Mr Chairman, would the Honourable Prime Minister indicate ... *[Interruption]*

The Chairman: I cannot hear you too well, Mrs Holder.

Mrs Sheila VA Holder: Will the Honourable Prime Minister indicate, at Acct Code 6115, what semi- skilled are specific to the 19 Operatives and Unskilled persons in his office?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: This group includes cooks, maids, gardeners, janitors, cleaners.

Agency 02 - Office of the Prime Minister, Programme 021 - Prime Minister's Secretariat - \$48, 229,000 - agreed to, 0and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

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AGENCY 31 - MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS AND COMMUNICATIONS, Programme 311 - Ministry Administration

Question is proposed that the sum of \$227,373,000 for Agency 31 - Ministry of Public Works and Communications, programme 311 - Ministry Administration - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Honourable Member Mr Kadir.

Mr Abdul Kadir: Could the Minister of Works kindly state which international organisation would have dropped off from the subsidies from 2004 to 2005.

The Chairman: Which Item, Honourable Member?

Mr Abdul Kadir: Project Code 6322. There is a reduction, so my question is, which international organisation would have had their subsidies amputated?

Hon C Anthony Xavier: Mr Chairman, first of all the Cheddi Jagan International Airport and the Civil Aviation Authority are no longer receiving subventions, and the allocation for contribution for international organisation of \$65 million in 2004, and the reason for the reduction, was due to the payment in arrears in 2004 to RASUS and REDIG.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Acct Code 6116 - Contracted Employees - two persons...

Hon C Anthony Xavier: Permanent Secretary and a Transport Foreman, for your information Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: I have not finished my question.

The Chairman: Yes, Honourable Member, please finish.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Could the Honourable Minister please indi-

cate ... I notice in last year, we had one person and it was \$1.4 million, now we have two people and we have a 400 percent increase. One would have thought that the increase should be around perhaps a 200 percent. Could the Minister indicate who are the two persons and what is each of them annual salary?

Hon C Anthony Xavier: Mr Chairman, in 2004, the Permanent Secretary, when he came back his salary was paid for by the Ministry of Finance, this increase is to take care of his salary.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: A supplementary question, during the absence of the Permanent Secretary, did someone act, and if that was the case, under which head was the person paid?

Hon C Anthony Xavier: The Deputy Permanent Secretary acted in place of the Permanent Secretary and was paid under her substantive head.

Agency 31 - Ministry of Public Works and Communications, Programme 311 - Ministry Administration - \$227, 373,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Pages 122 and 123

AGENCY 31 - MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS AND COMMUNICATIONS, Programme 312 - Public Works

Question is proposed that the sum of \$214,359,000 for Agency 31 - Ministry of Public Works and Communications, Programme 312 - Public Works - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Bernard.

Mr Deryck MA Bernard: Mr Chairman, I note that, under Acct

Code 6112 - Senior Technical - the Ministry is unable to fill the vacancies, and this includes such important elements as research, I presume the soil's lab comes under this head; I presume the electrical inspection might come under this head; perhaps some of the road programme management comes under this head. I want to ask the Minister in view of the shortage of people under this head, his ability to fill these positions, whether he is in fact taking steps ... What steps is he taking to find technical people to fill these important slots under Senior Technical?

Hon C Anthony Xavier: A lot of persons has reached retirement age and has been sent off. What we are trying to do now is to start advertising so that these technical posts will be filled this year.

Mr Deryck MA Bernard: Arising out of that reply, I wonder whether the Minister might not consider that this might be a more appropriate place to hire contracted employees to fill key positions, rather than what appears to be more random. This is an appropriate place to use the device of contracting employees to fill important technical vacancies.

Hon C Anthony Xavier: Mr Chairman, that could be taken into consideration.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Corbin.

Mr Robert HO Corbin: Mr Chairman, if one looks at COA 6112 - Senior Technical - under the Staffing Details, one notes that the authorised establishment in 2004 was 35, but in 2005 it has been reduced to 13. Under COA 6113 the authorised establishment in 2004 was 74. Now that authorised establishment has been reduced to 32 in 2005, less than half. I am wondering whether the Minister can offer an explanation or whether this means that the Ministry will no longer be undertaking no technical work, or that this work has been contracted out. Some explanation is necessary with the massive programme that we are told that the Ministry will be carrying out this year, and the amount of expenditure that has been approved for the Ministry of Works.

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Hon C Anthony Xavier: Mr Chairman, due to the reform process, there has been a rationalisation in all Ministries, including the Ministry of Public Works.

Agency 31 - Ministry of Public Works and Communications, Programme 312 - Public Works - \$214,359,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Pages 124 and 125

AGENCY 31- MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS AND COMMUNICATIONS, Programme 313 - Communications and Transport

Question is proposed that the sum of \$36,030,000 for the Agency 31 - Ministry of Public Works and Communications, Programme 313 - Communications and Transport - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Bernard.

Mr Deryck MA Bernard: I would like to ask, under Programme 313, this agency includes transportation planning, and presumably the staff comes under Senior Technical, I would like to ask what is the establishment for professional transportation planners, how many actually exist, and what plans he has to strengthen this important area of infrastructure management?

Hon C Anthony Xavier: As said in my budget presentation, the Central Transport Planning Unit has been established from January 1 of this year, and this has now been submerged into the Work Services Group of the Ministry of Public Works, where it is gaining from all the different personnels, so that there is no overlapping in programmes and so on.

Mr Deryck MA Bernard: Supplementary question: could I ask the Minister if he would be kind to let me have a document outlining this restructuring so that we can understand how this new planning struc-

ture operates?

Hon C Anthony Xavier: I will be more than happy to do that, Sir.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Allen.

Mr Ivor Allen: Mr Chairman, Page 125, Acct Code 6271 - Telephone Charges - We note that in 2004, Revised to \$130,000 and Budgeted for 2005 \$230,000, are we to assume that there will be a substantial increase in telephone charges, or is it that there is going to be more calls made?

Hon C Anthony Xavier: Obviously with increased usage the telephone bills will go up. It is a case where there will be so many works going on that definitely we will be using the telephone more.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Kadir.

Mr Abdul Kadir: Mr Chairman, under the Staffing Details, I noticed that there is a tremendously shocking reduction, in terms of manpower authorisation from 2004 to 2005, with the ambitious programme that this Department Communication and Transport, I guess this includes road buildings. Can this Minister explain how will this programme materialize?

Hon C Anthony Xavier: Mr Chairman, the Guyana Civil Aviation Authority, and the Cheddi Jagan International Airport, both were transferred out of the Ministry of Works and they are now semi-autonomous agencies. Therefore most of the employees have gone there. That is why there is that big reduction from 2003 to now.

Agency 31 - Ministry of Public Works and Communications, Programme 313 - Communications and Transport - \$36,030,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

DIVISION 517 - MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS AND COMMUNICATIONS - AIR TRANSPORT REFORM PROGRAMME (Project Codes 16001, 16002 and 16003)

Question is proposed that the sum of \$482,832,000 for Division 517 - Ministry of Public Works and Communications - Air Transport Reform Programme (Project Codes 16001, 16002 and 16003) - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Melville.

Mrs Shirley J Melville: Under Project Code 16002, could the Honourable Minister explain which airstrips in the hinterland will be done?

Hon C Antony Xavier: Project Code 16002 - The Rehabilitation of Annai, Orinduik and Kaituma airstrips.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Melville.

Mrs Shirley J Melville: Could the Honourable Minister explain if the Annai Airstrip is to be extended? It was renovated and it is almost half the size it was originally. So are we going to be continuing on this?

Hon C Anthony Xavier: I cannot say whether or not the Annai Airstrip would be extended. Right now planes are landing at Annai quite comfortably and safely. I do not know that there is a request to have it extended, so I cannot really and truly tell you, but I can look at it and give you an answer later.

Mrs Shirley J Melville: May I continue on the same?

The Chairman: You may, Honourable Member.

Mrs Shirley J Melville: Honourable Minister, from approximately 4,000 feet, it is now approximately 2,000 feet, so I think we need to look at it.

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Hon C Anthony Xavier: In response to the Honourable Member Melville, it was reduced from 4,000 feet to 2,000 feet? It is not reduced, we have rehabilitated the depressed area of the airstrip.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Mr Chairman, the same Project Code 16002 - Rehabilitation of Airstrips - the Honourable Minister indicated Orinduik, Port Kaituma and Annai, but when you look at page 92 Volume 2, the Project Profile, it only speaks about the Rehabilitation of runways at Orinduik and Port Kaituma, so I wonder if Annai was inadvertently omitted.

Hon C Anthony Xavier: It was. This is work that is ongoing.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: It is not included, and it ought not to have been.

Hon C Anthony Xavier: That amount of money is the retention money that is in the Budget this year. The Rehabilitation works is in the Legend, but the balance is the retention money for the work that was already completed.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: A supplementary question, doesn't Port Kaituma also has work ongoing?

Hon C Anthony Xavier: Yes.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Holder

Mrs Sheila VA Holder: Project Code 16003 - Airport Security - indicate, with the increase allocated for airport security, what is the nature of this additional security?

Hon C Anthony Xavier: This is under an IDB Programme - the MIF

Programme of US \$500,000, and this component is for the regulatory strengthening, administrative services and training.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Corbin.

Mr Robert HO Corbin: I would like to go back to Project Code 16002, but I am a bit befuddled by the Honourable Minister. He is normally very clear. I was not sure that I understood the answer to the question of Mrs Backer, about this retention. Is he saying that no work will be done at Annai, but money is in the vote for retention, or is work going to be done, because I am not sure what the answer means. I just want to be clear so I would understand what is being done.

Hon C Anthony Xavier: Mr Chairman, this work has been completed and we are in the defects maintenance period. I am sorry about the befuddle.

Division 517 - Ministry of Public Works and Communications - Air Transport Reform Programme (Project Codes 16001, 16002 and 16003) - \$482,832,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Page 407

DIVISION 519 - MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS AND COMMUNICATIONS - SEA DEFENCES

Question is proposed that the sum of \$1,775,000,000 for Division 519 - Ministry of Public Works and Communications - Sea Defences (Project Codes 15001, 15004, 15005 and 47001) - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Mr Kadir, do you have anything under this Division?

Mr Abdul Kadir: No, Mr Chairman, but I was going back, but we have passed that already.

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Division 519 - Ministry of Public Works and Communications - Sea Defences (Project Codes 15001, 15004, 15005 and 47001) - \$1,775,000,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Page 408

DIVISION 520 - MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Question is proposed that the sum of \$1,339,100,000 for Division 520 - Ministry of Public Works and Communications - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Yes, Mr Corbin.

Mr Robert HO Corbin: Mr Chairman, I am a little slow. Project Code 16003 - could the Minister kindly indicate what stellingings, and where will be rehabilitated this year by this amount of \$50,000,000.

Hon C Anthony Xavier: Rehabilitation of Stanleytown, Rosignol, New Amsterdam and Wakenaam stellingings.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Project Code 27003 - Reconditioning of Ferry Vessels - and the Legend says *Docking of and repairs to MV Malali and MV Torani*. I am just asking the Minister if he can give this House an idea of how long the vessels will be docked? Are these major repairs, or something that will take a few weeks?

Hon C Anthony Xavier: Normally these vessels take about four to six weeks each.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Corbin.

Mr Robert HO Corbin: Project Code 26003. I note this is a sum being provided by the IDB. Is the Minister in a position to make public the schedule of the communities that are likely to benefit from this electrification in unserved areas? Is it in a document that can be made public and, if so, what are these areas?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Mr Chairman, there is a document that can be made public.

Mr Robert HO Corbin: How many areas?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: It is a phased programme, but we can make available the whole document. It is a phased programme covering about 200 different areas around the country over four years. We have already published, in the newspapers, areas which are to be addressed in Phase I.

Mr Robert HO Corbin: A supplementary question, Sir. Is this an official publication in the newspapers? Because I would really like to get an official document from the Honourable member so we could know what will be done officially this year. If there is such a document available, because the newspapers do not always report accurately.

The Chairman: Is it a news item, or an official advertisement?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: It was an advertisement by GPL, inviting people to take note in these areas.

Mr Robert HO Corbin: I cannot be guided by that.

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: I will make available a document listing the areas that are to be addressed in the first phase.

Mr Robert HO Corbin: Thank you.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Project Code 14010 - Dredging - Equip-

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ment - I see that \$80,000,000 has been budgeted, and my question is, what portion of this \$80,000,000 will be used for dredging the three main ships' channels of the Berbice, Demerara and Essequibo Rivers?

Hon C Anthony Xavier: Mr Chairman, \$50,000,000

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, a supplementary question, The Project Code provides for dredging - equipment; the Legend provides for Rehabilitation of vessels, I would like to inquire which vessels are we referring to here?

Hon C Anthony Xavier: Motor Tug Setter and the dredge Stephen.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Corbin.

Hon Robert HO Corbin: Project Code 12001 - Government Buildings - There is a sum there for \$153,000,000. It is not rehabilitation but construction, so I wonder whether the Honourable Minister would indicate what new buildings will be constructed as Government buildings this year.

The Chairman: The Honourable Minister.

Hon C Anthony Xavier: The construction of a multi-complex building at Lethem.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer:

Mrs Deborah J Backer: No please, Mr Chairman.

Division 520 - Ministry of Public Works and Communications - \$1,339,100,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Pages 433 and 434

DIVISION 548 - MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS AND COMMUNICATIONS - BRIDGES/ROADS

Question is proposed that the sum of \$3,142,000,000 for Division 548 - Ministry of Public Works and Communications - Bridges/Roads - stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Mr Chairman, Project Code 12001 - BRIDGES Berbice River Crossing - I just see a sum of \$26,000,000 which, according to the Legend, is provision for design and environmental study. I am just asking the Honourable Minister if here, or in his budget, there is provision for the actual start of the construction of the Berbice Bridge.

Hon C Anthony Xavier: No.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Holder.

Mrs Sheila VA Holder: A supplementary question, will the Honourable Minister indicate whether or not the study has been completed?

Hon C Anthony Xavier: The feasibility study has been completed. What is currently going on are the environmental studies, et cetera.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Ravindra Dev.

Mr Ravindra Dev: Project Code 12005 - Could the Minister say which section. Is it West Demerara, West Bank, or West Coast will be dealt with under this project?

Hon C Anthony Xavier: May I answer?

Mr Robert HO Corbin: I want to ask on the same head, so maybe the Member may want to answer at the same time.

The Chairman: You may proceed.

Mr Robert HO Corbin: What I would like to know, when the Minister is answering the question to this same head, whether these roads that are listed here are roads which were requested by the Regional Democratic Councils in the respective areas, and whether they had requested these provisions in their estimates.

Hon C Anthony Xavier: This amount here is specifically for the four-lane highway, West Demerara Public Road, and also the four-lane from the Demerara Harbour Bridge to Ruimveldt.

The Chairman: Do you have an answer to Mr Corbin's question?

Hon C Anthony Xavier: That answers the question.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Ravindra Dev.

Mr Ravindra Dev: This was the ambiguity I was looking to have clarified, because the West Bank Road, construction has proceeded far into it, and I am still to understand exactly where the four-lane portion will be put, because, as it stands right now, there is no space for any four-lane to be placed there.

Hon C Anthony Xavier: Mr Chairman, the four-lane highway is from the Demerara Harbour Bridge to Ruimveldt on the East Bank Public Road.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member is asking about West Demerara ...

Mr Ravindra Dev: ... Project Code 12005.

Hon C Anthony Xavier: We are just widening the two existing lanes.

Mr Ravindra Dev: This is what I am just trying to clarify - where this four-lane will be placed.

The Chairman: I think the Honourable Member is saying that, in West Demerara, there is a four-lane road which is listed here. He is asking which road

are you talking about, a road in West Coast or West Bank, where?

Hon C Anthony Xavier: It is West Demerara/Four Lane Road. It is not West Demerara four-lane road, it is West Demerara/Four Lane Road, Honourable Member Dev.

Mr Ravindra Dev: I am even more confused, Mr Chairman. If it is West Demerara/Four Lane Road, is it West Bank Demerara, or West Coast Demerara? The West Bank Demerara Road is under construction. I want to know if that portion will be four-lane or, if not, the West Coast Demerara could possibly take a four-lane. So I am asking therefore, will construction now begin to put a proper four-lane highway on West Coast Demerara.

Hon C Anthony Xavier: Not at this time, Mr Chairman.

The Chairman: Just one moment, Members. I have Miss Peterkin first, Mr Corbin, and then Mrs Backer.

Miss Myrna EN Peterkin: Mr Chairman, I would like to ask the Minister ... I see here Road Maintenance System ... *[Interruption]*

The Chairman: What Item, Honourable Member?

Miss Myrna EN Peterkin: Sorry, it is Project Code 12001, under road maintenance, if the railway embankment is a part of this maintenance?

Hon C Anthony Xavier: The railway embankment is not part of that programme.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Corbin.

Mr Robert HO Corbin: I would like to ask the Honourable Minister, and I am going to ask him a similar question a little later on the same head. The Bartica/Issano/Mahdia Road \$15,000,000 ... *[Interruption]*

The Chairman: Where is that?

Mr Robert HO Corbin: Project Code 140002, whether this sum is being handled centrally by the Ministry of Works, or whether it is being handled by the Regional Democratic Council, and if so, whether this is the amount which the Regional Democratic Council requested in order to maintain that in the year ahead?

Hon C Anthony Xavier: This road is being done centrally by the Ministry of Public Works.

Mr Robert HO Corbin: A supplementary question through you, Mr Chairman. Is it that this amount will totally rehabilitate the entire road, or could you identify what sections of this road? I have some intimate knowledge of the serious state of this road, so which section the programme considers critical that only \$15,000,000 will do.

Hon C Anthony Xavier: Mr Chairman, I will have to provide that answer in writing to the Honourable Member.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Going back to Project Code 12005, West Demerara/Four Lane Road, the Minister said that these are two separate items, and I am just trying to picture, out of the \$802,000,000, how much is going to be used on West Demerara, and how much will be used on the four-lane road?

Hon C Anthony Xavier: Again, Mr Chairman, I will have to provide that in writing to the Honourable Member.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, under Project Code 12004 - Weight Control Programme - Could the Minister elaborate on what will be accomplished under this Weight Control Programme.

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The Chairman: That could not be referring to you, Mr Alexander. *[Laughter]* I only mentioned Mr Alexander's name.

Hon C Anthony Xavier: Mr Chairman, this is a study to revise legislation, and to also install about six scales under the project.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Holder.

Mrs Sheila VA Holder: Mr Chairman, will the Honourable Minister indicate the quality of the road. First of all, let me mention the Project Code is 14005 - Miscellaneous Roads - and the Legend says Construction and rehabilitation of selected roads in various regions. I see, listed in the profile Ogle Road, which is the road leading to the Airport, I would like to know what standard that particular road will be built to.

Hon C Anthony Xavier: To an international airport standard.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Corbin.

Mr Robert HO Corbin: I want to ask the same question, or a similar question that I asked about the Bartica./Issano/Mahdia Road - Project Code 14006 - Urban Roads/Drainage and the Legend reads, Rehabilitation of selected urban roads and drains. My question is, whether the programme that was arrived at was a programme submitted by the elected Local Government bodies in the respective areas where these roads are to be done, or whether these roads were arbitrarily decided upon by the Ministry of Works, or centrally by some other directorate, and who will be responsible for their construction?

Hon C Anthony Xavier: These roads are normally selected by the municipalities in the various areas. We do the works and they also supervise.

Mr Robert HO Corbin: Are you sure?

Hon C Anthony Xavier: Yes.

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The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: A supplementary question under Project Code 12004 - The Minister indicated that the Weight Control Programme includes studies. Am I correct? I would wish to ask if the Minister could indicate where it is intended to locate the six scales.

Hon C Anthony Xavier: Well, that will be determined by the outcome of the studies.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Kadir, and then Mrs Backer.

Mr Abdul Kadir: Under project Code 12004 - Weight Control Programme - the Legend says, Provision for weight control programme - IDB, but then the programme details tells us that this has to do with the reconstruction of the Mahaica/Rosignol Road, so I wonder if the Minister can tell us which of the two it is really, according to the description?

Hon C Anthony Xavier: Could the Honourable Member repeat the question?

Mr Abdul Kadir: Mr Chairman, the details, according to the Legend for Project Code 12004 - Weight Control Programme, states that it has to do with the Provision for weight control programme - IDB, and the Profile page number is 290, but when we refer to page 290 in the Profile, we see the description of the programme is reconstruction of the Mahaica /Rosignol Road, including the Ithaca section.

The Chairman: It is page 291, and not 290, Honourable Member.

Hon C Anthony Xavier: Mr Chairman, the Weight Control Programme is a sub-component under the loan.

The Chairman: Mr Allen and then Mr Alexander.

Mr Ivor Allen: Page 433 Project Code 12004 - Weight Control Pro-

gramme, if the study will determine the locations of the scales, how is it that we arrive at six scales?

Hon C Anthony Xavier: This has nothing to do with the six scales, those come under another programme.

The Chairman: Mr Alexander, I am waiting patiently, or anxiously.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, a supplementary question, there seems to be some confusion which has been provided under Project Code 12004 ...

The Chairman: The Weight Control Programme is generating a great deal of interest.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: I was led to believe that, under the specific item, Weight Control Programme, that a study was being done, and that that study will determine where the six scales referred to will be located. The question which still is begging, how has a decision been made to have six scales when the study is incomplete?

Hon C Anthony Xavier: Mr Chairman, the amount in the loan for six scales, the study will determine where we will position these six scales. We only have money to buy six, so when the study comes out, we will know whether it has to go here, Kitty, North Ruimveldt, wherever. If we need to buy more, we will do so subsequently in another programme.

The Chairman: Yes, Mr Alexander?

Mr Vincent L Alexander: A supplementary question, this project is entitled Mahaica-Rosignol Road/Studies. That is the description of the project, and the sub-elements of the project are Civil Works; Design and Supervision; Studies, Weight Control Programme. My question is, how is it in that context that we also have a provision for studies under the Sub-head Weight Control, when the overall programme has a specific item, designated Studies?

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Hon C Anthony Xavier: Mr Chairman, there is a lot of studies going on, the study for the feasibility for the southern approach to Georgetown et cetera, and all these have been finished since last year.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Holder, and then Mrs Backer.

Mrs Sheila VA Holder: Mr Chairman, my question pertains... *[Interruption]*

The Chairman: Those who are not asking questions regularly are receiving priority. Yes, Mrs Holder.

Mrs Sheila VA Holder: My question pertains to Project Code 14006 - Urban Roads /Drainage, and the Legend says, Rehabilitation of selected urban roads and drainage. When I checked it, I see description of project Item 3, Rehabilitation of selected roads. That is still up. I want to ask the Honourable Minister what method is used by his Ministry to select roads for renovation? Do schools and hospitals get priority?

Hon C Anthony Xavier: Mr Chairman, as I explained earlier, these roads are normally sent to us by the various municipalities, they select the roads. I do not know what priority they give. We just assist in repairing the roads for them.

Mrs Sheila VA Holder: I do not think that the Honourable Member understands the question. Those roads that were selected by the municipalities have been identified. I am referring to the third item in the description of the project, which does not list any roads. I am therefore asking, what priority is used, specific to the non-selective roads, by the municipalities?

Hon C Anthony Xavier: Mr Chairman, I would imagine that the municipalities would take into consideration areas where there is heavy population. Obviously health centres, schools, hospitals, post offices, those kind of places where there are those kind of agencies.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Project Code 14006 - Urban Roads/Drainage, and we see the Legend says, Rehabilitation of selected urban roads and drains and the Project Profile speaks about the same thing - roads and drains. My question is, how much of that \$170,000,000 will be used for roads and how much is going to be apportioned for drains?

Hon C Anthony Xavier: \$125,000,000 for roads, and the difference for drains - \$45,000,000.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Under the Project Code 12001 - Bridges - There is a subhead - Road Safety, I would like the Minister to indicate what is intended to be done, specifically, under the Road Safety Programme.

Hon C Anthony Xavier: This would include signing, marking, reflectors on the roads, lights in certain areas, sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, et cetera.

The Chairman: Are you asking a question, Mrs Backer? Will you please ask it?

Mrs Deborah J Backer: I was hoping that a few people would come in between. Page 433, Project Code 12001 - Road Safety - \$50,000,000, and the Legend says, Implementation of road safety programme. There is no profile page, so could the Minister please share with the House what is the road safety programme.

Hon C Anthony Xavier: Mr Chairman, apparently the Honourable Member was not paying attention. I just answered that same question. It was the same question that the Honourable Member Mr Alexander asked. I have answered it already.

Division 548 - Ministry of Public Works and Communications - Bridges/

Roads - \$3,142,000,000- agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Pages 56 and 57

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Mr Chairman, are we talking about Agency 07- Parliament Office?

The Chairman: Just one moment, Honourable Members. *[Pause]* Honourable Prime Minister, you indicated a few moments ago that you are now in a position to deal with Agency 11.

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Yes.

The Chairman: Is it the view of the Honourable Members that we should return to Agency 11?

[Members replied in the affirmative]

Pages 72 and 73

AGENCY 11 - ELECTIONS COMMISSION, Programme 111 - Elections Commission

Question is proposed that the sum of \$647,598,000 for Agency 11 - Elections Commission, Programme 111 - Elections Commission - stands part of the Estimates

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, I wish to ask the Honourable Prime Minister, under Acct Code 6302 on page 73, who are intended to be beneficiaries of the sum of \$60,000,000 for training, including scholarships?

continued in Pt II

National Assembly Debates

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF
THE SECOND SESSION (2002-2005) OF THE EIGHTH PARLIAMENT
OF GUYANA UNDER THE CONSTITUTION OF THE CO-OPERATIVE
REPUBLIC OF GUYANA HELD IN THE PARLIAMENT CHAMBER
PUBLIC BUILDINGS BRICKDAM, GEORGETOWN

Part II

54TH SITTING

2.00 PM

Tuesday, 8 March 2005

cont'd fr. Pt 1

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: This allocation provides for training of staff for continuous registration, and a number of matters would have to be dealt with in preparing for the next elections.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander, then Mr Kadir.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: A supplementary question, does this include training for the implementation of additional elements of the election?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: We do not have such specific information of the training at this time, Sir.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Kadir.

Mr Abdul Kadir: Will the Prime Minister care to explain, under Acct Code 6294 - Other - relative to last year of \$2,958,000, there is a projection of \$100,000,000 - some of the details of *Other*?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Acct Code 6294 includes provisions for continuous registration.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Khan

Mr Jerome Khan: I turn to page 73 Acct Code 6281- the general

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head is *Other Goods and Services Purchased - Security Services* specific, could the Prime Minister explain why there is a substantial increase of a budgeted amount of \$22,800,000, from a revised amount of \$10,830,000 in 2004?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: The Elections Commission anticipates beginning to store equipment to firms in other regions and therefore there will be other buildings to secure.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander

Mr Vincent L Alexander: A supplementary question, under the Acct Code related to *Other*, which we were told is for continuous registration, what are the proposed elements, or components, of this continuous registration?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: It includes the setting up of offices in other regions; the items they will need, communication and transportation and so on.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Jerome Khan

Mr Jerome Khan: A supplementary question to Acct Code 6281, if you will permit me, Sir. Could the Prime Minister say if the security services that he alluded to in his answer would be subject to public tender so that the public can tender, or has that service has already been procured?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: It will be advertised.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: A supplementary question under Acct Code 6294. The Honourable Prime Minister alluded to the infrastructural aspect of continuous registration, would he wish to allude to the procedural aspects that are intended?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: If I am correct in what I understand the question about procedural aspect, I do not think that is a subject of the Budget and this expenditure here.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, do I take it, then, that the Honourable Prime Minister if saying to me that the Budget only provides for an aspect of continuous registration, and not continuous registration as a complete process.

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: My understanding is that this Budget takes care for the material things, and the other type of decisions as to how things will be done would be elsewhere. Provision is made here for the materials that would reasonably be expected to be required.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Holder.

Mrs Sheila VA Holder: Will the Honourable Prime Minister at Acct Code 6255 - Maintenance of Other Infrastructure - explain the astronomical increase for this Budgetary year? What does that cover?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: What is the number?

The Chairman: Acct Code 6255.

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: This covers maintenance of additional buildings which will be acquired in various regions.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Jerome Khan.

Mr Jerome Khan: I wish to turn to page 72, Acct Code 6223, perhaps we can take it in conjunction with Acct Code 6222. There is a budgeted amount of \$76,000,000, can the Prime Minister say what exactly are we purchasing here for office materials and supplies?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: I think that this is mainly printing charges, paper, forms and so on.

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The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Jerome Khan.

Mr Jerome Khan: I wish to ask if these items are going to be procured locally or overseas.

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: I think that is a question that the Commission itself will come to.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Kadir.

Mr Abdul Kadir: Mr Chairman, when we turn to the staffing details for this Programme Head for Elections Commission, I notice that there is a total reduction from 95 to a projected 88, then I turn to the grand total, in terms of appropriation and statutory, then I see that there is a tremendous increase in projected expenditure from \$205, 797,000 to \$647,598,000. I am trying to rationalise, in my mind, the correlation there.

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: I think there is a provision here for additional people whom the Commission expects to retain and those numbers are not reflected in the 88 here.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander

Mr Vincent L Alexander: A supplementary question, the Honourable Prime Minister indicated that the Commission would make some decisions in relation to purchases, I would wish to have clarified whether it is indeed the fact that, after this Budget is passed, that the Commission will either have to refer or to defer to any government agency the determination of what to buy and where to buy it?

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: I seek your protection, Mr Chairman. Is that a proper question for this consideration?

The Chairman: Firstly, I did not understand. I did not quite get the question.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: I will repeat the question. My question is to an answer provided which said that, on the question of purchases, that the Commission will take those decisions. I am asking for clarification to have this House properly informed as to whether the Elections Commission, after this Budget would have been approved, would have to refer, or to defer, to any other State agency in the process in determining what to purchase and where to purchase.

The Chairman: That is not a proper question, Honourable Member.

Agency 11 - Elections Commission, Programme 111 - Elections Commission - \$647,598,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Pages 74 and 75

AGENCY 11 - ELECTIONS COMMISSION, Programme 112 - Elections Administration

Question is proposed that the sum of \$493,040,000 for Agency 11 - Elections Commission, Programme 112 - Elections Administration - stands part of the Estimates.

Agency 11 - Elections Commission, Programme 112 - Elections Administration - \$493,040,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Page 396

DIVISION 505 - CONSTITUTIONAL AGENCIES (Project Code 25010) GUYANA ELECTIONS COMMISSION

Question is proposed that the sum of \$50,000,000 for Division 505 - Constitutional Agencies (Project Code 25010 - Elections Commission -

stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: One minute, Honourable Members [*Pause*] We are only dealing with Project Code 25010 - Purchase of Computers and accessories.

Division 505 - Constitutional Agencies (Project Code 25010) - Guyana Elections Commission - \$50,000,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Pages 56 and 57

AGENCY 07 - PARLIAMENT OFFICE, Programme 071- National Assembly

The Chairman: I understand that there is an application in this matter.

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Mr Chairman, I beg that that this Agency be deferred for tomorrow.

[Deferred]

The Chairman: Thank you. We will move on to the next agency.

Pages 90 and 91

AGENCY 15 - MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE AND INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION, Programme 151 - Foreign Trade and International Co-operation

Question is proposed that the sum of \$1,000 for Agency 15 - Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Co-operation, Programme 151 - Foreign Trade and International Co-operation - stands part of the Estimates.

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The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Jerome Khan.

Mr Jerome Khan: There is no money. I am a bit confused. In reviewing this, there is absolutely nothing on these two pages. Could you guide me, Sir, how can we discuss it?

The Chairman: Yes, Honourable Member Mr Nadir, can you answer?

Hon Manzoor Nadir: It is coming up on pages 52 and 53. That is where the head is reflected on.

The Chairman: Do I have to put any question here? There is no money under the head.

Hon Manzoor Nadir: Yes, there is \$1,000 under fuel and lubricants.

Agency 15 - Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Co-operation,
Programme 151 - Foreign Trade and International Co-operation - \$1,000
- agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Page 436

DIVISION 550 - MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE AND INTERNATIONAL CO- OPERATION (Project Codes 12001 and 25001)

Question is proposed that the sum of \$2,350,000 for Division 550 - Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Co-operation (Project Codes 12001 and 25001) - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: There are two items here - Buildings, Office Equipment and Furniture.

Division 550 - Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Co-operation (Project Codes 12001 and 25001) - \$2,350,000 - agreed to, and

stand part of the Estimates.

Pages 47 and 49

AGENCY 04 - MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, Programme 041 - Ministry Administration

Question is proposed that the sum of \$505,618,000 for Agency 04 - Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Programme 041 - Ministry Administration - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Riehl

Mrs Clarissa S Riehl: I wish to ask the Honourable Minister, on Acct Code 6116 - Contracted Employees - who are those contracted employees, because it is filled, according to the Staffing Details. Who is he budgeting \$11,750,000 for the contracted employees.

The Chairman: We are not yet at Ministry Administration. What item are you asking about, Honourable Member?

Mrs Clarissa S Riehl: Acct Code 6116 - Contracted Employees - there is nothing authorised. I believe that there is some mistake.

Hon S Rudolph Insanally: Mr Chairman, in response to that question, I would say that there are four contracted employees at Headquarters here in Georgetown, and there are eleven overseas. These are ambassadors and consuls who are recruited outside of the Government service, or have been retired from the Government service. In addition to that, in New York at the Permanent Mission, there are four locally-recruited employees under contract.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Kadir

Mr Abdul Kadir: Under the Acct Code for Subsidies and Contributions to International Organisations, there is an allocation for

\$288,484,000 ...

The Chairman: Acct Code 6322 ...

Mr Abdul Kadir: I would just like to ask the Honourable Minister if Caribbean Association of Local Government and Commonwealth Local Government Forum are part of the Institutions that are benefiting from these subsidies?

Hon S Rudolph Insanally: Our Ministry does not cover those two organisations.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Riehl

Mrs Clarissa S Riehl: Mr Chairman, this is the Ministry Administration, so I wish the Minister would confine himself to the Ministry Administration. We have not met foreign relations as yet. I am asking a question on Acct Code 6241 - Rental of Buildings -

The Chairman: What is the number?

Mrs Clarissa S Riehl: Acct Code 6241. On page 48, there is a big jump, the revised for 2004 was \$630,000, and now there is a big jump to \$2,640,000. What buildings do the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Georgetown hope to rent in 2005?

Hon S Rudolph Insanally: Yes, Mr Chairman, I can say that it is for the rental of a building for an expert who is here, and who is working for the Ministry for a programme under the Indian Government. It is for the rental of a house.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Riehl

Mrs Clarissa S Riehl: Again, Sir, on page 49, Acct Code 6261 - Local Travel and Subsistence - the projected budgeted amount of \$48,000,000, could the Honourable Minister say what the local travel and subsistence in this \$48,000,000 is intended for in the Ministry of

Foreign Affairs?

Hon S Rudolph Insanally: This has to do with postings and repostings of officers from the Ministry; postings to our Missions abroad and repostings back and also cross-postings from one mission to the next.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander

Mr Vincent L Alexander: A supplementary question on Acct Code 6261 - Local Travel and Subsistence - We have been advised that this has to do with the posting of officers. Could the Minister clarify the relationship between posting of officers, which must be somewhere outside of the country, if it is foreign affairs, and local travel and subsistence?

Honourable S Rudolph Insanally: I am advised that it is a multitude of things, not only the postings of the officers, but of their personal effects and other related expenditure, including local travel. All of these come under this heading.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Riehl.

Mrs Clarissa S Riehl: Under Acct Code 6294 - Other - there is a tremendous jump from \$2,440,000 to a projection of \$23,100,000. Could the Minister please explain what the projection in the Budget is catering for?

Hon S Rudolph Insanally: Again, I am advised that, with effect from this year, a Sub-programme in policy and monitoring was moved from Programme II to Programme I, and this sub-programme has four activities, and here the amount increased largely because, under this, rubric we have to pay consultants for the Maritime proceedings, and legal advice on the matter we have before the tribunal in Hamburg. I also understand that it covers revenue stamps for passports.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer.

Mrs Deborah J Backer: The Acct Code 6293 - Refreshment and Meals - Again, there is somewhat of a jump of over 300 percent from \$378,000 to \$3,392,000. Is this an indication that the Ministry will be eating more, or hosting more?

Hon S Rudolph Insanally: There was a transfer of some of these activities from Programme II to Programme I and, as I said, some of these activities ... in fact, the operations of the various divisions of the Americas and the multilateral division, protocol, consular services and frontiers, they are all subsumed under this figure here.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Holder

Mrs Sheila VA Holder: Would the Honourable Minister indicate whether that explanation is also applicable to overseas conferences and official visits? Search as I may, I do not seem to be able to find it anywhere in the Estimates.

Hon S Rudolph Insanally: Yes, to clarify this - travel in relation to overseas conferences and official visits are usually dealt with by a Cabinet decision, so it does not figure here.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Riehl

Mrs Clarissa S Riehl: There is no Acct Code, but the heading - Subsidies and Contributions to Local and International Organisations, and there is a projected sum budgeted at \$288,484,000 and, as I said, I have seen no Acct Code ... [*Interruption: 'The Acct Code is 6322.'*] Oh yes, I am sorry, Sir. It repeats itself. I wish to ask why is the jump from \$265,940,000 revised in 2004 to \$288,484,000? Does the Ministry intend to pay to any other international organisation? Could the Minister, at the same time, say which international organisations?

Hon S Rudolph Insanally: Mr Chairman, page 386 gives an entire list of the organisations to which we make contributions. The increase is attributable to the fact that, in some cases, we had arrears, and this year we have sought permission to cover those also. There have also been

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some difficulties in the rate of exchange in some cases.

Agency 04 - Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Programme 041 - Ministry Administration - \$505,618,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Pages 50 and 51

AGENCY 04 - MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, Programme 042 - Foreign Relations

Question is proposed that the sum of \$1,162,214,000 for Agency 04, Programme 042 - Foreign Relations - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Riehl

Mrs Clarissa S Riehl: Under Acct Code 6116 - Contracted Employees - \$213,700,000 projected, and this is Foreign Relations. In view of the Minister's answer before on the previous page 48, where there is another *Contracted Employees* for \$11,750,000, could the Minister please answer who he is catering for, who are the contracted employees for this amount?

Hon S Rudolph Insanally: To clarify again, the contracted employees are for the overseas missions, the Ambassador in Washington, the High Commissioner in Ottawa, the Consular General in New York, the Ambassador in Cuba, the Ambassador to Brazil, the Ambassador to Caracas, the Ambassador to Suriname, the Ambassador in Brussels, the High Commissioner to London, and the Permanent Representative in New York. There are also two locally recruited members of staff for the Permanent Mission in New York. That is it, Mr Chairman.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Jerome Khan.

Mr Jerome Khan: This is a supplemental to that same question. If we

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look at page 51- Staffing Details - for 2004 the contracted employees is listed as 15. We have no indicated number for 2005. Could I ask the Minister if the figure he is proposing in 2005 includes the High Commissioners who are proposed for India and China?

Hon S Rudolph Insanally: Mr Chairman, I am advised that the positions are not yet filled, and cannot be reflected in the Budget.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Jerome Khan

Mr Jerome Khan: I thought the Budget is a proposal for staffing needs, and I therefore wish to ask the Minister again ... *[Interruption]*

The Chairman: You cannot ask the same question twice, Honourable Member. The Minister has answered you. Are you proposing to ask the same question? I would not allow it.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: A clarification on the principle. We were advised earlier in this session that the Office of the Ombudsman is not filled, but that a provision is in the Budget for the Office.

The Chairman: This is not a session for a debate, Honourable Member.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: We are not debating. We just want a clarification, Mr Chairman.

The Chairman: Could you please ask a question, Honourable Member?

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Is it the principle that offices which are not filled ... *[Interruption]*

The Chairman: The Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs cannot answer a question in principle in relation to financial matters. If you direct a question to him on the Estimates, that will be fine. Are there any other questions?

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The Honourable Member, Mrs Riehl

Mrs Clarissa S Riehl: I wish to ask the Honourable Minister a question on Acct Code 6114. I see the revised figure is \$104,640,000 for 2004, and he is under-budgeted for \$81,000,000 for 2005. Does that mean that the Embassies and Mission Houses abroad will continue to suffer a staff shortage? Because here he is under-budgeting. I wish to ask him if he is deliberately under-budgeting and not catering to fill those vacancies overseas.

Hon S Rudolph Insanally: Mr Chairman, I am advised that this amount reflects the change-over I indicated earlier, of Programme II activities to Programme I. With that change there has been a consequential reduction.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Jerome Khan.

Mr Jerome Khan: I am directing you to page 51, Acct Code 6302 - Training (Including Scholarships) - given the fact that we have an authorised complement of 177 persons in 2004 filled 176 in 2004, I would like to ask the Minister if the amount of \$260,000 is adequate for the training needs of the staff.

Hon S Rudolph Insanally: Mr Chairman, if I understand it, we are talking about Acct Code 6302 - Training - this has to do with training of staff who are serving in foreign language postings. For example, in Brazil and elsewhere.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Sheila Holder first, and then Mr Khan.

Mrs Sheila VA Holder: Will the Honourable Minister indicate, at Acct Code 6311 - Rates and Taxes - whether this amount covers all outstanding taxes to the Mayor and City Council?

Hon S Rudolph Insanally: Mr Chairman, normally diplomatic missions do not pay taxes where they operate, but this has to do specifically

with land concession that was given to us by the government of Brazil, and with that undertaking we do have to pay taxes. This is a piece of land that we can build a mission on when we can so do.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Jerome Khan.

Mr Jerome Khan: Going back to page 51 under the general heading of Education Subventions and Training, could the Minister say ... *[Interruption]*

The Chairman: What number?

Mr Jerome Khan: Education Subventions and Training, any one of the two categories, Acct Codes 6301 or 6302, my question is, can the Minister say, or point to us, where provisions are in the budget for the training of 176.

Hon S Rudolph Insanally: Mr Chairman, I do not know where the Honourable Members got the numbers from, but we are talking about staff working basically at three missions - in Suriname, Brazil and China, and they are about six persons.

The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Mr Chairman, this is at the bottom of page 51 - Staffing Details - I see there is no authorised staffing, and of course, it follows no filled staff. I am just querying what is happening there? We have not authorised for 2005, so we do not expect to have any staff

Hon S Rudolph Insanally: Mr Chairman, I can only conclude that this is a typographical mistake.

The Chairman: the Honourable Member, Mrs Holder.

Mrs Sheila VA Holder: Page 51, Acct Code 6331 - Refunds of Revenue - Could the Honourable Minister indicate what, specifically does that mean?

Hon S Rudolph Insanally: Mr Chairman, I am advised that this has to do with our Programme II with our overseas missions and, more particularly, there are refunds for passport applications, that is to say, persons who apply and decide not to proceed, or they do not come for the passport. These monies are refunded.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander

Mr Vincent L Alexander: A supplementary question, the Minister referred to a typo in response. Could the Minister please indicate what is the correct information?

Hon S Rudolph Insanally: Mr Chairman, I am not in a position to give that answer now. I will furnish one very shortly.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Riehl.

Mrs Clarissa S Riehl: Page 51, Acct Code 6261 - Local Travel and Subsistence - \$12,948,000 budgeted. In view of the answer on the previous page, where \$48,108,000 was budgeted - this is for the overseas Ambassadors when they come home, I would like to ask the Minister what this local travel and subsistence is, as it relates to foreign relations? What is it all about?

Hon S Rudolph Insanally: Mr Chairman, a small service like ours has ambassadors with multiple postings so, in the event that someone based in Brussels has to travel to Geneva, this vote covers for such visits, and also in countries it is for internal travel where the ambassador perhaps has to travel to another city. For example, the United States or Brazil, the allocations are made from this head.

Agency 04 - Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Programme 042 - Foreign Relations - \$1,162,214,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Pages 52 and 53

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AGENCY 04 - MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, Programme 043 - Foreign Trade and International Co-operation

Question is proposed that the sum of \$67,693,000 for Agency 04, Programme 043 - Foreign Trade and International Co-operation - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Jerome Khan

Mr Jerome Khan: I turn to page 52, Acct Code 6116 - Contracted Employees - It is noted that the government has substantially reduced the budgetary allocation from 2003 and 2004 to \$1,457,000. My question to the Minister, or his representative - those employees who were employed in 2003 and 2004 have now been placed in permanent employment, and not just contracted employment. I am being positive here.

Hon Manzoor Nadir: Mr Chairman, the amount represents the sum for one contracted employee - that is the Minister's confidential secretary. The reduction is because of person who were on contract retired.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Jerome Khan

Mr Jerome Khan: I turn to page 53, Acct Code 6271, and we notice that there is a substantial increase from the budgeted figure in 2004, the Actual in 2003 to \$4,547,000, that is proposed in 2005, even though the revised is the \$4,549,000. I am asking the Minister, or his representative, to explain why there has been such an increase in those two years?

Hon Manzoor Nadir: Mr Chairman, there was a substantial amount of activity in this Ministry in 2004, and there was a substantial increase in the budgeted amount. This year's amount closely reflects what transpired in 2004.

Mr Jerome Khan: Mr Chairman, I wish to direct you to page 53, Acct Code 6272 - Electricity Charges - we notice that the revised is \$380,000 and the projected for 2005 is \$2,705,000, I wish someone to

clarify this. Isn't the Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Co-operation housed in the same complex with the Ministry of Foreign Relations, and why is there such an increase in the electricity budget.

Hon Manzoor Nadir: Yes, Mr Chairman, it is housed in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. What actually happened in 2004 was that we had to vire money to electricity charges to help media telephone charges and we did not pay our full amount to the bills of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for that entire building. This year is more reflective of the entire electricity charges that are assigned to this particular head.

Mr Jerome Khan: Again at page 53, Acct Code 6281 - Security Services - I note the actual in 2003 is \$42,000, the budgeted for 2004 was \$50,000, the revised amount was \$565,000, and the budgeted for 2005 is \$720,000. It my understanding, based on the answer from my Honourable colleague, that these Ministries are housed in the same building. Why is there such a substantial increase in security allocation for 2005?

Hon Manzoor Nadir: Mr Chairman, this increase reflects the actual security charges for the Ministry. In the past we had a subsidy from the Ministry of Works. They were picking up some of the expenses.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Khan.

Mr Jerome Khan: On page 53, Acct Code 6322 - Subsidies and Contributions to International Organisations - Could the Minister tell us which International Organisations we are contributing \$31,806,000 to?

Hon Manzoor Nadir: To the Regional Negotiating Machinery, and our fee this year has been reduced by about \$8,000,000, accounting for the decrease.

Agency 04 - Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Programme 043 - Foreign Trade and International Co-operation - \$67,693,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

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DIVISION 506 - MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Project Codes 12001, 24001 and 25001)

Question is proposed that the sum of \$21,930,000 for Division 506 - Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Project Codes 12001, 24001 and 25001) - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Backer

Mrs Deborah J Backer: Project Code 25001 - Office Equipment and Furniture - the Legend speaks about purchase of furniture and equipment for the Ministry (I presume that is the Local Ministry) and various overseas missions, and when one looks at the Capital Project Profile, page 36, it basically repeats, this project includes the purchase of office equipment and furniture for head offices and overseas missions. I would like to get an idea of what these office equipment and furniture are, because it does not seem to be a significant amount of money - US \$30,000, and we are speaking about equipment for various overseas missions. I would like to get an idea.

Hon S Rudolph Insanally: We are talking here about basic equipment like filing cabinets and computers. This is what this money would cater for.

Division 506 - Ministry of Foreign Affairs - \$21,930,000 (Project Codes 12001, 24001 and 25001) - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Honourable Members, we can suspend now for a few minutes until 17:30 when we will resume our considerations.

17:05H

THE SITTING IS SUSPENDED

17: 38H

THE SITTING IS RESUMED

Honourable Members, we shall resolve into Committee of Supply

IN COMMITTEE

Pages 144 and 145

**AGENCY 44 - MINISTRY OF CULTURE, YOUTH AND SPORT,
Programme 441 - Ministry Administration**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$100,537,000 for Agency 44 - Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport, Programme 441 - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Bernard

Mr Deryck MA Bernard: I have two simple questions. Acct Code 6116 - Contracted Employees - I would like to get an idea of what proportion of the thirty-two positions are technical or specialist, and what proportion is administrative.

The Chairman: Honourable Minister?

Hon Gail Teixeira: The majority of these are under Ministry Administration Programme 441 and are technical people in the areas that have been, persons, who came in through the National Service and who have been incorporated into the Ministry awaiting PSC appointments in administration, accounting, and maintenance personnel. These thirty-two also include a number of drivers at the Ministry, who were National Service formerly, and my personal assistant.

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The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Deryck Bernard.

Mr Deryck MA Bernard: Mr Chairman, I have been trying to figure out, from the officer and the work programmes that I see, where, if any, in this structure under Acct Codes 6115, or 6116, there is anyone who is assisting with the problem of Intellectual Property Rights and related matters. Is anyone here working on that, and if not, in this head or anywhere else in the Ministry.

The Chairman: The Honourable Minister

Hon Gail Teixeira: In response to the Honourable Member's question, it does not include any such person. I would love to have such a person onboard, and I have not been able to, but we do work with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Attorney General's Office that have the expertise there, and they guide us. No such person is in the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport.

Mr Deryck MABernard: A Supplementary question, Sir. Could I ask the Minister whether she would take in to contemplation in recruiting someone, on a partime basis, to speed up this process, in view of all agreed that this is an urgent matter?

Hon Gail Teixeira: I have no objections. Do you have anybody in mind? Give me the CV, and do not tell me about an advertisement, because these are hard positions to fill. They are very specialised.

Agency 44 - Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport, Programme 441 - Ministry Administration - \$100,537,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Pages 146 and 147

**AGENCY 44 - MINISTRY OF CULTURE, YOUTH AND SPORT,
Programme 442 - Culture**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$147,991,000 for Agency 44 -

Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport, Programme 442 - Culture - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member Mr Bernard

Mr Deryck MA Bernard: Mr Chairman, I want to ask a similar kind of question. If the Minister could let us know what are the heads of technical sections, who is responsible, and at what level? On Acct Codes 6112, or 6116, or 6111 for the specialist areas within the programmes of the Ministry, and whether there are any unfilled vacancies for the top people heading the important divisions of that Ministry.

The Chairman: The Honourable Minister Teixeira.

Hon Gail Teixeira: Mr Deryck Bernard has asked a very interesting question, and you will have to allow me some liberty to answer it. We have twenty-six buildings and entities under the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport. In Culture alone there are thirteen entities that we are responsible for. The technical persons that he would be asking for, some of them are under Acct Code 6116 - Contract Employees. These are some of the persons who may have been formerly in the National Service, and also some technical people from the Archives, the Museum, and the National Cultural Centre. We have in Administration, also, under Acct Code 6111, some of the persons in charge in managing Museums, as well as the Archives. Under Acct Code 6112, included are some of the technical people in the National Cultural Centre and the National Trust, but the majority of persons in the number of these areas are contract employees that are reflected under Acct Code 6116. Also the head of the Burrowes School of Art, including some of the instructors, are part of that group.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Bernard

Mr Deryck MA Bernard: I would like to ask two questions, as a follow-up, whether the Government would take under contemplation that this Ministry may very well benefit from a structure over all professional or technical collaboration in between the administrative structure

and the little units, and whether the government would consider that approach.

My second question is from a different Acct Code 6291 - National and other Events - I was trying to look at the events that were listed and contemplated, and I was wondering whether the Government would once again open its mind to the possibility of an even such as similar to the Guyana Festival of Arts and Craft, which seem to have died, or gone into a coma - whether it was not contemplated that that is one of the national events which would be of use, both to the Department of Culture and the Ministry of Education.

The Chairman: Hon Minister Teixeira.

Hon Gail Teixeira: Acct Code 6291, this figure relates to National Events -Mashramani and Independence. Commemorative events, heritage or historical events, even at the community level, such as the anniversary of some of the old villages, including some of the cultural activities. So these are reflected under there. In relation to the Honourable Member's question about the Guyana Festival of Arts, certainly that seemed to have died long, long before I came along. I think it died before Mr Deryck Bernard was the Minister of Education, but we are trying to create festivals and to bring back that. We had the Festival of Dance, and we are having a festival of Choirs this year and, hopefully in 2006, we would be able to have a national Festival of various areas.

Mr Deryck MA Bernard: Before I ask my next question, I would just like to point out to the Minister that as of culture, I not only had the festival, I took part in it.

Hon Gail Teixeira: Well, we know that you can sing, but I would not put you to dance, Deryck.

Mr Deryck MA Bernard: Oh please, no. *[Laughter]* Save the country.

Mr Chairman, my next question has to do with Acct Code 6321 - Sub-

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sidies to Local Organisations - I see a sum there, under the circumstances a generous sum of \$400,000 to the Theatre Guild Club Organisation, but I think, we all know the state of the building and the terrible state of small theatres in the country. What programme does this \$400,000 represent, in terms of resuscitating both the theatre and small theatres in this country?

Hon Gail Teixeira: The sum is not large, but nevertheless it has to be accounted for when it is released. We have tried in 1998, and again in 2003, to work with the Theatre Guild Board in getting themselves better organised so that we could help them to pay off their debts they had of rates and taxes; we proposed to assist them in looking for funding to rehabilitate the theatre. Unfortunately, things went into a slump into the latter part of 2004, but the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport is willing to assist Theatre Guild. It is an independent body and certainly seems to have control over the land. I think it is more an issue of an NGO getting their acts together, and then the Government will be better able and prepared to assist them to rectify the building. There was a lot of plans in 2003. We were really moving, but in 2004 somehow things have deteriorated.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Bernard

Mr Deryck MA Bernard: I must confess I am surprised. An institution listed under this head called the National Commemorative Committee ... [*Interruption: 'Where?'*] Page 113 of Programme Outlines 4420401, and I am not able to deduce what is the budget for that Committee. I would like to know what is budgeted for it, what is its work programme and, more important, Sir, how is that Committee constituted?

Hon Gail Teixeira: What page?

Mr Deryck MA Bernard: Volume 2 Page 113.

Hon Gail Teixeira: I do not know how that gets in there. There is no national commemorative committee. We have the National Mashramani

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Committee, and we set up national bodies when we set up specific events to work on, but the Ministry of Finance would like to have that heading, I guess, where a number of these events, or programmes, fall in, but that is not a definition of ourselves.

Mr Deryck MA Bernard: Mr Chairman, if I can ask a supplemental, whether the Minister may in fact not wish to examine the history of the previous incarnation of a commemorative commission and consider whether it might not have some use in 2005.

If I may, with your permission, Sir, ask one more question. In the activities listed under Acct Code 6291, or 6231, I am not sure, I have lost my place here, but a programme of cultural exchanges ... and I wonder whether the Minister is in a position to specify, at this stage, what are the cultural exchanges planned for the year 2005?

The Chairman: Honourable Minister.

Hon Gail Teixeira: I do not know what head he is talking about.

The Chairman: The Cultural Exchange head.

Hon Gail Teixeira: But there is no head like that.

Mr Deryck MA Bernard: Again, sir, if I can be of assistance, 4420403 on page 113, or is this another imposition of the Ministry of Finance. I am not sure. If you look at Volume 2, page 113, there is such a body listed, but I cannot find a budget or work programme.

Hon Gail Teixeira: Well, I have never heard of it. What I can say, Mr Chairman, there is no body in existence like that under the Ministry of Culture Youth and Sport. Maybe in terms of the bilateral arrangements and stuff but what I do know is that we have tried to get funding to send cultural groups abroad, sometimes not a large group but, based on funding, we go separately to Cabinet to get support for that, as we did with CARIFESTA.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Under the Acct Code 6321 - Subsidies and Contributions for Local Organisations, the Annexe provides for a contribution to the Rupununi Weavers' Society the sum of \$150,000 I wish to enquire what this is. Is this really a subsidy, or is this a subvention that is provided for a specific purpose?

Hon Gail Teixeira: The subvention for the Rupununi Weavers is to help them with the Rupununi Weavers' Museum that exists in Lethem, and so the subvention is to assist that society in the maintaining of that museum. Can I just ask, this reference to page 113 that Mr Bernard was referring to [*Interruption*] Well, former, I will be in that group too. I just want to make a correction, because I misunderstood him. In the Legacy that is written up here, it talks about Community Development Projects and Cultural Exchanges. That is where we are talking about the cultural exchanges within Guyana among our different groups for cross fertilisation, diversification of our culture, and so on.

Mr Deryck MA Bernard: With your permission, Sir, this answer to my question is quite interesting. Can I ask a supplemental? If there is, in fact, a work programme, and if I could ask to have a look at that work programme? I am interested, both as the shadow of that Ministry, and also from a personal point of view.

Hon Gail Teixeira: Mr Chairman, as soon as the Budget passes, the ministries will meet again to refine our budgets, because work programmes have been based on projections that were sent in since September of the year before and, when we have completed the work programme, I am more than willing to share them with the Honourable Member.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, I would like to enquire under the Said Acct Code 6321 - Subsidies and Contributions to Local Organisations - What criteria is used to determine which organisations

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are included, or qualified, or what methodology is used to have such organisations come under scrutiny for provision of the subvention or subsidy?

Hon Gail Teixeira: Are you asking a question of a particular organisation?

Mr Vincent L Alexander: A particular question in relation to how the head is determined.

Hon Gail Teixeira: Mr Chairman, most of these organisations that are listed here I inherited when the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport was created. We have no problems with them and therefore we continue to support them. They continue to do sound programmes and projects. They are accountable for the money they are given, and therefore they do look out for the money and no new money if released in the arrangements. We also ask them to submit to us their programmes so that we can see what those funds would cover, and whether small or large, it is well-utilised. So they must submit to us a programme, or a project, what the money would be used for.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Were there any organisations with which they had problems which were struck off the list?

Hon Gail Teixeira: Well, I do not think there is one, Sir. The one that was there, the Interim National Youth Commission, was removed about two three years ago, because it was not functioning, but I have not de-capitalated any organisation off my list.

Agency 44 - Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport, Programme 442 - Culture - \$147,991,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Pages 148 and 149

**AGENCY 44 - MINISTRY OF CULTURE, YOUTH AND SPORT,
Programme 443 - Youth**

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Question is proposed that the sum of \$50,073,000 for Agency 44 - Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport, Programme 443 - Youth - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Deryck Bernard.

Mr Deryck MA Bernard: I am looking at the wages and salaries for senior technical and Administrative technical staff in this programme. I would like to know what proportion ... *[Interruption]*

The Chairman: What number?

Mr Deryck MA Bernard: Acct Codes 6112 and 6116 - The Senior Technical Staff - I would like to know what proportion of the staff of this Division is allocated to the Regions, and if they are not under this head, where will they be reflected, if it would be in the Regional Budgets?

Hon Gail Teixeira: Acct Code 6112 - Senior Technical - in our context there are two persons as of last year in that post. The Ministry has field staff, in Region 1 - one person; Region 3 - we have one person and one in the islands; Region 4 - 1 person; Region 5 - one person; Region 6 - a Senior Officer and a Probation Officer (a person being on probation); Region 7 - one person; Region 9 - one person; Region 10 - we have just finished hiring one person.. Those are the field staff. They are all paid for by the Ministry and their travel, et cetera, is paid for by us and they are on their locations. The Headquarters persons serviced Georgetown and the rest of the country.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander

Mr Vincent L Alexander: I just wish to inquire of the Honourable Minister about the provisions under Acct Code 6321 - Subsidies and Contributions to Local Organisations - and in relation to the provisions in the Annexe for subsidy to the West End Committee and generally, to those organisations, I would like to find out the basis on which they are given a subsidy, and the determination of the quantity of the subsidy.

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Hon Gail Teixeira: Mr Chairman, in response to West End Committee, this was an old engagement that started when the Ministry was created in Main Street in 1999, and this is a Committee that also has a Committee Policing Group at that time, and so they were part of the monitoring of our facilities, because we were losing things from the National Archives. Our generator was stolen, the air conditioner was stolen, and we work with this Committee to improve our own security and to give them back something in advance towards the Youth Programme that they had at the West End Centre, and that has continued up to today with that Committee.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Acct Code 6322 - Subsidies and Contributions to International Organisations - and the accompanying listing which specifies Commonwealth Youth Programme and the President's Award, I wish to ask the Honourable Minister if, in any way, the Commonwealth Youth Programme caters for the Commonwealth Youth Ambassador, I think it is, and if there is any relationship between that and the CARICOM Youth Ambassador. What is the status of that?

Hon Gail Teixeira: On the question of the Commonwealth Youth Programme, yes, it does support ... because we are the host country for the Caribbean for the Commonwealth Youth Programme, it does support the Commonwealth Youth Ambassador Programme, and Guyana has had an Ambassador for the last several years, a number of young men and we will be changing the present one has served for two years, but there is no relationship between the Commonwealth Youth Ambassador Programme and the CARICOM Youth Ambassador. I cannot answer on the CARICOM one, because that is not a line item here, and that is something that you and I can talk about privately.

The President's Award Programme of the Republic of Guyana, this is the licence operator of the Duke of Edinburgh International Youth Award Association here in Guyana. This is a programme that caters for over 2,000 young people who do expeditions in Guyana and so on. So

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this is the President's Youth Award Republic of Guyana Programme, Duke of Edinburgh.

Agency 44 - Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport, Programme 443 - Youth - \$50, 073,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Pages 150 and 151

AGENCY 44 - MINISTRY OF CULTURE, YOUTH AND SPORT, Programme 444 - Sports

Question is proposed that the sum of \$65,789,000 for Agency 44 - Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport, Programme 444 - Sport - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Bernard.

Mr Deryck MA Bernard: Mr Chairman, I know that the National Sports Commission is a semi-autonomous quandary, if it is an appropriate word, so it only gets a subsidy from the Government, therefore it is difficult to ask some of the questions that I would wish to ask. They might not be appropriate. However, my first question is, is the Minister able to say what proportion of the work programme of the National Sports Commission is actually part of the sports programme of the education system of the school system?

Hon Gail Teixeira: The National Sports Commission, under Acct Code 6321, is a subvention agency. It is not semi-autonomous. It has an Act and it is a subvention agency and it holds very dear to itself its independence from the Minister. However, in terms of the question you asked, I may not be very exact in my answer, except to say that I know that a number of programmes that are run - netball, softball cricket, volleyball, and so on are geared towards school programmes. I would probably think that, out of their budget, maybe about ten to fifteen per cent may go into some programmes dealing with schooling youths. How tied that is to the Ministry of Education, I would not be able to correctly

portray.

Mr Deryck MA Bernard: Mr Chairman, I would like to ask the Minister whether she could not contemplate advising the relevant agencies that a more network system would benefit both sports and education.

The Chairman: I do not know if that is a relevant question, but I will leave it to the Minister if she wants to answer or not.

Hon Gail Teixeira: I think the National Sports Commission deals with the National Sports Association, the Olympic Association, for example, sport in the schools - as much as they can work with education, and obviously youths in the communities. As the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport, and because of funds that we have to operate with, funds to the Sports Commission and the Sports Associations to work along with youth at the community level, who may be in or outside of school, and try to encourage our colleagues in education to put more emphasis, budgetary and technical-wise, into the educational system. That is not to say that we do not pay attention, but there are so many youth clubs and sports clubs all around this country that need support and this is just a question of how we manage on what we have available.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, on the said Acct Code 6321 - Subsidies and Contributions to Local Organisations - with one such organisation being noted in the attachment, the National Sports Commission, the subvention of \$65,789,000, my question to the Minister is, it a prerequisite for this organisation to submit a budget on a prescribed format before the subvention is granted?

Hon Gail Teixeira: Yes, they submit a budget to the Ministry of Finance. We must submit an entire budget so all these heads would be detailed, and a programme as well.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander:

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Mr Vincent L Alexander: A Supplementary question - may I inquire from the Honourable Minister if he has knowledge of the National Sports Development Programmes by virtue of this process, on a line-item basis.

Hon Gail Teixeira: I would know when it is submitted to me, because it has to pass through me, when we have our management meetings, to prepare our budget submissions. Therefore, I would be very familiar with that.

Agency 44 - Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport, Programme 444 - Sport - \$65,789,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Pages 152 and 153

**AGENCY 44 - MINISTRY OF CULTURE, YOUTH AND SPORT,
Programme 445 - Youth, Entrepreneurial Skills Training**

Question is proposed that the sum of \$184,906,000 for Agency 44 - Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport, Programme 445 - Youth, Entrepreneurial Skills Training - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Bernard

Mr Deryck MA Bernard: Acct Code 6292 - Dietary - what work programme is funded under this head?

Hon Gail Teixeira: Mr Chairman, the Entrepreneur Skills Training deals with the Kuru Kuru Training Centre, as different from the Kuru Kuru Training College, which falls under my colleague's care, but the Kuru Kuru Training Centre, Sophia Training Centre, the New Opportunity Corps, which is in Essequebo, and also the Smithfield Drop-in Centre, which is in Angoy's Avenue, New Amsterdam. So it handles those four entities.

Under the Acct Code 6292 that the Honourable Member is asking, it

deals with the dietary arrangement for the staff and children, the students at NOC, and the live-in residential programme at Kuru Kuru - the youth training programme. That is what it would cover for an entire year - 365 days.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Acct Code 6294 - Other - What are the activities that are covered by this head and if, by any chance, it includes stipends for the participants of the various programmes and the Youth Entrepreneur Skills Training in particular.

Hon Gail Teixeira: Yes, this head deals with ... for example at NOC, the young people there, their clothes, cosmetics, deodorant, soap, tooth-paste, all those kinds of stuff; for Kuru Kuru and for all the places that I have listed the materials for the training programmes, whether it is equipment or wood, craft, paints, electrical work, air conditioning and welding and fabrication, all those materials that are needed for them, that would be included in the \$16,764,000, and included in that would be the young people at Kuru Kuru who get a stipend every month for being at Kuru Kuru for the ten months training programme. The kids at Sophia get a transport stipend for the six months programme there, and of course, for the children when they come out from NOC. They also have savings that they bring out from NOC.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Riehl

Mrs Clarissa S Riehl: Mr Chairman, I wish to ask the Honourable Minister a question on Acct Code 6292 - Dietary - a sort of follow-up, \$27,000,000 - could the Honourable Minister say how many students there are in both institutions - the NOC ... and give the gender, how many boys and how many girls are at NOC and Kuru Kuru College?

Hon Gail Teixeira: We do not only feed children. We also feed young people. We feed the staff who live-in in these areas. So let us go, Mrs Riehl. You asked a question, let's go:

NOC - 175 Children - 120 boys, the balance girls; 68 staff, 50 percent male and 50 percent female. They are fed three meals per day for 365 days.

Kuru Kuru Training Centre - 150 kinds, a staff of about 60-odd including security; 45 girls and the balance boys, and 43 percent of those kids are from the interior.

Agency 44 - Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport, Programme 445 - Youth, Entrepreneurial Skills Training - \$184,906,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Page 426

DIVISION 541 - MINISTRY OF CULTURE, YOUTH AND SPORT - YOUTH AND SPORTS

Question is proposed that the sum of \$1,152,200,000 for Division 541 - Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport - Youth and Sports - stands part of the Estimates.

Division 541 - Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport - Youth and Sports - \$1,152,200,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Pages 130 and 131

AGENCY 41 - MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, Programme 411 - Main Office

Question is proposed that the sum of \$286,594,000 for the Ministry of Education, Programme 411 - Main Office - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Deryck Bernard

Mr Deryck MA Bernard: First of all, under Acct Code 6301 - Education Subventions and Grants - there is a subvention to the Adult Education Association of \$14,000,000. My first question is whether the

Ministry has, in the recent past, conducted an evaluation of the programmes run by the AEA and whether they are satisfied and they were getting value for money.

The Chairman: The Honourable Minister, Dr Jeffrey

Hon Dr Henry B Jeffrey: I cannot say that it was what you will call a professional evaluation of the programme. We have had a look at the programme and we think that indeed the AEA has been doing a decent job. I think we did that assessment during the period when the AEA went to CIDA for some funding and they also got that funding from that source. However, I must say (well I am not going to go into that, I do not have to) that we have some problems with the organisation itself, and I think that we will have to work that through.

The Chairman: The Honour Member, Mr Bernard

Mr Deryck MA Bernard: Mr Chairman - Subsidy to the Caribbean Examinations Council. My question is whether the Ministry expects that the examination fee paid by candidates is likely to go up in 2005, or in the near future.

Hon Dr Henry B Jeffrey: There is in the air some notion that the fee should increase, I do not think that it is this year. They are expecting some kind of increase in the examination fees, not in our subsidies to the organisations

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, page 131, under Acct Code 6301, for Education Subventions and Grants, in relation to the attachment on page 381, I would like the Minister to confirm if the University of Guyana received a sum of \$385,000,000 subvention for the Turkeyn Campus, and \$93,104,000 for the Berbice Campus, and not the sum of \$1,300,000, which was stated in the Budget Debate by the Honourable Member, Mr Rajkumar. If there is any typographical error, as we may have experienced, you may do the corrections.

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Hon Dr Henry B Jeffrey: Mr Chairman, I thought, in my presentation, I stated the sum as stated in the Budget here.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Bernard

Mr Deryck MA Bernard: Mr Chairman, the activities include the work of the National Commission for UNESCO, and I would like the Minister to let us know what new work programmes are ongoing for 2005?

Hon Dr Henry B Jeffrey: I am the National Chairman for UNESCO and, of course, we have been doing some ongoing projects having to do with the projects themselves, because UNESCO facilitates a lot of projects in Guyana. I think this year they will facilitate about eight projects having to do with heritage, literature. I can always pass the projects on to you - a list of those projects if you so desire. UNESCO has a very important role to play in the question of education. That is where I think we want to lead it, because even the Fast Track Initiative itself we have some resource for is as a result is that education-for-all process. UNESCO has not been doing a lot there, but I think we have to lead it in that direction but, more of less, I will say that it has been doing a lot of projects in the schools. It has an environmental project but, as I said, I am prepared to let you have the programme, as a matter of fact.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, under the said head - Education Subvention and Grants - Acct Code 6301, and its Annexe, I note that all the Agencies listed here, they were given the sums revised for 2004, more or less the sums budgeted, except for one institution - Critchlow Labour College, where there is a substantial reduction. I note that, in 2005, the allocation remains the same or almost the same as for 2004, and I wish to ask the Honourable Minister if there is any preconditions, or criteria, which Critchlow has to satisfy to have this disbursement. Have they satisfied them? Are they outstanding? And if they are, what are they?

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Hon Dr Henry B Jeffrey: There were some kinds of dispute involving whether or not the College had audited accounts. My understanding is that, at this stage, they have brought those accounts up to date, there was then or not the company they used was a qualified auditor, but I think we have gone past that also. I think that also has been accepted, and they have been given a subvention for the first month of this year, which would be an indication that we have overcome the difficulty.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Bernard

Mr Deryck MA Bernard: Mr Chairman, under this head, there are several educational institutions that are listed under education delivery, because they have some amount of degree of autonomy, but they represent very different kind of institutions and I wondered whether the Minister had sought, from his officials, the cost of delivery per student of the various kinds of education represented here, so that we can know how efficient and effective we are, so that we know what it costs per student for the technical, for the residential secondary, for day-time secondary, and so on, and if not, if he does not have the information, could he let us have it? Or could he give us an undertaking that he would seek and provide us with that information?

Hon Dr Henry B Jeffrey: We have some kind of rudimentary information of that sort, but it is based strictly on our kind of dividing the number of students by the amount of resources we give to the institutions, which would turn out to say something at UG, maybe now at UG per student would cost about \$200,000. That is what we have come up with. The technical college - we said it is a little less than that - \$175,000 for the Teachers Training College. That is not what Mr Bernard is talking about us taking into consideration the overall administration of the education sector and adding that also to the process of costing. We have not done that. It is something that we need to do. We are doing it now for the primary and secondary levels, and I think certainly at the tertiary level that is something we need to do.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Miss Allen

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Miss Genevieve Allen: Mr Chairman, under this same head - Education Delivery - there is a reduction in the budgetary allocation for the Guyana Industrial Training Centre. Could the Minister please explain?

Hon Dr Henry B Jeffrey: That College is given a kind of subvention for it to do, what we will say, its own independent things, but it is covered under what we would have here at programme 5. Yes, there is a reduction. It is not a reduction in what we will call the education cost of the project, but it is a reduction in the kind of independent activities they could do this time. Yes, that is true.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: I now turn to Acct Code 6301, the Annex, and ask of the Honourable Minister to edify me on the very last provision, PS Education - previously ACU_Georgetown, provision of \$7,812,000. It is not easily understood as presented here. What is this for? What is that about?

Hon Dr Henry B Jeffrey: That is essentially where we deal with school welfare. I know that we used to do a little uniform and a little glasses and things like that. Many of the uniforms have now gone to the Ministry of Human Services, but we still provide some of the normal welfare things for the schools from that head.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Bernard

Mr Deryck MA Bernard: Mr Chairman, I am trying to discover where, if it is in this programme, that the schools welfare officers are located, and I do not think so. Well, I will ask the question, and if it is not here, 6116, or 6113, then I will ask the question under the appropriate subhead later on in the programme.

Hon Dr Henry B Jeffrey: The School Welfare comes under Programme 3 - Education Administration. School Welfare is a very loose arrangement we have there. If you will remember, at one time the welfare was with the Ministry of Human Services, and we have decided that

we would like the school welfare back in our system. I do not think that we have sorted out that matter yet permanently with the Public Service Ministry, because then it will no doubt have to move from Administration and come under Education Policy, but as is see it now - yes, it is under Programme 3.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mrs Melville

Mrs Shirley J Melville: Honourable Minister, it is a supplementary question to the two. Does the subsidies for the CXC examination, for example fall under this area also.

Hon Dr Henry B Jeffrey: This sum that you see here that we give to the CXC is subsidising the Secretariat. It has nothing to do with the students themselves, which comes up to about \$50,000,000 per year.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Basil Williams

Mr Basil Williams: May I respectfully refer you to Acct Code 6301? In respect of the Critchlow Labour College, the Honourable Minister, having confirmed that all impediments have been removed, in respect to the delay in payments of the subvention, and having confirmed that the sum has been paid for January this year, could the Honourable Minister indicate when they are going to pay the subvention for April to December 2004, or he could probably indicate why they have not paid it, but instead leap-frog over it?

Hon Dr Henry B Jeffrey: Let me say that you know how the budgeting is done. We are given the resources periodically, and we were not given the money for last year. Now we must wait upon the Ministry of Finance to give us any back-pay, as you would like to put it, but they are giving us the money for this year, so we are giving it to the College. I have no idea. We have made such representation, the College has made representation, and we will just wait and see.

Mr Basil Williams: A follow-up, Mr Chairman. Is the Honourable Minister confirming, or is giving an undertaking, that that subvention for

the period April to December, 2004 will be paid?

Hon Dr Henry B Jeffrey: I think I said that both my Ministry and the College have made representation.

Agency 41 - Ministry of Education, Programme 411 - Main Office - \$286,594,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Page 132 and 133

AGENCY 41 - MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, Programme 412 - National Education Policy, Implementation and Supervision

Question is proposed that the sum of \$154,452,000 for Agency 41 - Ministry of Education, Programme 412 - National Education Policy, Implementation and Supervision - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Bernard

Mr Deryck MA Bernard: Mr Chairman, if I could go to staff matters coming under Acct Codes 6116, and possibly 6112, I am particularly interested in finding out from the Minister whether he has the full complement of inspectors, whether he has all the inspectors in his inspectorate and if there are any vacancies and what are the subject areas?

Hon Dr Henry B Jeffrey: Yes, we have three inspectors that are short and we have had approval to fill those vacancies only about a week ago, and just in case you will ask, we do have approval to fill about fifty-three vacancies, and they are all in the system. Most of them are at NCERD. So as we go along, we can bear that in mind.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Bernard.

Mr Deryck MA Bernard: The Minister anticipated my second question. So I will have to go to the third question in some public controversy about the matter of the retaining of professional staff who have

attained normal retirement age, and therefore I would like to know whether, in fact, whether there are any senior technical or contracted employees who have been retained, or who have since been re-employed, or have been engaged, who are over the normal retirement age, and what criteria was used to decide which technicians and specialists would be employed past the normal retirement age and which would not be retained.

Hon Dr Henry B Jeffrey: Well, we have been in a process of attempting to delink NCERD from the Ministry itself, in a sort of corporitisation and, in attempting to do so, we have been advertising and we have been saying that the age limit as such is not a barrier to being employed in those organisations, maybe 70/60, but not the normal age limit of 55. There are some institutions such as NCERD that we have been attempting to do that with. In terms of the Ministry itself, we have also been taking on some people who are specialists. We tend to advertise, and again their qualifications determine whether or not they are taken on. It is as simple as that. We have a specific position, however, in the teaching profession, where we say that we will not take on anyone at primary or nursery, but will do so at secondary as per need. That itself is even a bit flexible, that we do say that if you go into the hinterland areas, if the region makes representation, if the communities make representation, there are nobody there that can fill the vacancies, well, therefore we will have to be flexible. All such vacancies, in terms of the teaching profession, come to the Ministry, signed by the CEO, signed off by the PS, and then go as recommendations to the Teaching Service Commission.

Mr Deryck MA Bernard: I want to ask about the particular scales - you will get them on Acct Codes 6116, and 6112, about two professional areas. That is, Education Planning and Education Testing, and I would like the Minister to give me an estimate of what plans he has now, and what plans he has to bring the Ministry's human resource in these areas up to speed. I am quite aware of the fact that we groan in this country for shortages in these two areas.

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Hon Dr Henry B Jeffrey: In the planning area, (I better not say so, because there is a chief planner) in terms of attempting to recruit people, we have been relatively, and I say relatively, major shortages, that is where the fifty-three people, most of them - nearly forty of them, we have just decided to take on to do the testing. But in the planning area, we have been relatively successful. How successful we are going to be in finding these people, are we going to pull them out of the school system? These are discourses that we are having. We can take on some people, but it is perhaps best that we take on in a sort of part-time, allow them to make more money, stay at home, do work, and only have a co-ordination. That may be possible to a limited extent, but that is the sort of discourse that is taking place at the moment, given the shortage of human resources in the country.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Miss Allen

Miss Genevieve Allen: Mr Chairman, page 132, Acct Code 6242 - Maintenance of Buildings - there is a revised for 2004 for \$54,540,000. Could the Minister say which buildings are programmed for maintenance?

Hon Dr Henry B Jeffrey: I have a list here with the kind of programmes we did. We did a few of these programmes in the regions. I have a note here that there was nothing budgeted in 2004 for this, but we received some resources and finance and we did some programmes in the regions. I have a list here, and I can pass it if you wish - Abary Primary, Corriverton Primary, Moruka Primary, New Amsterdam Multilateral, Essequibo - Greenidge Primary, Cotton Tree Nursery, and things like that. So you can have the list if you want.

Agency 41 - Ministry of Education, Programme 412 - National Education Policy, Implementation and Supervision - \$154,452,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Page 134 and 135

AGENCY 41 - MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, Programme 413 -

Ministry Administration

Question is proposed that the sum of \$742,900,000 for Agency 41 - Ministry of Education, Programme 413 - Ministry Administration - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Bernard. Mr Alexander is asking too many questions. *[Laughter]*

Mr Deryck MA Bernard: Programme 413 - Under this Programme, there is 4130405, if you look at Programme Outlines on Page 102, and it lists Special Projects, if the Minister could say what are the Special Projects, how much money is involved for 2005?

Hon Dr Henry B Jeffrey: That is essentially for the School Feeding Programme. We have had some luck in that area of course, because we have been given a lot of free milk and, as a result, you might see that we have not spent some of the money that we have been given. Of course, we have been trying some innovative things, as you have heard from the Honourable Member Mrs Melville, trying to tie up with the community. Instead of biscuits, we have been using cassava bread and peanut butter, which are produced in the community. They say that it is more nutritious. It was brought to me, and I must tell you that it tasted superbly. I tasted it myself and therefore we are trying that in Region 9. We are trying to leave some money in the community.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Bernard

Mr Deryck MA Bernard: On the same page, under head 4130203 - Management Information Systems - Could the Minister tell us which Departments, both at the Centre and the Regions, are now fully part of the Management Information Systems, and whether in particular personnel administration is now fully automated? If it is fully automated, why in the processing of teachers leave and other matters are still so slow?

Hon Dr Henry B Jeffrey: Well, we have been attempting to beef up the Information Technology Department in the Centre but, as I said in my budget presentation, we have put IT Officers in every single region of the country. It is important for us. It is part of our conditionalities that we do so and, in most of the projects that we do and we will have on-time information for most of the senior officers in the region. Right now, the Ministry, maybe one of the few Ministries, is twenty-four hours on-line straight to the satellite, and it would be possible, if we can tie this entire system up, for the Minister to get onto his computer for the planning of his office and know precisely what is the nature of any situation in any given school in any situation in the long run. In the short and medium term, we are thinking more in terms of being able to monitor some basic indicators at the regional level, indicators that we think are very important if the systems are going to move on.

Mr Deryck MA Bernard: I have a question on this head, Mr Chairman. I am trying to figure out what are the subventions under Acct Code 6301. In the notes at the back, there are subsidies, on page 381 for Agency Code 41, but I am not sure that I am able to discover what is the \$48,000,000 for under Acct Code 6301, Programme 413. If we can please be told where we can find it, or if it is not in the volume, can we know what are the subsidies under that subhead?

Hon Dr Henry B Jeffrey: That is for the subvention for the CXC and for education itself?

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, a supplementary question, is the Minister saying that the school feeding project is essentially milk and biscuits? In addition, could the Minister indicate that large quantities of biscuits remained unused during the last school year?

Hon Dr Henry B Jeffrey: First of all, yes, it is essentially that. As I said, we have been making an attempt to do different things, and there is talk, of course, of giving hot meals in certain of the hinterland areas. We believe that that is a very problematical thing. We will have to monitor, to audit. It will be very difficult, but it is on the table for discussion. I do

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not know if you were saying that there were some systematic destruction of milk and biscuit, but I have no doubt that almost every year, annually, particularly in the hinterland regions, where we take it to one spot and we expect it to get to another spot, that has occurred, and we tried to be a little more efficient and effective, but I have no doubt that you may well find incidents such as those.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Kadir, was trying to get my attention a long time.

Mr Abdul Kadir: Mr Chairman, under Acct Code 6224 - Print and Non-Print Materials - I noticed a reduction of approximately \$46,000,000 from Revised 2004 to Budget 2005. Will the Minister tell this House how this reduction in allocation will not compromise the education delivery for 2005?

Hon Dr Henry B Jeffrey: That is simple. I have been saying all through the year that the Ministry is the recipient of an Education Fast Track Initiative that will spend almost half a billion dollars in books and it therefore takes up some of that slack which will do some other things.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Dr Joseph.

Dr Dalgleish Jospheh: A supplementary question to the Minister on the School Feeding Programme. Could the Minister state what is the nutritional value of that meal? [*Interruption: That is not a question here.*]

Hon Dr Henry B Jeffrey: I will just answer him anyway. Before the people came to me, they went to the health people and they reckoned that it is better than the biscuit and milk I was giving, and furthermore, like the children are not too keen on the milk without the cassava bread. It appears that we will have a better rate of participation, at least in this process.

The Chairman: Honourable Member, do you want to ask a question?

Miss Genevieve Allen: Yes, Mr Chairman.

The Chairman: Proceed.

Miss Genevieve Allen: Page 135, Acct Code 6284 - Other - we have budgeted \$52,000,000, in 2004 the revised was \$61,896,000. Could the Minister explain?

Hon Dr Henry B Jeffrey: I just pointed out that we are on the internet twenty-four hours per day and it is costly. We are straight to the satellite, direct links and all of that, software operations, protection of fire walling and all that sort of thing. They cost a tremendous sum, and that is why we have the Other.

Agency 41 - Ministry of Education, Programme 413 - Ministry Administration - \$742,900,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Pages 136 and 137

AGENCY 41 - MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, Programme 414 - Training and Development

Question is proposed that the sum of \$437,519,000 for Agency 41 - Ministry of Education, Programme 414 - Training and Development - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander. I do not know why I am calling you Mr Alexander: The Honourable Member, Mr Bernard.

Mr Deryck MA Bernard: I am not so sure that I am flattered, Mr Chairman. *[Laughter]* Looking at the notes under this head on page 103, and therefore looking at the Senior Staff Acct Codes 6112 and 6116, I would like to know what is the complement of skilled staff-technical staff - in the Allied Arts Programme?

Hon Dr Henry B Jeffrey: I cannot tell you precisely what is the skilled staff in the Allied Arts Programme, but I can give you a breakdown of

the skilled and technical staff in the department as a whole. We have 171 persons in that department. Do not worry with these numbers that you see here. They are not real. They are wrong. There are seven Administrative; forty-six Senior Technical and Skilled; 40 Clerical and Office Support, and Semi-Skilled about twenty-seven. There are about 171 persons. It is over our limit, which is not what you have there - 168, but 135. The reason is that some of the staff at the Technical Institute are not on our establishment, but are found there. Again, I can give you the numbers.

Mr Deryck MA Bernard: Mr Chairman, I would still like to have the specific numbers on Allied Arts Programme, and I still want to ask my second question. If the Minister does not have the information then I would accept it by internet or in writing. What is the budget for the Allied Arts Programme?

Hon Dr Henry B Jeffrey: We will have to do some disaggregation there. I do not have that now, but I can always have it via satellite.

Mr Deryck MA Bernard: Thank you. Mr Chairman, I have an easier question now, because I am assuming that the Budget for NCERD has already been disaggregated, since it is going to be corporatised, and therefore I would be very surprised to hear that it has not been corporatised, so I would like to ask for the disaggregated budget of NCERD and the disaggregated staff. This time I want both professional, administrative, and support staff.

Hon Dr Henry B Jeffrey: I think he said it is easy, but I think he is being a bit wicked, because he knows that if it was being disaggregated, then it was indeed corporatised, it would have been a subvention, just like the University of Guyana and others. No, it has not been formally been passed into law, and we will have to place a thing here, instead of turning up and maybe we will never get to do it, the way things are looking, but it is our ideal. It is something that we are going for. Again, we can always disaggregate that, it should not take too long. I can give it to you if you want.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Bernard.

Mr Deryck MA Bernard: One last question - Page 103, the NCERD, area 41402, I am interested in Materials Production, and I would like to know if he would give us a list of what books, materials have been introduced in 2005, and what books are contracted to be produced outside of the Ministry in 2005, and if he could, under what education programmes?

Hon Dr Henry B Jeffrey: I think that NCERD has been doing a lot of revision of the text that exist - like the Easy Path Series on the Timehri Readers. NCERD have been doing a whole lot of printing. Indeed, much of this \$400,000,000 that we have spent is an attempt to print and get books back into the primary school. Based upon our new book policy which says that, we are not going to give you every text. We are going to provide the four basic texts for the four basic subjects and reading. NCERD has been doing a lot of that printing for us, and we have been upgrading the Timehri Readers and Easy Path Series from nursery right up. That is what we have been doing last year. But, again, I always say that the Ministry of Education is not the CIA. We have nothing to hide. As a result, you can always be given that information more specifically if you want.

Agency 41 - Ministry of Education, Programme 414 - Training and Development - \$437,519,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Pages 138 and 139

AGENCY 41 - MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, Programme 415 - Education Delivery Question is proposed that the sum of \$3,084,849,000 for Agency 41 - Ministry of Education, Programme 415 - Education Delivery - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Bernard

Mr Deryck MA Bernard: You will be relieved to know, just one

question. In terms of Administrative and Senior Technical Staff, I presume under this head includes the administration of Region Administration Programme, I would like to know what is the total regional administrative staff in Education, Regional Education Officers, Deputy Regional Education Officer, District Education Officers, et cetera, and what proportion of that establishment is filled and what is taken, if any, to fill the vacancies in Regional Administration?

Hon Dr Henry B Jeffrey: Let me just answer you here that we have had Regional Education Officers in every region, except perhaps Region 8, where we have somebody is working and acting, and therefore most of the positions for Regional Education Officers have been filled. We have been attempting to filled vacancies at the other level, just the Education Officers in the regions first. Again, we have permission to fill them in Georgetown and on the coast, but we say let us pay some attention to the regions. We have done that. I think we have gotten the permission, and therefore we are going to put these people. Bearing in mind that, when we talk about this, and we talk about vacancies ... we are talking about the position itself is vacant, there is always someone and he is working, but what we are saying is that they are not ...

Mr Deryck MA Bernard: ... confirmed

Hon Dr Henry B Jeffrey: ... but let us bear in mind, this has nothing to do with that. The Ministry itself does not employ Regional Education Officers. They are employed by the regions. They are on the regional establishment. That, you must understand that the Regional Education Officers are not creatures of the Ministry of Education. They are creatures of the regional system. They are the officers of the region, not officers of the Ministry of Education as such. So that must be understood quite clearly. Essentially, what you see here in this budget is about Georgetown. The reason why you see these problems here, in terms of numbers and establishment, is because the teachers are in there, they are nowhere else. The teachers are administrative staff in the schools in this place, so that is why you will say that it needs some sort of rectification, and we will have to get it done. If you go back, it is a couple of years it

has been there, and we need to get it done.

The Chairperson: The Honourable Member, Ms Allen

Miss Genevieve Allen: Mr Chairman, under Acct Code 6117 - Temporary Employees - We see a sum budgeted of \$30,754,000, but when we go to Staffing Details under Filled for 2004, we have a number of 120, and for 2005, it is blank. Could the Minister explain?

Hon Dr Henry B Jeffrey: My understanding of that number is that it is for part-time payment and part-time teachers, and we place here as temporary employees. As part-time work comes on, you might see, by the end of the year, you will see some sort of numbers around here, because I think they do some sort of a tabulation to talk about man-hours per man-day and things like that, but, essentially, this money you see here is to pay part-time teachers - part-time people in the system.

Agency 41 - Ministry of Education, Programme 415 - Education Delivery - \$3,084,849,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Pages 427 and 428

DIVISION 543 - MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Question is proposed that the sum of \$360,406,000 for Division 543 - Ministry of Education - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Bernard.

Mr Deryck MA Bernard: Mr Chairman, the question is about the Carnegie School of Home Economics, there is a sum here for the rehabilitation of the building and my question is, why was nothing contemplated, in terms of the upgrading of the equipment of that institution, in light of our ambitious plans for the expansion of tourism?

Hon Dr Henry B Jeffrey: I totally agree with you. I even suggested that the school should be corporatised, placed under some sort of Board, together with myself, the Ministry of Tourism and the Tourism Association, because it could be a very important institution. A few studies were done that demonstrated, quite clearly, that the equipment is not up to a speed, and that we need to do something about it. We have been waiting for some reply for the people who have done the study to see if we can get the money to put some sort of a comprehensive programme to put the institution at the centre of the tourist industry. We have not been able to do that so far, but it is certainly part of the general scheme of things.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Bernard.

Mr Deryck MA Bernard: Sir, I want to frame this question delicately. Project Codes 26011 and 45006, I wish to let the Minister know that I have heard about the advertising and contracting of textbooks, and I would like the Minister to tell us what steps he is taking to ensure that the printing of textbooks is done according to transparent and acceptable standards of procurement?

Hon Dr Henry B Jeffrey: Let me say that first, this is not what the rumbling is about. The rumbling is about the big money. This is petty and, as I said, the big money is the hundreds of millions of dollars, and it is the Fast Track Initiative, and it is a considerable sum. What we have done, after looking at things, we have pulled back that contract once already, as you know, and we have extended the time for another period, largely because everybody sat and they did the tender document, there are people who are saying that they do not understand them and so on. So we have been trying our best to be as fair as possible in this process. I went to the Ministry of Education about three years ago, perhaps the first day in my office, there were people who came there, *look, this is a problem*, and I did a thorough investigation of it, and I looked at it, and it appears to me that the complaint was more apparent than real, but nevertheless, we have been attempting to make this process as transparent as possible. That is all I can say at this stage. I do

hope that at the end, there is not too much quarrel and controversy.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, Project Code 26001 are original texts that are being created by the Ministry, or whether we are in fact using texts that already in production.

Hon Dr Henry Jeffrey: Yes, that is it - to revise. We are revising texts that are already in production. Indeed, to be truthful, if you notice, we have \$14,000,000 there, and that is about what we are using. The Ministry of Finance felt very charitable towards us and gave us that lot of money there, but that is not the sort of money that we normally use to do this kind of work. That is the reason why we did not utilise all of it and it was vired to other places.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Miss Allen

Miss Genevieve Allen: Mr Chairman, Project Code 45006, on the Legend it says, provision for institutional strengthening, could the Minister explain what is meant by that term?

Hon Dr Henry B Jeffrey: I think that you went to a few of the Education Fast Track Initiative meetings and seminars, and you know that that is wrong. The Education Fast Track Initiative is indeed a Project intended to really bring primary education up to speed by 2015, and with particular emphasis on the hinterland regions, and therefore it does all that kind of thing. It is not simply a matter of any kind of an institutional strengthening of any thing. It is getting textbooks, school feeding programme. It has a strong school feeding programme, and things like that.

Division 543 - Ministry of Education - \$360,406,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Page 429

DIVISION 544 - MINISTRY OF EDUCATION - SECONDARY SCHOOL REFORM PROJECT

Question is proposed that the sum of \$0,000,000 for Division 544 - Ministry of Education - Secondary School Reform Project - stands part of the Estimates.

Division 544 - Ministry of Education - Secondary School Reform Project - \$0,000,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Page 432

DIVISION 547 - GUYANA EDUCATION ACCESS PROJECT (Project Code 26001)

Question is proposed that the sum of \$350,000,000 for Division 547 - Guyana Education Access Project (Project Code 26001) - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Bernard

Mr Deryck MA Bernard: Just a small question, Sir, for this project did the Government have to make any counterpart contribution?

Secondly, what proportion of the technical proportion is money paid to consultants recruited from outside of Guyana?

Hon Dr Henry B Jeffrey: It is one school that has left, it is a school in Linden, the physical infrastructure. That is all that is left on the project. There is a problem here, in the sense that, if you go for the soft side of

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education, if you start talking quality in education, and trying to improve standards, the cost of the consultancy grows in relation to the problem and therefore, if you come to the BEAMS Project, you might see, not this one so much, we had a large institutional building component, we built schools in Linden and Corriverton and substantial schools - Linden Foundation. I do not know how you are going to maintain it, but we built it. The truth is, that in a programme like that, maybe you had about twenty-five, percent in terms of real consultancies. When I say consultancy, I mean that is not in the admin cost of the project. That is where you will pay consultants outside of that, so overall you might end up with forty/forty-five percent. But when you get to the BEAMS Project, that is nearly fifty/fifty percent, because that is more the soft side of education.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Mr Chairman, a supplementary question, it might be a little off-key, but the Minister referred to the BEAMS Project, but when we dealt with the head, which we passed, we saw zero.

Hon Dr Henry B Jeffrey: No, it is here. It has been shifted. Page 439

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Thank you. However, I wish to ask a question in relation to the head before us, specific to the textbooks, which are the textbooks we are requiring.

Hon Dr Henry B Jeffrey: This project is essentially dealing with secondary schools, and they bought some textbooks for the schools in the area. That is essentially what that is. That had nothing to do with the printing and revising of textbooks. That was for some textbooks they bought for the schools during the project.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander

Mr Vincent L Alexander: A supplementary question, these books were not books that were produced by the Ministry of Education. These

were books bought from other publishers?

Hon Dr Henry B Jeffrey: Yes.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: I would like to inquire whether these books were bought on the open market for tender process or whether they were acquired from the publishers.

Hon Dr Henry B Jeffrey: The British bought those books and they were bought through the Crown Agents. That is what they did.

Division 547 - Guyana Education Access Project (Project Code 26001) - \$350,000,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Page 439

DIVISION 553 - BASIC EDUCATION ACCESS AND MANAGEMENT SUPPORT PROGRAMME (Project Code 12001)

Question is proposed that the sum of \$791,000,000 for Division 553 - Basic Education Access and Management Support Programme (Project Code 12001) - stands part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Bernard

Mr Deryck MA Bernard: Mr Chairman, arising out of my question to Division 547, may I ask what, if any, funds are available under Division 553 or Institutional Development of professionals and technicians to supplement, and even replace, the consultants that are part of the burden of these kinds of projects?

Hon Dr Henry B Jeffrey: I think, for instance, as you know, when Sir John Daniels was here the other day, I discussed with him a notion that the University of Guyana and Indira Gandhi University should get together and do the MSC Programme what we have factored into this for

senior education people, a cadetship programme for education people. So it is intended ... of course, nobody sets up a programme that, when the consultants leave, that there is no one on the ground, no continuity. So the programme does that. It talks about succession management and all that sort of thing. So it has all of that within in it, and it is not simply for the Ministry of Education itself, the centre, but for the process throughout the regions.

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Miss Allen

Miss Genevieve Allen: Mr Chairman, under Civil Works there is a sum of \$532,186,000, and I checked under the profile the names of the schools that would have been rehabilitated, or constructed, and I did not see it, so I am going to ask the Minister if he can indicate to us which schools have been earmarked?

Hon Dr Henry B Jeffrey: Well, we have been doing North Ruimveldt, the Multilateral schools in general, Bygeval and the one here, Tutorial, Aurora Secondary. I cannot remember all of them, but you can always get the schools. That is not a problem.

The Chairperson: The Honourable Member, Miss Allen, you may proceed.

Miss Genevieve Allen: The profile indicates curriculum development and technology improvement in nursery and primary schools, and improvement of secondary schools.

Hon Dr Henry B Jeffrey: What is the question?

Miss Genevieve Allen: Let me ask the question this way: Are nursery schools, secondary and primary schools going to be included into the Civil Works Programme?

Hon Dr Henry B Jeffrey: No, secondary schools

The Chairman: The Honourable Member, Mr Alexander

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Mr Vincent L Alexander: My question simply is, under this BEAMS Programme, am I correct to conclude the reform of the Education Act is included, and if I am right, can the Minister indicate under which one of the provisions it will fall, and what is the projected sum?

Hon Dr Henry B Jeffrey: Yes, under the Organisation of Human Resource and Capacity Building, that is where that project will be placed.

Mr Vincent L Alexander: Is there a projected sum for the project?

Hon Dr Henry B Jeffrey: Mr Alexander has a sense of self-interest here. Yes, there is indeed some monies for doing the consultations and all of that. However, the level and the width of those resources, I am not certain how far the resources will go, but there is some money. We must bear in mind that we have had a PRSP process; we had a process with us going around the country; we had 38 consultancies for the strategic plan; we had a PRSP process, and now we want to go around to do an Education Act. I am saying that the only argument of the people, they are saying that yes, we need to do this, but we need to take into consideration what we have already on the ground, before we move on and see if we need to do as extensive project, but the money is there and we will do whatsoever, for the most part, that it can do.

Division 553 - Basic Education Access and Management Support Programme (Project Code 12001) - \$791,000,000 - agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Honourable Members, this brings us to an end of our business for today. The Honourable Prime Minister, will you move that the House stands adjourned until tomorrow March 9 at 14:00h, subject to the Assembly resuming first.

ASSEMBLY RESUMED

Hon Samuel AA Hinds: Mr Speaker, I propose that this House stands

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adjourned until tomorrow at 14:00h.

Adjourned accordingly at 19:20h