

**THE**  
**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES**  
**OFFICIAL REPORT**

[Volume 7]

**PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE NATIONAL  
ASSEMBLY OF THE THIRD PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA UNDER THE  
CONSITUTION OF GUYANA**

---

**82<sup>nd</sup> Sitting**

**2 p.m.**

**Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> December, 1975**

---

**MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**Speaker**

Cde.Sase Narain, J.P., Speaker

**Members of the Government – People’s National Congress (50)**

**Prime Minister (1)**

Cde. L.F.S. Burnham, O.E., S.C., **(Absent)**  
Prime Minister

**Deputy Prime Minister (1)**

Cde. P.A, Reid, **(Absent)**  
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Development

**Senior Ministers (9)**

Cde.H.D. Hoyte, S.C.,  
Minister of Economic Development

\*Cde. H. Greene, **(Absent)**  
Minister of Co-operatives and National Mobilisation

**\*Non-elected Minister**

\*Cde. H.O. Jack,  
Minister of Energy and Natural Resources

**(Absent)**

\*F.E. Hope,  
Minister of Finance

\*Cde. S.S. Naraine, A.A.,  
Minister of Works and Housing

\*Cde. G.A. King,  
Minister of Trade and Consumer Protection

**(Absent – on leave)**

\*Cde. G.B. Kennard, C.C.H.,  
Minister of Agriculture

\*Cde. C.L. Baird,  
Minister of Education and Social Development

\*Cde. F.R. Willis S.C.,  
Minister of Foreign Affairs and Justice

### **Ministers (5)**

Cde. W.G. Carrington,  
Minister of Labour

**(Absent)**

Cde. S.M. Field-Ridley,  
Minister of Information and Culture

**(Absent – on leave)**

Cde. B. Ramsaroop,  
Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and leader of the House

\*Cde. O.M.R. Harper,  
Minister of Health

**(Absent)**

\*Cde. C.V. Mingo,  
Minister of Home Affairs

### **Ministers of State (9)**

Cde. M. Kasim, A.A.,  
Minister of State for Agriculture

### **\*Non-elected Ministers**

Cde. O.E. Clarke,  
Minister of State – Regional  
(East Berbice/Corentyne)

**(Absent)**

Cde. P. Duncan, J.P.,  
Minister of State – Regional (Rupununi)

Cde. C.A. Nascimento,  
Minister of State,  
Office of the Prime Minister

Cde. M. Zaheeruddeen, J.P.,  
Minister of State – Regional  
(Essequibo Coast/West Demerara)

Cde. K.B. Bancroft,  
Minister of State - Regional  
(Mazaruni/Potaro)

**(Absent)**

\*Cde. W. Haynes,  
Minister of State for Consumer Protection

**(Absent – on leave)**

\*Cde. A. Salim,  
Minister of State – Regional  
(East Demerara/West Coast Berbice)

**(Absent)**

\*Cde. F.U.A. Carmichael,  
Minister of State – Regional (North West)

### **Parliamentary Secretaries (8)**

Cde. J.R. Thomas,  
Parliamentary Secretary,  
Ministry of National Development

**(Absent)**

Cde. C.E. Wrights, J.P.,  
Parliamentary Secretary,  
Ministry of Works and Housing

Cde. M.M. Ackman,  
Parliamentary Secretary,  
Office of the Prime Minister and Government Chief Whip

### **\*Non-elected Ministers**

Cde. E.L. Ambrose,  
Parliamentary Secretary,  
Ministry of Agriculture

Cde. S. Prashad,  
Parliamentary Secretary,  
Ministry of Co-operatives and National Mobilisation

Cde. J.P. Chowritmootoo,  
Parliamentary Secretary,  
Ministry of Education and Social Development

**(Absent – on leave)**

Cde. R.H.O. Corbin,  
Parliamentary Secretary,  
Office of the Prime Minister

**(Absent)**

Cde. M. Corrica,  
Parliamentary Secretary,  
Ministry of Works and Housing

**(Absent)**

### **Deputy Speaker (1)**

Cde. R.C. Van Sluytman, Deputy Speaker

### **Other Members (16)**

Cde. J.N. Aaron

Cde. L.M. Branco

Cde. E.H.A. Fowler

Cde. J. Gill

Cde. W. Hussain

Cde. S. Jaiserrisingh

**(Absent – on leave)**

Cde. K.M.E. Jonas

**(Absent – on leave)**

Cde. M. Nissar

Cde. L.E. Ramsahoye

Cde. J.G. Ramson

Cde. P.A. Rayman

Cde. E.M. Stoby, J.P.

Cde. S.H. Sukhu, M.S., J.P.

Cde. C. Sukul, J.P.

Cde. H.A. Taylor

Cde. L.E. Willems

**Members of the Opposition – Liberator Party (2)**

Mr. M.F. Singh, Leader of the Opposition

Mrs. E. DaSilva

**OFFICERS**

Clerk of the National Assembly – F.A. Narine

Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly – M.B. Henry, AMBIM

4.12.75

National Assembly

2.10 -2.20 p.m.

**Prayers**

**Public Business**

**MOTION**

**APPROVAL OF ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURE 1976**

*Assembly resolved itself into Committee of Supply to resume consideration of the Estimates of Expenditure for the Financial year 1976, totalling \$449,762,120.*

*Assembly in Committee of Supply*

**The Chairman:** Page 68.

**HEAD 26 – MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE**

*Question proposed that the sum of \$2,140,221 for Head 26, Ministry of Agriculture stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Singh):** Before speaking on subhead 1, item (23) and subheads 2, 5, and 7, let me make a general observation. Looking at these Estimates I see columns indicating that these are actual figures for 1973 and 1974 and I am rather surprised that the 1973 figures that are supposed to be actual have all been rounded off to the nearest \$100 whereas if we look at page 69 the actual for 1973 we see what does appear to be actual. As I said, a look at the next page would make it obvious that they cannot be actual.

Dealing with subhead 1, item (23), Temporary Clerical Assistance, this is something we touched on before. We welcome the hon. Minister in the House. I understand he was indisposed.

I know that there has been influenza all over the country. I had a touch of it last week. The Minister looks well and we are always happy to have all the Ministers in the House.

We did, in fact, discuss this accounting matter in the House. There is the question of whether to put a nominal sum or not. I submit that the usual token amount of a nominal sum, which the Ministry of Finance would tell us should be put, has not been put because we cannot call \$13,000 a nominal sum for Temporary Clerical Assistant. \$13,000 is not like \$100 or \$10 or \$1. So they have increased it to \$1,000. This has been going on since 1973 where they have the actual as \$13,000. In 1974 the amount was \$323,100; the 1975 Revised is \$329,855. Why do we therefore put \$13,000 for 1976. We are not putting a token amount. It looks as though it is in the level of \$200,000 or \$250,000. This year it is \$329,000. I think we will be much nearer reality if we did put that kind of figure. The hon. Prime Minister did accept this point.

In respect of subhead 2, Transport and Travelling, the sum of \$60,000 was approved in the 1975 Estimates for Transport and Travelling. I am very happy to note that the figure has been reduced in the Revised Estimate to \$42,000 and for 1976 the Ministry is asking for \$50,000 less than they asked for this year. So that I think one has to give credit where credit is due. Let me compliment this Ministry for keeping it down its expenses on Transport and Travelling. We are always very happy to see that expenditure is less than what was provided in the Estimates. Here is a case where almost every other Ministry says "increased cost of fuel" but this Ministry is saying "we want less" for something as vital as transport. We all hear about gas having gone up and so on. So for this particular subhead our compliments go out to the Minister and his Ministry.

Subhead 5, Telephones. Here, sir, I see that even though the sum required for 1975 was \$138,000 the sum requested for 1976 is \$178,000. The legend says "increased activities." I am wondering whether there are increased activities or whether the Minister is catering for any arrears on telephone bills. It does seem a significant increase from \$138,000 to \$178,000. Maybe the hon. Minister might be able to tell us what are the increased activities.

4.12.75

National Assembly

2.20 -2.30 p.m.

In respect of subhead 7, Subsidy on Oil, I note that we provided a token amount of \$1 in the 1975 Revised Estimates. But this has been revised to \$430,000 for the subsidy on oil this year and we are not providing anything for next year. Does the hon. Minister not envisage that there would be expenditure more than \$1 in respect of this item during next year?

2.20 p.m.

**The Chairman:** Cde. Minister of Agriculture.

**The Minister of Agriculture (Cde. Kennard):** Cde. Chairman, in respect of the observations on item (23), Temporary Clerical Assistance, \$13,000 in keeping with policy for 1976 to contain expenditure as far as possible, we have made this nominal provision for temporary clerical assistance and it is the intention to so deploy our clerical resources in the Ministry to be able to cope with any increase in the clerical work load. Hence, this low figure of \$13,000.

The observations of the hon. Leader of the Opposition with respect to Transport and Travelling is welcome and, again, this reflects the awareness of economics in the administration of the Ministry of Agriculture.

On the question of telephones, the increase is unfavourable being represented by additional facilities. For example, yesterday we opened a new land and surveys building, a building which has cost some one and a half million dollars. We have had to install quite a number of telephones and part of the increased cost is reflected there. In addition, there are a number of additional projects such as the I.B.R.D.'s education project. We have to provide staff in the Ministry for the establishment of a training centre and the like. Similarly, there has been the establishment of the Animal Health Training Centre, a completely new institution in the Ministry, hence, the increased demand for telephones. The increase is attributable solely to the additional facilities within the Ministry.

With respect to subhead 7, Subsidy on Oil and the provision of \$1, the international price of vegetable oil has been declining. In fact, it declined last year and this trend seems to be continuing. Crops and commodities like soya bean have been good and this has resulted in reduced prices in soya bean oil. We do hope to reduce this subsidy in 1976 and wipe it out completely. If, of course, the price for edible oil should increase on the international market for some reason or the other then it would be necessary for a supplementary provision, but as at present forecast it seems unlikely the price would increase to the level which would necessitate and additional subsidy.

*Head 26, Ministry of Agriculture - \$2,140,221 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Pages 69 to 75.

#### **HEAD 27 – MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AGRICULTURE**

*Question proposed that the sum of \$12,604,719 for Head 27, Ministry of Agriculture, Agriculture, stand part of the Estimates.*

**Mr. Singh:** Mr. Chairman, on page 69 I will list many items but the majority of my comments will be related vacancies in this Section of the Ministry.

**The Chairman:** May I suggest that you speak on vacancies without calling the numbers unless you want specifically to call them.

**Mr. Singh:** No, sir. And then there may be other heads. Would the hon. Minister like me to call them out or just mention them as I speak? Take for example,...

**The Chairman:** I would say on the question of vacancies you would speak generally, you would make reference but there but there are other items you may wish to speak on.

**Mr. Singh:** I can go through and identify the items. Page 69 deals with vacancies generally. On page 70 it is also a question of staffing. On page 71 I should like to speak on item (61) and item (118), on page 72 items (123), (131) and (132) and on page 73 subheads 40 and 48.

On page 69, a look at the figures would make it quite apparent that there are a number of vacancies in this Department. We do know that there are problems in respect of filling vacancies particularly those of a technical nature, a specialist nature, but there must an indication that these vacancies have been existing for over long periods. We seem to keep voting moneys every year which obviously sends up the amount in personal emoluments, and the revised amounts are drastically reduced because there seems to be no bodies. It must necessarily affect the efficiency of the Department if you have posts and they are not filled. If you have all the positions filled then the work of the Ministry would be more efficient.

Item (2), Supernumerary Chief Agriculture Officer. There is a provision of \$1. One might ask another question. It is supernumerary, and supernumerary is to preserve the pension rights of some particular person. Are we keeping this post open in order to preserve the pension rights of somebody who is seconded elsewhere? Would the hon. Minister tell us?

### **2.30 p.m.**

If we look further down, for example, at the post Agricultural Officer/Agricultural Assistant, item (8), the amount voted was \$6,384 but the revised amount is only \$2,128. Item (9) Statistical Officer states very clearly in the legend that the office is vacant even though the amount of \$2,060 is in the Revised Estimates. If we look at item (11), there are supposed to be 4 posts of Agricultural Technical Assistant I and the sum of \$10,284 was voted for those four posts but only \$6,576 was spent, obviously indicating that all those posts are not filled. I would not call

out the figures but the same thing applies with respect to all those posts; the amounts are provided to meet the salaries of the posts but the revised figures are significantly less, obviously indicating vacancies. The same thing applies with respect to item (15), Senior Microbiologist, item (16) Senior Agricultural Engineer, item (17) Agriculture Chemist, item (18) Economic Botanist, item (19) Fisheries Officer, item (22) Plant Pathologist, item (23) Plant Breeder, and item (24) Crop Agronomist. There are supposed to be 3 Crop Agronomists but all are obviously not there.

Item 26 deals with 57 posts of Agricultural Technical Assistant and that amount has been significantly underspent too so that there appear to be vacancies in all the posts listed.

If we turn over the page, we can see the same thing in respect of items (31) and (32), Production Manager (Veterinary Sciences) and Production Manager (Animal Husbandry). I want to say particularly that I am worried about this Veterinary Officer, Senior Livestock Officer, Veterinary Officer, Livestock Officer, Poultry Officer, Farm Manager, Senior Livestock Assistant, Livestock Assistant. All of these being recorded here have been underspending in 1975 and, as I said, if all the posts were filled there would be no need to underspend the money like that. I am itemising the posts because we want to realise that these are important posts.

Recently we passed legislation whereby it is necessary for the slaughtering of animals to be approved by the veterinary section of the Ministry of Agriculture so that even though I cannot say that I have heard any complaints, we have to be careful. I have not in fact heard any but there were great fears expressed at the time when that legislation was in the House, that the Ministry did not have the staff to really tackle that type of legislation but the hon. Deputy Prime Minister, at that time, did make some amendments to include not only Veterinary Officers but Veterinary Assistants or some junior Livestock Officers. There obviously are vacancies here and I am worried.

There are also vacancies in the posts of Senior Agricultural Officer, item (45), Agricultural Officer/Agricultural Assistant, item (46) and Agricultural Field Assistant, item (50). There are supposed to be 90 Agricultural Field Assistants. That vote has also been underspent.

Now, moving out of these Veterinary posts and agricultural posts, we look at the Food and Nutrition Development division which seems to be a relatively new division. We see that for items (53) and (54), Senior Food Scientist and Food Scientist, the money has been underspent. There are also supposed to be 5 Agricultural Technical Assistants I and II. The sum of \$13,320 was provided but only \$7,152 was spent.

We go on to the Soils division. Soil Physicist, item (57), Soil Surveyor, item (58) and Agricultural Chemist, item (59); all of these items have been underspent. I wonder how much these vacancies have affected the efficiency of the Department.

Now, across the page, on page 71, there is item (61) Agricultural Technical Assistant Trainees. That makes me very happy because obviously the Ministry must have realised the problem. They are now asking for \$122,400 for training in 1976 and I mention this because I would like the Minister to tell us his plans in respect of these Agricultural Technical Assistant Trainees. I presume "agricultural" will also cover the Veterinary section and, in view of all those shortages, I wonder whether this money is enough and what will be the end results. How long will it take to train these people? Of course, some of them will need degrees training. But, at least, this is a start being made and this is very commendable. This vote never appeared before in any form in the Ministry.

Touching briefly on item (118), I note that there is a post of 1 Vehicle Driver and the sum provided in the 1975 Approved Estimates was \$2,580 but the revised amount is \$21,225 in 1975 so there seems to be something wrong somewhere. The same would apply to page 72, item (123), Agricultural Technical Assistant I. There again it is one person. The sum approved was \$2,796 but the revised amount is \$16,440.

Item (131), Laboratory Assistant I, the sum asked for in 1975 was \$2,256 but there is nothing in the Revised Estimates at all so I can only presume this position is completely vacant. Item (132). There are 2 posts of Charwoman. The sum asked for in 1975 was \$3,504 but the revised amount was \$24,466. There seems to be something wrong there.

On page 73, subhead 40, Can Grove Emergency Fund Relief Committee. In 1975 the Approved Estimates provided \$500. There is nothing listed in the 1975 Revised Estimates. For 1976, the sum of \$500 is being sought. We will use nothing in 1975 but we are still asking for the same level of \$500 in 1976. I know that Cane Grove did not suffer that serious disaster in either 1967 or 1968 and I am wondering whether there are still problems which would necessitate this voted provision of \$500. We did not use it this year. Is there some reason to believe that we should use it next year? If there is not, well then, we should take it out of the

**2.40 p.m.**

Estimates. With respect to subhead 48, Subsidy on Poultry Feed, the sum of \$3,480,000 was provided in 1975. We are expected to spend that in 1975 according to the revised figures but in 1976 the Ministry is asking for more; it is asking for \$4,500,000.

I have no objection to the fact that the Ministry is asking for more money but I would like to reiterate what I said last year in respect of the poultry feed. First of all, before I go on let me say that during last year we read an article in the morning newspapers that the poultry production for 1975 would be approximately 17,000,000 lbs. We know that in Georgetown and, indeed, in the other districts, it has been most difficult, within recent times, to obtain chicken, either plucked or life ones. We have had this problem and it has not ended. The situation has improved somewhat but it is still not as easy as it used to be to get chicken. The amount of 17,000,000 lbs is a significant figure. Where are these chickens? We are not seeing them.

I have been talking to people recently and some of the small chicken farmers have told me that they have got to close down their pens because it has become uneconomical to rear

**4.12.75**  
**(Mr. Singh continues)**

**National Assembly**

**2.40 -2.50 p.m.**

chickens and produce eggs. According to them, there has been a reduction in the quality of feed being put on the market now. They complain that it is taking a much longer time to produce chickens of the required size and to produce eggs. It is taking almost one and a half times to bring a bird to the stage where you can put it on the market. They do not feel they can survive with this state of affairs.

I did raise the question last year about an examination of the quality of feed put on the market. I want to repeat that request for an examination because, far from improvement complaints come to us in this particular field. I am certainly very happy about the subsidy because it does make it possible to get chickens at a cheaper price. I am sure all the housewives would agree with me that they are happy about this. Let us get chicken at the present moment. We do have difficulty in getting them.

**The Chairman:** Cde. Minister of Agriculture.

**The Minister of Agriculture (Cde. Kennard):** Cde. Chairman, with respect to the general question of vacancies referred to by the hon. Member, this matter should be looked at with respect to two situations: (a) The supply of trained personnel and, (b) the demand for trained personnel.

In connection with Veterinary and Livestock Science, there is a shortage of trained Agriculturalists and Veterinary Officers. On the supply side, this has been brought about by the facts of history, namely, that in the past very few Guyanese ventured into the field of agriculture as a profession. They chose other fields. Now that we have mounted a very strong Agricultural development programme, the supply is not there since the persons have not been trained.

On the demand side, not only do we need trained personnel in the Ministry but there are also competing demands such as the sugar industry, competing demands in the schools for Agriculturalists, competing demands in Public Corporations such as the Agricultural Products

**4.12.75**

**National Assembly**

**2.40 -2.50 p.m.**

Corporation, the National Service and the like. So that, now that there is this tremendous upsurge of interest in agriculture, the demand far exceeds the supply.

But what are we doing about it? This year we have recruited some eleven Agricultural Officers who were trained at the University of the West Indies. These professional have been on Government of Guyana Scholarships for training in agriculture and have returned home now to serve. The programmes for the award of scholarships for training in agriculture are being greatly intensified to train these persons at the University of the West Indies and further afield in the case of Veterinary Officers. For example, we have a contract with the ..... in the United States for the training of Veterinary Surgeons and we do expect, from next year, an intake from the students who are now studying at U.G. But more than sending scholars to the U.W.I. and further afield, we are exploring the desirability of introducing a degree course in agriculture at the University of Guyana so that we would have a greatly increased number of students studying agriculture right here under local conditions and hence have a Faculty of Agriculture within the University of Guyana to deal with this question of training of professional agriculturalists.

At the same time an investigation has been mounted to evaluate whether it would be

**2.50 p.m.**

feasible to mount a training programme for Veterinary Surgeons within the Caricom regions. This study is taking place at the moment and when the report is received, we will know whether it will be possible to have Veterinary Surgeons trained within the regions. This would, like the Agriculturalists I mentioned a while ago, result in an increased flow of Veterinary Surgeons for service not only in Guyana but to other sister countries in Caricom.

At the sub-professional level – because the hon. Member has referred to the large number of vacancies and the like – we are expanding the facilities at the Guyana School of Agriculture to double the intake of students. This programme is being partly financed by a loan from the World Bank. By doubling the intake, obviously we hope to double the supply and, therefore, to have an

easier time with respect to recruitment as soon as the facilities have been erected, the teaching staff recruited and the programme gets moving.

In addition to training at the Guyana School of Agriculture, under the World Bank Programme, we are to establish 6 rural training centres in agricultural areas. For example, in Berbice, Bartica, Essequibo and so on we will have young people trained in agriculture within their regions, not only to serve more effectively on their own farms but to serve as settlers on the settlements; to be organised and also to serve within the Ministries, Public Corporations, sugar companies and so forth as skilled trained agriculturists. By these means, Cde. Chairman, we hope to reduce, if not, to wipe out this shortage of trained personnel.

Already this year we have established at Mon Repos a centre for training animal health assistants. These are sub-professionals to Veterinary Surgeons. These animal health assistants at the international institution actually established at Mon Repos will, on graduation, be sent into the fields and into urban areas to supplement the work that is done by our Veterinary Surgeons and collectively they will provide a better service to the livestock industry. So the problem has been recognised and, as you have seen, steps are being taken to remove the problem.

The hon. Member, the Leader of the Opposition, has referred to the token vote for the Supernumerary Chief Agricultural Officer. The reason for the token provision of \$1 is that we have seconded the Chief Agricultural Officer, Mr. Carter, to this training programme devoting his attention to all the ramifications of this very urgent and progressive programme and it is therefore necessary to employ a Supernumerary Agricultural Officer to perform his function, that Supernumerary being the present Deputy, Mr. Chesney. So much for vacancies, Cde.Chairman.

With respect to the observation on pages 71, item (118) is a typographical error and I wish to tender my apologies to the House in particular to the hon. Member. Rather than \$221,225 the figure should have been \$2,225.

On subheads 131 and 132, here, too, there seem to be typographical errors. Fortunately the sums involved are relatively minor and do not affect the body of the Estimates to any significant extent.

On page 73 subhead 40, the \$500 shown under Cane Grove Emergency Fund Relief Committee may be considered to be a token provision. I am advised that there are still one or two minor amounts which are to be brought to account. This provision would ensure that those small accounts are paid when the vouchers have been mobilised and located.

With respect to item (48), Subsidy and Poultry Feed, like the vacancies referred to a while ago, this is a problem of supply and demand. Poultry production has reached an unprecedented level. Production is at a record level. Production next year will exceed the 1975 record, hence the provision for the feed subsidy.

The demand for poultry meat seems to be increasing beyond all expectations. Poultry meat appears to be the most popular protein meat these days. Perhaps consumption is being encouraged by a large number of restaurants, self-services, bars and the like which encourage consumption. This is a good thing, the demand is increasing and the supply occasionally has fallen somewhat short of the demand. This is seasonal. Over the past two months we have had some shortage of supply in relation to that very demand though supply has been much more than last year. The problem has been created by the production of chicks. We have had some misfortune with the arrival of eggs in Guyana. We had misfortunes in the hatching of eggs. The hatcheries are reporting very substantial losses of eggs in the incubators. This, therefore, reduced the output of chicks to be fed to the broiler houses. The problem, therefore, seems to have been an important one, that is, of bringing in eggs from overseas, which were to mark. I will now advise that the difficulty has been resolved and there will be an abundance of chicken on the market for Christmas and thereafter.

We have had reports about the occasional variation in the quality of poultry feeds and we have had a number of meetings with the two major poultry feed producers one being in the private sector and the other in the Government sector. As a result of these meetings the supervision within the factories will be increased. Members might have seen recently in the newspapers an advertisement by at least one of those factories for the employment of additional Superintendents. In addition, our own analytical facilities are now operational. We have imported equipment this year and this equipment is now operational which will check the quality of feeds, not only poultry feeds, but all feeds being turned out by the feed factories.

So by improved supervision within the factories themselves, with a check being made by the Ministry of Agriculture and with additional vigilance by the Ministry itself, through the Animal Health Assistants and others appointed to service the industry, in the livestock industry there ought to be no complaints about the quality of the poultry feeds being supplied to poultry rearers.

*Head 27, Agriculture - \$12,604,719 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**3 p.m.**

**The Chairman:** Pages 74 to 76.

## **HEAD 28 – MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE LANDS AND SURVEYS**

*Question proposed that the sum of \$3,154,525 for Head 28, Ministry of Agriculture, Lands and Surveys, stand part of the Estimates.*

**Mr. Singh:** I hope to make a few general remarks on this Head and then speak on page 75, items

(42) and (58). Page 76, subheads 11 and 12. This is the Lands and Surveys Division of the Ministry of Agriculture and just now we were dealing with the Veterinary posts and the agriculture posts and we dealt with the shortages of the vacancies in those categories. Now we will be dealing with the lands and surveys and the vacancies in this Department because the same pattern exists here and we have to bear in mind that the country will not be able to proceed apace with its development unless this particular Department is properly staff and operating efficiently and expeditiously. Invariably before you can solve any project surveys are involved.

On Monday last we had the hon. Prime Minister telling us that the Government has not been able to keep its promise to the Amerindians to give them titles to their lands because of the shortage of surveyors so that we must appreciate how important it is for us to have surveyors. We did touch on this in respect of the Ministry of Works and Housing yesterday and at least under the Ministry of Works and Housing the hon. Minister did give us some plans for the training of surveyors. But in addition to that, we need to look at the Department generally and see whether the vacancies have not been filled because of a lack of qualified personnel or whether it may not also have been because of a lack of activity on the part of the Public Service Commission not making appointments.

I should certainly like to know how many vacancies there are in this Department, what vacancies do exist, what acting appointments there are in respect of the various posts. I would not be surprised if there are a lot of acting appointments in the Department. If this is so, it must make for frustrations. If a man is good enough to act in a job for long period of years, then surely he should be appointed to the post. We talk about capitalist standards and the capitalist way of doing thing, maybe we need to have a look at this carefully because, from what I gather, according to the capitalist standards and the capitalist way of doing things, you seek qualifications to certain posts irrespective of the fact that a man may be acting in that post for years, for a long period. Because of what, according to the hon. Minister of Works and Housing, is the capitalist standards we do not appoint a man to a post if he does not have the qualification.

Maybe this is the egalitarian society the Government needs to look at. If a man has been doing a job for a long period of years and has been doing it reasonably then I think he should be appointed to the post.

My information is that there are a lot of acting appointments in the particular Department. Let us bring that to an end. If there is a problem with the Public Service Commission let us bring it to an end. Unless you can fill the vacancies, unless you can appoint a man who has been acting for a period of time, when you appoint him and he is secured obviously efficiency will increase.

I make an appeal (1) to fill the vacancies, (2) if the people by the previous standards fall short of the written-down qualifications and they can do the job, then we need to put aside written-down qualifications and appoint the man if he can do the job, (3) generally, the business of putting much more accent on the training surveyors.

All through this Ministry we see underspending starting from the very top. In the case of the Chief Land Development Officer, there has been underspending. The sum of \$13,620 was approved, \$6,810 was spent, Assistant Commissioner, Land Administration, there is a revised provision of \$1; I do not see that it is a supernumerary post, and I do not see any legend. It obviously means that nobody was in the post for 1975. And there it goes on. I would not call figures in the interest of reducing time. But there are a number of other posts. Take for example, 8 senior surveyors. Are there not surveyors that can be appointed senior surveyors? Why should we have vacancies? One Agricultural Engineer. That is in the engineering field. Supernumerary Land Development Officer. We are supposed to have 35 surveyors and surveyor apprentices. The sum of \$171,220 was voted, and the revised figure shows \$118,057. There are two posts, Senior State Land Officer, and then there are the other semi-technical posts: Photo-Library Technician, Land Development Assistant, and all the others.

The item (34), Land Investigator. I remember asking about this last year. We do not seem to have got anyone in the post because the revised estimate for 1975 is \$609.

**4.12.75**  
**(Mr. Singh continues)**  
**3.10 p.m.**

**National Assembly**

**3.10 – 3.20 p.m.**

Perhaps the hon. Minister would tell us what is the position with the Land Investigator, item (34), and Technical Assistant I, item (35). Generally, that seems to be the position so that, in addition to the other items, particularly the surveyors, I would like information about the proposals to fill the vacancies and to activate the Public Service Commission if that is the Department that is behind hand on this.

More specifically, page 75, item (42), Driver Mechanic. There are supposed to be 4 and the Approved Estimates provided \$11,548 for them. The Revised Estimates show \$30,867. The figure being asked for in 1976 is only \$13,452, so, there seems to be something wrong there. Similarly, item (58), 1 Field Foreman, who should have received \$2,796 according to the 1975 Approved Estimates; however, the Revised Estimates have \$17,916.

Page 76, subhead 11, Land Surveyors' Examination. This is ancillary to what I had been asking about. I see that in 1975 \$1,700 was approved and \$1,700 is the revised amount but the 1976 expenditure has been put at \$2,500 and the legend states:

“Increase in number of candidates taking examinations.”

If more money is required because there is an increase in the number of candidates, it does seem to suggest that there is no shortage of candidates to take the surveyors' examination. That is very encouraging. There does not seem to be too much difficulty in recruiting people to study and take the Land Surveyors' Examination. Perhaps, the hon. Minister would enlighten us about this examination. Why do we not have Sworn Land Surveyors appointed? If they are taking the examination, what is it? Is there a high incidence of failure at the Examination? I would like to know who holds this examination; give us some details about it. When was it last held? If possible, tell us how many people took the examination and how many people passed that examination. I am not sure whether these figures would be available. Maybe I would need to get it later from the Minister but if he does have them now I would like to know, because, I repeat,

we are talking about a field in which there is national shortage and on which so much depends: Amerindians Lands, development of the country as a whole is involved here.

In respect of subhead 12, Resumption of state lands, Working Party expenses, under this subhead \$5,000 was voted in the 1975 Approved Estimates. Nothing is listed in the 1975 Revised Estimates even though that amount was asked for at the beginning of 1975 but the request for \$5,000 is repeated for the year 1976. Obviously what the Ministry had planned has not got off the ground. Will the hon. Minister give us some details of this Resumption of State Lands, Working Party expenses? Why did it not get off the ground this year and what will happen to it next year? Is it the same problem, namely, that there are no surveyors so nothing will be done? Well, if this is it, then we need to do something very drastically and quickly about surveyors generally.

**The Chairman:** Cde. Minister of Agriculture.

**Cde. Kennard:** On the general question of vacancies the situation with respect to the supply of surveying personnel trained in related skills is perhaps even worse than that of agriculturists and veterinary officers. What are we doing it? The position is that discussions are now in progress again to implement a course at the University of Guyana to produce highly qualified surveyors. It is a degree course. Where there are so many acting appointments referred to by the hon. Member, it is considered that university training in these modern days should be a requirement. We are hopeful that perhaps by 1977 it will be possible to start this course. This, indeed, having regard to the urgency of our development, has, perhaps, been needed for a long time but we can see what best we can do to expedite the inauguration of that course.

With respect to the production of Sworn Land Surveyors and other Technicians, the Technical Institute has a programme of training and though the intake of students has been somewhat disappointing – apparently the field is not as attractive as other fields – yet this year, some sixty young men have taken the surveyors' examination. The papers, I am advised, are not

being marked and the results will shortly be known. I personally would hope that the quality of training has been such as to ensure a high percentage of passes this year because in the past the training of students has suffered from a shortage of teachers at the Technical Institute and the results have been most disappointing in terms of the number of passes. We are hopeful that with an improvement implemented this year the results will be much better than in previous years. This would help to relieve the situation of the training of Land Surveyors. The use of new equipment, the use of satellite and the like which would expedite surveys resulting in the

**3.20 p.m.**

production of many more surveys than would be possible by using the conventional cadastral means. Therefore, in terms of the supply of the necessary maps and surveying data, we hope to do better than in the past by using this new technology which is now being implemented. I referred to this yesterday at the opening of the new \$1½ million Land Surveying building at D'Urban backlands. I concede that there are a number of acting appointments at the senior level in the department but discussions are in progress with the Public Service Commission with respect to the filling of these vacancies which have been very long outstanding. The problem has been that the job specification and the qualification required for the permanent filling of these vacancies have been set at a level considered high, but nevertheless a level which is suitable at this state in our development. We need a high quality of personnel to man so vital a department of the Ministry. Nevertheless, discussions are in progress with the Public Service Commission with respect to some adaptation of the job specifications to meet the best possible candidates who might be available in Guyana to ensure that the posts are filled and that the job is done. So I would assure my hon. Friend that there should be an early solution to this problem of acting appointments.

Page 75. Reference was made to item (42) Driver Mechanic and item (58) Field Foreman and the relatively small allocation compared with the larger allocations last year. What has happened here is that there has been some shift in the designation of posts within the general

framework of these Estimates. Some people who were formerly described as Driver Mechanics or Field Foremen have been re-designated and their salaries have been shown against the appropriate items, thereby reducing the provision for genuine holders of posts with the relevant designations shown in the Estimates, namely, Driver Mechanic and Field Forman.

Page 76, subhead 11, Land Surveyors' Examination. A question was asked on the increase in this provision. This is reflection of what I have indicated earlier that we do have a training programme, people are taking examinations, more students are entering examination rooms, entailing, therefore, more fees to the persons who mark the papers. This increase will be shown in the Estimates. [**Mr. Singh:** "Who set the exams?"] There is a Board of examiners under the appropriate Ordinance.

Subhead 12, Resumption of State Lands, Working expenses. The fact is that there was no expenditure last year despite the provision. I admit that there was no expenditure because the work was not done. It was not done because of the shortage of staff which has been identified by my hon. Friend concerning which I gave some explanation a while ago. However, in 1976 we do plan to have some re-deployment of our personnel within the Lands and Surveys Department to ensure that work is done on this question of resuming state lands for distribution to persons in need. Indeed, the whole question of the better utilisation of land in Guyana and ensuring that land is used to the best advantage and that there is really no idle land – if one can avoid idle land – in accessible areas will be speeded up. This vote is expected to be more than spent next year in the arrangements to be undertaken for Land Reform including the resumption of State Lands.

*Head 28, Ministry of Agriculture – Lands and Surveys - \$3,154,525 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**HEAD 29 – MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE  
HYDRAULICS**

**The Chairman:** Pages 77 and 78.

*Question proposed that the sum of \$3,129,897 for Head 29, Ministry of Agriculture – Hydraulics, stand part of the Estimates.*

**Mr Singh:** I will speak generally first and then I will ask a question on page 78, subhead 2. I am very sorry to be harping on this but now it seems that we have a difficult category of technicians. We dealt with Veterinary Officers, Agricultural Officers, Surveyors and surveying Assistants and I am unhappy to say that in the Hydraulics Division the business of underspending and apparent vacancies is also reflected here on page 77. It is reflected in respect of a different kind of people, e.g. item (7) Computer Technician I, item (8) Tracer, item (11) Stock-keeper and Printer, item (12) Assistant Printer, item (17) Technician Engineers and item (19) Overseers. Just to give an example, there are supposed to be 25 overseers and the Ministry asked for \$103,288 in 1975. They have revised that figure to \$75,240 only. Obviously, there must be vacancies among these 25 overseers. If there is, again, the question of filling vacancies please let the Public Service Commission get on with the job of doing it and could the hon. Minister tell us what prospects there are of filling the other vacancies. There has been underspending. Could we have some information on that? I again made the observation on page 78. The 1973 Actual figures are to the nearest \$100. I do not accept that those figures could be Actual and I am unhappy about them because I do not like to see the 1973 Actual figures. In the 1974 column the figures are listed as actual too and they cannot be actual. Maybe there is some reason why they are adjusted that way.

Subhead 2, Transport and Travelling. The sum which was approved in the 1975 Estimates is \$120,000 but this has been very significantly underspent. Only \$59,500 was spent which is less than 50 per cent. In spite of this underspending where the Ministry very commendably kept its vote down to half of what it had been allocated, the Ministry is still asking for \$120,000 in 1976. If they can spend only half the money in 1975 should they not repeat the same performance in 1976? I wonder whether there is any specific reason for the underspending

and whether there is some specific reason for wanting to use in 1976 twice what was spent in 1975.

**The Chairman:** Cde. Minister of Agriculture.

**Cde. Kennard:** Cde. Chairman, there is this problem again of vacancies in the Hydraulics Division pointing again to the fact that we need more Guyanese to enter these fields, the fields of agriculture engineering and the like because it is the area of development of this country and it will be the area of development for many years, indeed for more years than we can count.

We have gone a step further in the training of engineers than we have with agriculturist and the like. There is the H.N.C Course for engineers and we have sent 5 students to the

**3.30 p.m.**

University of Guyana to undergo such training. They will qualify in January, that is next month, and will therefore be recruited in the service of the Hydraulics Department. In addition to this we have sent students to the University of the West Indies and we expect an intake at the U.W.I. of our students in July. This would make a great difference in the general staffing position.

There are some vacancies for very senior personnel which we have advertised in the international market we have had quite a good response. We are in the process of selecting some engineers from these advertisements to be assigned to specific projects so that on the completion of those projects we will have a better supply of our own Guyanese engineers to take their places.

On the question of Travelling which is item (2) and the apparent underspending of the provision, this is a reflection of the shortage, the number of vacancies. There were no people and therefore the expenditure on travelling was minimal but the provision had to be made because

there was the hope that we would have been in a position to fill the vacancies and therefore the travelling would then have been done. Since we were unfortunate in not having the vacancies filled the travelling was not done. Therefore there was underspending. Further to this, the Chief Hydraulics Officer has so deployed his staff to be largely sited on particular projects as to minimise travelling up and down the Coast. Officers have been assigned to specific localities where there is the greatest volume of work. They are there on the spot. This has reduced the amount of travelling which is a welcome economy.

*Head 29, Ministry of Agriculture Hydraulics - \$3,129,897 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Pages 79 and 79 (a).

### **DIVISION XIII – MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE**

*Question proposed that the sum of \$28,038,000 for Division XIII – Ministry of Agriculture stand part of the Estimates.*

**Mr. Singh:** Subheads 2, 4 and 5. A general question on subheads 8 to 12; then subheads 21 to 23; subheads 30; subheads 38. On page 79 (a) subheads 43, 44 and 55.

Subhead 2, Animal Quarantine Station. The legend says “To provide for the renovation of the existing station and the construction of a new station at Timehri.” I may be wrong, sir, but if my memory serves me correctly we were told last year that there was a new station under construction at Temehri and I got the impression that it would have been completed by now. We have approved of \$45,000 in the 1975 Estimates but this has been revised to \$25,000. There has been an underspending here. A request is now being made for \$100,000 for this animal quarantine station. Could the hon. Minister tell us what is the position?

**4.12.75**

**National Assembly**

**3.30 – 3.40 p.m.**

Subhead 4, Development of Fishing. The legend says “To provide for the purchase and operation of trawlers and continued rehabilitation and assistance to artisan fishing.” We would like a progress report on this. What plans the Ministry has in respect of this development on fishing? We have read about the fish processing plant and the rest of it but I rather think that this is a different set of things involved and the sum of \$500,000 is requested. I presume we are buying new trawlers. How many is it proposed to buy during 1976?

I would have asked about the Guyana School of Agriculture and the expansion but the hon. Minister has already said this is being expanded to train people to fill the posts in the Ministry.

**3.40 p.m.**

Sir, in respect of subheads 8 to 12 this deals with the Land Development Projects at Black Bush Polder, Onverwagt, Anna Regina, Charity/Amazon and Soesdyke/Linden. All of them had significant sums of money approved in the 1975 estimates and all of the votes have been underspent. To give one example, Black Bush Polder was allocated \$600,000 and this has been reduced to \$100,000. It does appear that these projects have not moved apace as they should have, because they have all reduced expenditure. That is perhaps justification for my harping on the vacancies in the Departments. I rather suspect that these projects did not get ahead as the hon. Minister himself had thought they would, because otherwise he would not have asked for money. Of course, it may well be because it was the shortage of personnel. Presuming it was in respect of personnel then it does show how important it is for us to get ahead with recruiting the personnel if it means having to raise the level of salaries to do it. We may be pennywise and pound foolish in not raising the salaries to attract people.

In respect of subhead 21, Geodetic Survey of Coastlands, the sum of \$680,000 was approved in the 1975 Estimates, but this has been reduced to \$75,000. There seems to be something holding back progress in respect of this geodetic survey programme. I am not sure

whether this involves personnel. It is a Canadian loan. Is it that the Canadians are holding back? What is the position? What is the progress of this programme?

Similarly the other two, subheads 22, Topographic Surveys and subhead 23, United Nations Mapping Project. Here again, the sum of \$500,000 was voted in the 1975 Estimates for topographic surveys and this has been reduced to \$300,000. The sum of \$580,000 was voted in 1975 for the U.N. Mapping Programme and all we proposed spending is \$10,000 for 1975. Could the hon. Minister tell us why this is so?

Subhead 30, Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory. The sum of \$600,000 was approved in the 1975 Estimates and this is being reduced to \$85,000. It is to provide a building for a Veterinary Laboratory. Can we have a progress report on this to find out why it has not progressed?

In respect of subhead 38, Purchase and Installation of Pumps, this has been going on for some time and I particularly remember the hon. Minister Kasim making several speeches about providing pumps throughout the country to make sure that there is proper drainage. The prevention of flooding was taken care of. We have been providing significant sums of money over the years – even before 1975 I rather suspect – but these Estimates start from 1973 with “actual” figures which I do not accept as actual. But over the years we have been spending moneys.

In 1975 we had hoped to spend \$3,700,000, but this has been reduced to \$1,600,000, so that it is over \$2 million less. And one wonders what the position is. What is holding back this programme. I would have thought according to the hon. Minister Kasim that there would have been pumps all over the country by now to take care of flooding etc.

Page 79 (a), subhead 43, Purchase of Equipment. The sum of \$1 million is being requested and the legend states, “To provide for the purchase of equipment for reinforcement

works.” Could the hon. Minister give us an idea of what type of equipment is being purchased under this particular head?

And in respect of subhead 44 which deals with Sea and River Defence (Force Account) I am happy to see here that the Approved Estimates call for \$4 million. The Minister intends to underspend that \$4 million in 1975 and they are requesting an additional \$4 million for 1976. This project is being done by our own engineers and let me say that I feel very proud that the Ministry is doing an admirable job in respect of its sea and river defences. I feel that we have developed the skill and expertise of the personnel in this particular Hydraulics Division to such an extent that they are a credit to the country in the very excellent work that they are doing. I should like the hon. Minister to give us a progress report. Their work has been of such outstanding quality that it has brought praise and comments from everywhere. Perhaps the hon. Minister would like to give the nation a progress report on the works being done by this Hydraulics Division.

In respect of subhead 55, Caricom Corn/Soya Bean Project, the sum of \$500,000 is requested and there seems to have been some drop in the figures here. It may not have been such a new head but at least there was nothing in the 1975 Estimates, and the legend states, “To provide for the development of an agricultural project.” Could the hon. Minister give the nation some details of this Caricom Corn/Soya Bean Project?

**The Chairman:** Cde. Minister of Agriculture.

**Cde. Kennard:** Cde. Chairman, page 79, subhead 2, Animal Quarantine Station. This project has not moved on because of discussions that we have been trying to have with the Veterinary authorities of the Caricom Region. At this very moment there is a meeting taking place in St. Vincent on this matter on regional quarantine arrangements. It is being attended by our Chief Veterinary Officer, Dr. Peter Fernandes. There have been technical discussions concerning the standards to be employed in providing a quarantine station, whether or not there

should be one quarantine station for the region, where it should be located, and matters of that sort.

As a result of these technical differences, the matter is still not fully resolved. The project has not moved apace but it is still necessary to make a provision in the Estimates in the hope of these technical difference being settled at an early date. Meanwhile, every necessary step is taken to take the animal population of Guyana through the existing system of quarantine at Timehri and at the Botanical Gardens where there is a small quarantine station here in Georgetown.

Subhead 4, Development of Fishing. The development programme places much emphasis and hope in the fishing industry. We do feel that the industry could be a very major contributor to the economy. In fact, the industry is performing very well indeed. Exports of shrimps are at a very high level and as you know, Cde. Chairman, we are self-sufficient in fish, our fish production being also at a very high production level, to such an extent, that we are making arrangements for the processing of the increased catches of fish, firstly by the erection of a modern plant at Kingston to be run by the Guyana Agricultural Products Corporation where fish would be filleted, smoked and salted and made into various edible products through modern techniques.

In addition to this, under the Guyana State Corporation, there is to be established a major fish complex in collaboration with Japanese interests. Work has already begun on this major complex in Georgetown, again the intention being to process fish, in this case, not only for the domestic market, but for export. We are, at the moment, bringing in a very high percentage of

...

**3.50 p.m.**

the fish available. Much of the fish available outside the Guyana continental shelf is not brought in because of the absence of these facilities for storage and processing so these facilities are viable. Work is in progress on these facilities and when they are completed, Guyanese can look

forward to a very large supply of fish, fresh, frozen and smoked. When they are completed we can also look forward to a large supply of fish produce.

The provision in the Estimates this year will focus attention not only on the deep sea/small trawler fishing but also on encouraging the small fisherman to increase his production. For example, the Ministry itself has built an in-shore trawler which will fish in the in-shore areas and demonstrate to our small fisherman better techniques for improvement. The trawler would also be used for collecting fish from our small fishermen at sea to bring that fish on the market etc. there is to be an expansion of the landing facilities throughout the coast to make better facilities for the small fisherman, whether on land or sea, facilities like cold storage for his fish. The provision of such storage would in itself encourage the small fisherman to increase his catches and also improve the supply of fish to housewives in the rural areas.

Not only are we expanding off-shore, that is on-the-trawler fisheries to which I have referred and in-shore as well to which I have just referred but attention is being given to expanding our sweet-water or fresh water fish supply. Work is going on at Onverwagt and in other areas there is the creation of fish ponds. Not only tilapia will be used but scientists are finding other species of fish.

In addition, we are doing our own research on the multiplication and the using of the Lukunani. With all these things, the future augurs very well indeed with respect to the viability of increasing the quantity of fish going to Guyanese consumers. With that, in a nutshell, I have described the fishing activities.

Now, I refer to Land Development and the apparent under-expenditure last year. Increasingly, our land development projects are being organised on a consistent basis, that is to say, having made the original investment, having made provision for some additional maintenance until the settlers have found their feet and have reached a high level of production,

Government will, of course, invest in the early stages. Thereafter, the plan is for the settlers to contribute to the maintenance of the settlement and, finally, for state paternalism, such as it is, to be removed from the settlers and assistance given to the creation of new and additional settlements elsewhere so that the settlement would go through this process, become self-supporting, self-sustaining communities with new entities being created in other areas.

In addition to this, work on land settlement schemes is often financed by agencies such as the Ministry of Co-operatives and National Mobilisation/Community Development if they are community projects. In some cases, the Guyana Rice Board contributes to the provision of certain facilities thereby reducing pressure on the votes shown by the Ministry of Agriculture in the Estimates of Expenditure. Therefore the reduction or apparent reduction in expenditure expresses these factors which have been at work. But certainly there is no reduction in the quality of maintenance of these land settlements. In fact, our Land Development or Land Settlement Schemes are more productive today than ever before. For example, at Black Bush Polder record rice crops and being reaped. Record crops of vegetables are also being reaped at Black Bush Polder reflecting the quality of infrastructure and maintenance on these settlements quite apart from the dedication of the settlers themselves.

**4 p.m.**

On the question of subheads 21, Geodetic Survey of Coastlands, 22, Topographic Surveys and 23, United Nations Mapping Project, these are surveys financed largely externally. Much of these surveys involve serial mapping or the use of air-borne instruments. One might have a year of intense work because of excellent weather conditions and, correspondingly, there is a high expenditure resulting from those activities. If weather conditions are poor and the serial activities reduce, the expenditure is correspondingly reduced. Very often, also, there are problems of the contractors mobilising their equipment on the ground, that is, getting aircraft in Guyana and the like. The reduction of expenditure last year demonstrates what took place in terms of these situations. It is hoped, of course, to regain the momentum next year, weather

permitting and factors relevant to mobilisation also permitting.

Subhead 30, Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory. This is a very important facility, a facility which is not only required for the development of the livestock industry, but a facility that is pertinent to the Animal Health Assistants Training Centre at Mon Repos and, eventually, to the training of Veterinary Surgeons if such training were provided here in Guyana. We have not quite got off the ground on this Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory. It is a question of priorities. Last year we gave the very highest priority to getting the Animal Assistants Training Centre going and we concentrated all our resources on that centre to the neglect or disadvantage of starting this Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory. A start on this may be made early in the new year.

In connection with subhead 38, Purchase and Installation of Pumps, it is planned to install some 41 pumps to improve the drainage of the wasted agricultural areas. Already 16 pumps have arrived so that we are awaiting the arrival of 25. One pump has been completed and it is hoped that in 1976 we would complete the installation of at least an additional twelve pumps. The slow pace of this project has arisen from problems of supply in the country from which these pumps are coming. We have been disappointed at the rate of delivery of these pumps, an external circumstance over which we have had no control. There has also been the further complication of the continued inflation externally which has greatly increased the cost of these pumps. I wish to assure my hon. Friend that the project is still being pursued and that, as indicated, there has already been an improvement in the delivery in that we have got 16 pumps and 25 will arrive next year. The project will, therefore, be expedited to fruition.

Page 79 (a), subhead 43, Purchase of Equipment for Development. The sum of \$1,000,000 was provided for next year. Like the pumps just described, we have had supply problems, difficulties of the flow from the manufacturers to Guyana. I must say the situation has improved. We have just received a large number of dragline and this is, perhaps, very good news

to the farmers. These draglines are being deployed immediately in response to the call for higher levels of production in 1976, drainage and irrigation being a very essential foundation upon which one can secure an increase in production.

I accept, on behalf of the Ministry and particularly the hard working officers of the Hydraulics Department, the encomium showered upon them by my hon. Friend and Leader of the Opposition for the hard work they are doing, so successfully, in the defence of our shores from the onslaught of the sea and the river. They have, indeed, developed a very strong work force and the quality of the work that they are doing in the sea defence area is very high indeed. We are hoping to complete the Georgetown sea defence during the first quarter of 1976. As Members perhaps have seen, up the East Coast of Demerara the sea continues relentlessly to assault the seawall at Liliendaal and upwards, so work will have to continue in that area. Work is continuing in other areas such as Essequibo. We are also improving the defences on the Demerara River. We have already started work in the areas of Friendship where some Members might have experienced high spring tides. That area will be defended against the river and work has already begun. This whole programme of defending the land from the river and the sea is continuing one, it is an endless programme for which funds have to be provided, staff has to be trained and equipment purchased and mobilised. This department is becoming increasingly capable of doing this and therefore, not relying on expatriate contractors.

Permit me to mention Caricom Corn/Soya Project. This project represents the first project under the Caribbean Food Plan. This is a plan to make the Caricom region largely self-sufficient in food and the first project to be started under the food plan in this corn/soya bean project on this intermediate Berbice Savannah. The Company has already been registered. The participants are the Guyana Government, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago and the Government of St. Kitts, Nevis and Anguilla. The Company has been registered, the Board of Directors appointed and the Company is in the process now of recruiting staff and purchasing equipment. Some

**4.12.75**

**National Assembly**

**4.10 – 4.20 p.m.**

5,000 acres of corn and soya bean will be produced initially and shortly thereafter a further 5,000 acres of corn/soya bean. The produce we share between the various countries.

The project is being finance not only by subscription to the share capital between the three participants but also by loans financed through the Caribbean Development Bank. Most of the funds will come through loans financed through the Caribbean Development Bank. Much

**4.10 p.m.**

hope is placed on this project because it will succeed. There will be an expansion and the implementation of other food projects within the region. Many, I am sure, will be based in Guyana which has the major potential of food production for the Caricom region.

**Mr. Singh:** One short supplementary question, sir, but let me first take the opportunity to compliment the hon. Minister. We are certainly very pleased with this hon. Minister. As usual, he has answered the questions very fully, frankly and knowledgeably. He said that Guyana can look forward to fresh, frozen and processed fish. The supplementary question I want to ask is: Does process include canning? Do we have nay plant for canning fish in these plans we are talking about?

**Cde. Kennard:** At the moment we are pursuing a project which is largely financed by the Canadian International Development Research Institute. This involves the use of fish for the production of fish products such as fish flour, and fish sausages. Not only frozen dehydrated products but canned products as well. We have had samples of these products. Canned fish is a possibility though in the initial stage we could perhaps avoid canning because the cans will have to be imported. It is better to market the fish without much of an imported content. So if fish were dehydrated, salted or frozen it would obviate the necessity for expensive packing.

Canning really has a low priority. Other products have the higher priority. We have, of course, canned things like bangamary. We have filleted fish like trout but these other products are being worked out. In the short run the highest priority is fresh fish, then the frozen fish, then the dehydrated fish, salted fish, and pickled fish. Those other products which are more sophisticated than I thought would come on a very low level of priority.

*Head XIII, Ministry of Agriculture - \$28,038,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 80.

#### **DIVISION XIV – MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE**

#### **IBRD/IDA PROJECTS**

#### **LIVESTOCK DEVELOPMENT PROJECT**

*Question proposed that the sum of \$2,200,000 for Division XIV, Ministry of Agriculture IBRD/IDA, Livestock Development Project stand part of the Estimates.*

**Mr. Singh:** Subhead 4 – Development Studies. The sum requested for 1976 is \$296,390 and the legend says “To provide mainly for the purchase of buffaloes for development. I.D.A. credit.” I wonder whether the hon. Minister would give us some details of this programme.

**The Chairman:** Cde. Minister.

**Cde. Kennard:** It is, Cde. Chairman, planned to have a very comprehensive livestock development programme. The livestock development programme has a beef programme and also dairy production, and then production of these other forms of animal protein such as buffalo

meat and buffalo milk, goat meat and goat milk, mutton and rabbit meat. This is why we are now mounting this programme and this expenditure is but the beginning. I want to make it known that it involves all the other things. The buffalo is only one small item of it. The buffalo we know thrives very well under very rugged conditions. Buffalo milk is very rich in butter fat and you have good meat from buffalo. Some people have succeeded in crossing the coq and the buffalo. We do feel that the buffalo has a place in swampy areas and in areas where the going is fairly rough. These highly bred buffaloes will be brought to supplement the beef and dairy cattle and production programme under this provision.

*Division XIV, Ministry of Agriculture, IBRD/IDA Projects Livestock Development Project - \$2,000,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 82.

## **DIVISION XVI – MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE**

### **IBRD/IDA PROJECTS**

#### **SECOND SEA DEFENCE PROJECT**

*Question proposed that the sum of \$5,000,000 for Division XVI, Ministry of Agriculture IBRD/IDA Projects, Second Sea Defence Project, stand part of the Estimates.*

**Mr. Singh:** In respect of subhead 1, Civil Works, the sum of \$3,659,734 is requested and the legend says “To provide for the construction of Georgetown Sea Wall, slipway and outfall channels, I.B.R.D. Loan.” I wonder whether the hon. Minister would like to give us a progress report on this.

4.12.75

National Assembly

4.10 – 4.20 p.m.

**Cde. Kennard:** Tenders are being invited, Cde, Chairman, for the slipway and outfall channels. This improves the grades generally in getting the water out of the sea as readily as possibly without any difficulty. As indicated earlier, the Georgetown seawall project will be completed during the first quarter next year.

*Division XVI, Ministry of Agriculture, IBRD/IDA Projects, Second Sea Defence Project - \$5,000,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimate.*

**The Chairman:** Page 83.

## DIVISION XVII – MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

### IBRD/IDA PROJECT

#### TAPAKUMA IRRIGATION PROJECT

4.20 p.m.

*Question proposed that the sum of \$2,600,000 for Division XVII, Ministry of Agriculture IBRD/IDA Projects, Tapakuma Irrigation Project, stand part of the Estimates.*

**Mr. Singh:** Sir, subhead 1 Civil Works \$1,392,857 for 1976 “To provide for drainage and irrigation. I.B.R.D. Loan.” I wonder whether the hon. Minister would tell us what plans he has in respect of civil works to be done under this Head.

**Cde. Kennard:** Cde. Chairman, next year this provision will be used for part of this major project, the Tapakuma project. This is a major project which will give drainage and irrigation 56,000 acres and bring some 13,000 new acres under cultivation. Next year this expenditure will be utilised for the development of the Cozier Canal and the Somerset/Berks area

which has tremendous rice potential. This will involve an area of some 6,000 acres from the expenditure under this subhead next year.

*Division XVII, Ministry of Agriculture, IBRD/IDA Project, Tapakuma Irrigation Project - \$2,600,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** We shall deal with the Ministry of Education and Social Development.

Page 28.

### **HEAD 8 – TEACHING SERVICE COMMISSION**

*Question proposed that the sum of \$130,226 for Head 8, Teaching Service Commission, stand part of the Estimates.*

**Mr. Singh:** This is something new, Teaching Service Commission, and I want to ask a general question on it. It was discussed here in parliament and we did make recommendations about it. We were given the assurance that the Leader of the Opposition would be consulted in respect of the appointments. I wonder whether the hon. Minister would tell us whether it has in fact been set up and whether it is functioning and where it is to be set up. Because certainly I am not aware that it has been set up and is functioning. The provision is made here for the supporting staff. Could the hon. Minister give us some details as to how far they have gone in respect of actually having it in operation.

**The Chairman:** Cde. Minister of Education and Social Development.

**The Minister of Education and Social Development (Cde. Baird):** Cde. Chairman, we have had some problems acquiring a building in which this Commission would operate. At the moment, as you will have seen, we have an allocation for the administration staff and we hope within the first quarter of the new year to set the Commission in train. We in the Ministry of

**4.12.75**

**National Assembly**

**4.20 – 4.30 p.m.**

Education are looking at the regulations that we think should govern the appointment and discipline of teachers. We feel that this kind of information will help the administrative staff and the Commission in general when they get together to form their own regulations.

*Head 8, Teaching Service Commission - \$130,226 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Pages 126 to 129.

#### **HEAD 41 – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

*Question proposed that the sum of \$12,777,789 for Head 41, Ministry of Education and Social Development stand part of the Estimates.*

**Mrs.DaSilva:** Mr. Chairman, on page 126, subhead 1, items (2), (15), (22) and (24). I have no comments of page 127. On page 128, subheads 12, 14, 21, 28, 34, 43, and 44. And on page 129, subhead 45.

To start off with subhead 1, item (2), Supernumerary Permanent Secretary. This appears various times in these Estimates. I do not want to repeat remarks every time, but in certain instances I would wish to highlight it. We voted a token provision of \$1 in 1975 for this Supernumerary Permanent Secretary. The Revised Estimate shows that it was not used. Why are we asking again in 1976 for money for this person if the money has not been used? Does the hon. Minister foresee that his post will be filled?

We have the same position existing in Items (15) and (22) Supernumerary Assistant Field Auditors and Supernumerary Assistant Chief Education Officer. Surely it will be necessary to assist our Assistant Chief Education Officer. Item (24), Personal allowance to Dr. Elbert. We have nothing against the personal allowance to Dr. Elbert, but it would be interesting to let us know who is Dr. Elbert and what he does.

Now we come to page 128, with subheads dealing with the various activities in the Ministry of Education and Social Development. So before dealing with the items I have enumerated, there is a general remark which I should like to make. I would be interested to know how the hon. Minister feels about this. The hon. Minister Desmond Hoyte only yesterday was saying – and other Ministers have said it in various ways – we fully understand and sympathise with the inability to fill positions of responsibility with skilled people and semi-skilled people. I am not talking about people leaving the country. We are dealing with those who remain in Guyana. They are here in Guyana and one hears about what happens. They come to see us and they all come with the same story. They have passed five subjects at G.C.E. ‘O’ Level. Some of them have passed English and Mathematics in their ‘O’ Levels. Why are we not moving these people into our Teacher Service Commission? I do admit that one does not take any one and make him a teacher just as one does not make any one a nurse. Teaching and nursing should be vocations rather than jobs, because they call for counselling and guidance and things like that.

There is a great need for teachers especially in the multilateral schools. All the way through these Estimates there is the very real shortage of staff yet there are those who are

#### **4.30 p.m.**

qualified and are not finding employment. It is that their standards or their levels of G.C.E. are too low so that even though they can produce these 5 subjects they are not capable of doing the job? In a certain big firm I had an experience recently with a young lady who has passed 4 subjects at ‘O’ Level. She had to make three trips before she could pick out three reels of thread of different colours – and they were all near each other. Is it that these people have got these qualifications on paper only and no common sense? Is there nothing the Ministry of Education can do about them?

I want to ask the hon. Minister of Education about a particular subject about which I feel very strongly. I do not want to get emotional about it but I am very concerned about this. We hear of the tired, struggling family which has a child who had to leave school for some reason or

the other; she is an early school leaver; she does not go on to the end. The girl's parents can ill afford it, but they send her to typing and shorthand lessons, "commercial schools" as it is called. Suddenly she comes out with her certificates. She can hardly construct a sentence; she can take two or three words and string them together but when you give her a test, her standard of work is appallingly low and yet she has these certificates. I do not want to put anybody out of work but as we are hearing that Government is taking over the schools and is going to be responsible for all schools, I wonder whether this would extend to the so-called "commercial schools". What qualifications do these people have in order to satisfy the Ministry of Education that they are capable of running such a school? We have the need for typists and so on and the parents do pay money for these lessons but could not something be done so that we can help the teachers in these schools? Could the Minister state what are Government's plans with respect to what I have just said?

We come down to subhead 12, Free Places, Secondary Schools. What I want to do is merely ask the hon. Minister for some information about the giving of lessons to children after school. She and I both feel alike on this subject; we have discussed it many times. I was pleased to hear her say last year when she gave a statement on this that she would like to have this practice discouraged as much as possible. Can the Minister tell us if there has been any further proof that it has been discouraged because, as I said before, it is really a waste of money and a waste of time. There is the question of these children being over-crammed and then there is the discrimination and favouritism and so on. Can the hon. Minister say whether there has been any improvements?

I am dealing now with subhead 14, Evening Courses in Science and Other Subjects. I have chosen this subhead because the legend states: "Additional classes." It states specifically: "Evening Courses in Science and other Subjects". This does not cover all the subjects but we note that the Revised Estimates for 1975 call for \$35,000 and this year \$108,900, more than three times the revised amount used in 1975, is requested. There must have been a terrific expansion in this field. Could the Minister tell us where this expansion has taken place?

Subhead 21 deals with the Grants to Voluntary Organisations. We know this grant increased in 1975 and in 1976 we are being asked to vote \$15,000. We are not grumbling about the increase because we know of the “shoe-string” budgets on which such organisations operate. I think this grant is for organisations such as the Theatre Guild and the Y.W.C.A. and I wonder whether they would fall under the takeover of voluntary organisations which, as the Prime Minister tells us, will be absorbed in the National Service.

Subhead 28, Contribution to UNESCO. The sum of \$60,536 is listed in the Approved Estimates for 1975 but we note the Revised Estimate is \$121,136 and next year we go back to \$60,600. Is this another case where we were paying the contribution for two years together and this year we have gone back to the actual thing? We know that organisations such as UNESCO – and the Red Cross too, for that matter – cannot afford to have their dues paid late. They need the money and need it urgently so could the Minister tell us if that is the case or if there is some other explanation?

Subhead 34 deals with the Contribution to the Caribbean Exams Councils. We were told last year by the Minister that in 1976 we are due to have our own Caribbean examinations. Each territory is to supply its own syllabus. As far as I understand, Guyana is responsible for Agriculture, History and Geography. I think I am correct, but maybe the Minister will put me right if this is not so. I also know that sometime during July this year, when the hon. Prime Minister was speaking at the opening of the Guyana National Trading Corporation Ltd. Bookshop, he said something to the effect that the rest of the Caribbean seemed to be lagging behind in this matter and that, if necessary, Guyana will have to go it alone. Well, 1976 is just around the corner. What is the position? Have the rest of the Caribbean picked up on their own or are we to get it alone? Are we ready to meet it? In view of the remarks that I have made, how are these children going to be ready to take the examination in 1976 if the syllabus was not ready in 1974?

**4.12.75**  
**4.40 p.m.**

**National Assembly**

**4.40 – 4.50 p.m.**

Subhead 43, Overseas Examinations, Local Expenses: For this subhead we have been asked to vote \$225,000 for 1976. If we are starting our Caribbean Examinations in 1976 and overseas examinations will be stopped in 1976, why do we need \$225,000? I am not being facetious; I just want clarifications.

Page 129, subhead 45, Talking about Education: We have been asked to vote \$86,728. This is a new subhead and the heading states: "Talking about Education." I have heard a little bit about it but I think it would be a good opportunity if the Minister would use this information to enlighten us by talking about this.

**Mr. Singh:** I would like to raise a matter which can come under subhead 25, Grants to Students, subhead 34, Contribution to Caribbean Exams Council and subhead 41, Examinations. You need books before you can qualify yourself to take an examination. What I am about to say is in connection with the question of books. The hon. Prime Minister, during the Budget Debate, reiterated that there were going to be free text books to schools. He mentioned that there had been administration follow-up but he did vehemently deny that books were being sold at the Guyana National Trading Corporation at prices higher than those that prevailed in other places. The hon. Prime Minister did challenge me to bring forward proof that that was so. I would like to say that I have two books here which were very much needed and used under both subheads. It is the "New Mental Arithmetic". One was bought from the Central Book Shop and the other from the Guyana National Trading Corporation. The two bills are here. The two books were bought on the 4<sup>th</sup> December, 1975, which is today. [**Cde.Hoyte:** "Who bought them?"] They were bought by the Clerk in my office in order to let the hon. Prime Minister know that I have accepted his challenge to provide the proof. Here is the proof.

Also, I have a list which staff in my office prepared, having gone around and enquired about the prices of books. I can say, for example, that the Caribbean Reader Book III which is available from both the Guyana National Corporation and the Central Book shop, is being sold at

the Guyana National Trading Corporation for \$4.95 and at the Central Book Shop for \$4.65. The Modern French Course is being sold at the Central Book Shop for \$3.25 and at the Guyana National Trading Corporation for \$4.50. I can make this list available to the Minister. There are other items too: The New Mathematics Book III can be bought at the Guyana National Trading Corporation for \$4.90 and at the Central Book Shop for \$4.00. All these books are available at the Corporation. I can easily make this list available to the hon. Minister and those who would want to peruse these receipts and books. This is a very unfortunate state of affairs. It may well be that the Guyana National Trading Corporation has trade problems. But one cannot excuse the fact that these books are being sold at higher prices than elsewhere. The hon. Prime Minister denied this very vehemently. Here is the proof.

In addition to that, we would like to hear some statement as to when the present unsatisfactory situation in respect of the availability of books for schools will be remedied. I am told that even at Queen's College the students are short of books. This is the case in many other parts of the country, particularly in the interior areas. We were told that the books would be airlifted and brought into the country. I do not want to say anything more about this. Suffice it to say that the situation is most unsatisfactory.

**The Minister of Economic Development (Cde.Hoyte):** Cde. Chairman, may I intervene to deal with the matter of the price of text books which was raised yesterday by the hon. Leader of the Opposition and which he has raised again today. I am prepared to concede that the hon. Leader of the Opposition is actuated by the purest motives and is not attempting in any way to mislead this House.

The price at which text books or, indeed, any other commodity is sold that is the retail price, has a direct relationship to the cost at which the item is obtained. It is not sufficient to say that a certain commodity is sold at price X at one store and is sold at price X at another store and, therefore, the other store is making too high a mark-up or is profiteering. The answer to the point made by the hon. Leader of the Opposition is very simple. The stocks which are being sold by

bookshops other than the Guyana National Trading Corporation were obtained last year when prices were lower. The prices of books by the Guyana National Trading Corporation are prices referable to books which were obtained in 1975. The fact that the prices must be different would easily be proved because no private bookstore was given a licence to import school books this year. Any school book which is being sold by a private bookstore is, in fact, a book which would have been imported last year. That is the simple answer. But if the private bookstore had imported books in 1975, their prices would have been far higher than the prices of books sold by the Guyana National Trading Corporation.

I will crave your leave tomorrow, Cde. Chairman, since the hon. Leader of the Opposition has raised this matter, to give to this honourable House a list of comparative prices to show how, in fact, over a wide range of books, the prices at the Guyana National Trading Corporation are much lower both in terms of the mark-up and in terms of actual selling prices.

It is true that there are some cases in which G.N.T.C. prices are higher because of the price variation between the new G.N.T.C. stock and the old stock of private bookstores; but, even so, in many cases where the private book stores have old stock, their prices are still high. I hope the hon. Leader of the Opposition would accept that explanation, as indeed he must, because no private book store would have been able to import short books this year.

**4.50 p.m.**

**The Chairman:** Cde. Minister you do not have to have my leave. Tomorrow under 'Statement by Ministers' you may do so.

**Mr. Singh:** Thank you, sir, Mr. Chairman I have noted all that has been said by the hon. Minister. Particularly I have noted that he has said that none of these books stores were given licences to bring in books this year. I think that is part of the problem they were complaining about, that they were not given any licence to bring in any book this year and yet they were

blamed for not having provided the books. Let me say I do not think anybody can impute any improper motive to me. My office bought these...

**The Chairman:** Cde. Minister said so. He said you were motivated by the purest of motives.

**Mr. Singh:** I am thankful to him for that. But going further, I and the nation would certainly appreciate that he be allowed to give his list of comparative price. I think the nation is entitled to that kind of information.

I think that we must recognise also that the book shops did not get any licence at all to bring in any books and therefore we should not blame them for having created this situation.

**The Chairman:** Cde. Minister of Economic Development.

**Cde.Hoyte:** Cde. Chairman, I am sorry to have to intervene again but it was only today, in my capacity as acting Vice President of Guystac, that I was looking at some cables received by the Guyana National Trading Corporation and it was quite clear from the correspondence that there is a short supply of books in the centres from which the books are imported. In fact, the last cable which I read stated that certain books which had been ordered some time ago would be available only in February next year and even then at an increased price. So the question whether books are available or not has nothing to do with the Guyana National Trading Corporation; it has to do with the availability of books. It has to do with the worldwide shortage of paper and things like that.

**The Chairman:** Cde. Minister of Education.

**Cde. Baird:** Cde. Chairman I would like to make a comment on the hon. Member's reference to the shortage of personnel in the various departments but I will speak specifically on

the apparent difficulty in recruiting people to serve in our top institutions and I say “apparent difficulty.” We realise it is the responsibility of Government to ensure that the supply of teachers keeps apace with the demand. What we believe or what we appreciate is that they will be looked upon as an important sector of Guyana’s labour force.

I have to point out that few countries in the world today have been able to achieve the objective of matching supply to demand. The rate of friction in the teaching profession is the subject of ongoing research, especially in developed countries. This I believe would reflect the anxiety of Governments and educators and others concerned about education. It reflects the anxiety about the short supply of teachers despite increasing expansion and anyone who lives in Guyana today should be in a position to acknowledge that there is increasingly expansion in the education of teachers, the penetration of teachers and we have to realise that it is widely accepted that today aided teachers, and I stress the word ‘aided’ because of their background, are equipped with skills and ability which can be generalised to fulfil the needs of services other than teaching, services that, as happened elsewhere, it is inevitable that our teachers who have been specially prepared for teaching will be absorbed in sectors where their expertise is crucial to national development.

Cde. Chairman, I have to refer to the traditional belief that learning for students is limited to those periods when the teacher is physically before the class. Technically, I think it is constructive to tell this House that there are procedures which ensure that students are profitably employed during the periods when a teacher is not before them. It has been shown that such periods during which the students respond to tasks assigned them by teachers, provide very meaningful experience, meaningful in terms of the outcome of that kind of experience. The kind of experience, I am referring to is experience in research using laboratories and workshops. This kind of experience inculcates attitudes in the students, self-reliance, being able to observe and interpret that kind of thing and make decisions objectively and creatively.

I think it would be useful for me to point out that there is another strategy which is being employed in our schools at this time, what I would refer to as intelligent phases which ensures the employment of members of staff. In this way we endeavour to overcome any problem created by a temporary shortage which may exist from time to time. Of course, I want to reassure the hon. Member on the other side that action is being taken to ensure that our educational institutions are adequately staffed. We are looking at a special device to recruit people to fill those vacancies.

**5 p.m.**

Of course training is on-going and already we have increased the in-take in our Training institutions.

Cde. Chairman, I think we have to be realistic because Guyana is a young country and while the preparation of teachers began in 1928, the preparation of primary teachers and our secondary schools, to which I think the hon. Member was referring, the professional preparation of secondary school teachers began in this country as late as 1968 at the University of Guyana and that catered only for graduate teachers. I think we must acknowledge that the Government is concerned about this, the Government is concerned about professional preparation of teachers and producing teachers in adequate numbers because in 1969 the Secondary Teachers Training College was introduced for the preparation of non-graduate teachers to perform in secondary schools.

I have discussed this to draw attention to the fact that there is no negligence at all in the

**5 p.m.**

matter of providing an adequate number of schools. Secondly, I think it is fair to say that even when there is a temporary shortage there is absolutely no reason why student should not receive the kind of learning experience that they deserve. I hope this explanation will serve its true perspective for the Members of the House and Nation.

The hon. Member went on to say something which I think was an extension of the comment about the profession of teachers. The hon. Member Mrs. DaSilva wondered what we were doing to motivate young people to go into teaching. You have seen on the Estimate – I think it appeared in the Estimates last year and the year before – an allocation for Chief Guidance Officer and you will see he is supported by certain categories of workers. Although the Guidance Programme is about two years old I prefer to say we are now engaged in developing a guidance system which will serve the needs of the whole of Guyana, not necessarily schools. It is a guidance system that can be used for guiding people in any kind of educational institution. I must report that we have noticed a healthy development that schools are now being motivated by the involvement of the guidance programme and we found that a significant number of young people are now students of our training institutions. I am advised that one institution has no less than fifteen of the graduating class. The number might be relatively small, but it is a great change. They are being motivated.

Then there are other arrangements for providing an adequate teaching staff. The Minister of Education has mounted programmes which we hope will put in the shortest possible time some teachers in schools giving technical education and home economics education. Those are programmes that are on-going at the moment. And we use a lot of different kinds of strategies to be sure that we keep pace with the demand for personnel.

The hon. Member referred as she did last year to the paying for extra lessons for the Common Entrance Examination. She wanted to know whether there was any change in the situation. Although it might be insignificant, I wish to report that there has been a change in the situation. We must not forget that parents are very important in this matter of paying. Parents believe that what they pay for would be better in service, and it is difficult to explain to parents and convince them that if a child is properly taught consistently during school hours it might not be necessary – at least for many children, it might not be necessary to have them go through those gruelling experiences. We must not forget further that we do not want the position where a

**4.12.75**

**National Assembly**

**5 – 5.10 p.m.**

teacher refuses to give help to people who need that kind of help because there will be students who would need some extra coaching. This is all I have to say on that matter.

There was reference to the evening courses. I think it is obvious in countries such as ours where the services are being expanded .... have an inadequate number of people to work, for it is necessary that on-going education develops and expands. Increased allocation is really intended to cover the cost of offering more opportunity for training. One remembers too that even in developed countries it is found necessary because knowledge becomes .....short time and so our labour force must be constantly given the .... examine new techniques, examine their own situation and interpret all these in terms of how they can improve the system and how they can increase production.

There was also an increase for voluntary organisations. As far as I know this increase in grants really covers the situation in which more people benefit from these facilities and of course, there is the increased cost of maintaining in-service.

I think we have to make a special contribution to UNESCO in view of the increased demands being made by that organisation and it will be useful for me to indicate some of the benefits you get from UNESCO, in the matter of training, preparation of personnel, benefits from UNESCO fellowships and so on.

**5.10 p.m.**

As a matter of fact, part of the money we are using is to develop the information service in the Ministry. This is a service which has to do with career guidance, a service in which we are producing material, pictures, visual aid equipment and that sort of thing, to educate not only the young people who are doing the jobs but to educate the adults throughout the country. This is a

support to the other aspects of guidance and that sum of money is given to us by UNESCO. I think we get our money's worth and beginning from 1976 I think we have organised to enter into negotiations with them so that we can increase the benefits we get. For example, we have proposed to accept help in the setting up of an up-to-date Research Unit and so this organisation, I would say, helps us in the development of our educational system.

Overseas examinations: I think the sum is \$225,000. As a matter of fact that allocation of \$225,000 is for all examinations not the overseas examinations relating to schools only. It has to do with examinations for Chartered Accountants and all overseas examinations, for the administration of examinations. We have to pay invigilators; more people are taking the examinations; we have to pay more centres, more invigilators and that sort of thing. It is for the administration of examinations and the increased cost of administration of examinations; the movement of paper, security and so on.

The Caribbean Examination: I think that on the last occasion I had indicated in the House that 1976 was the date set for the first Caribbean examination. Since then many things have happened and the date now is 1978. One must realise that in the Caribbean we were not sort of preparing for the amount of personnel that we need for examining and contributing to that aspect of education as in other areas and the need for training is there. At the moment, they are training examiners in new examination techniques. We have to realise that it is not enough to ask a person who teaches or a person who has a degree to set an examination for that is a special kind of skill. In 1978 examinations will be held in English, Mathematics, Science, History and Geography and syllabuses are being developed in Agriculture, Technical Education and Home Economics.

I wanted to have a word here perhaps on Guyana's position on the Caribbean examination. First of all, perhaps it might be better for me to make a comment on our evaluation of students' response at the secondary level. We are evaluating at two levels. We are evaluating

students' responses to the curriculum of Community High Schools and we are also evaluating response to curriculum being developed for the Caribbean examinations. As a matter of fact, because of the internal evaluation which we had for the Community High Schools, there is a significant modification in the mode of examinations and we have proposed to the other territories some suggestions for making the Caribbean examination more relevant to the needs of the territory. We are proposing, and we have proposed to them, that they should not continue to have an examination that characterises people as passes or failures for that kind of examination – and we all know that Caribbean examination usually take that form, or that mode – rejects a substantial portion of the labour force. We have suggested, as we propose to do, to have an examination that indicates that area in which the student the student has competence.

I am going into more detail to identify the specific areas of competence within a special area. In other words, we are concerned about evaluating or presenting the results of evaluation in such a way that the examinee and the employers and other concerned persons will identify the areas in which a person is strong and in that way we believe that all citizens will find a place somewhere. That is what we have suggested and this can be done.

In addition, we are proposing that, for example, the Social Study subjects like Geography, History, Social Studies, and National Policy, there should be optional questions in the papers which will all individual territories to evaluate the response of that nationals to the socio-political climate which prevails in their country. In other words, in countries like perhaps Guyana, Jamaica and Trinidad, countries that can produce curricula, however modified it is, however small it is, we are advocating that in addition to the basic understanding of the subject Geography or History that students should be asked to respond to questions that relate to their own country. Those are the developments so far in the Caribbean examinations.

I would like to emphasise that Guyana, at the moment has already instituted the internal examination evaluation of people, working on Community High School curriculum as one kind

**4.12.75**

**National Assembly**

**5.10 – 5.20 p.m.**

of secondary examination. That will be evaluated internally and the other level will be evaluated at some external examination. This is the position so far. If Guyana cannot accept the decisions, or where we cannot fit into the plans of the Caribbean examinations, perhaps we will have to consider evaluating our students at other levels.

**5.20 p.m.**

Reference was made to the programme “Talking about Education.” “Talking about Education” is a radio programme which came into being to support the Ministry of Education in its development plans. Quite definitely, it aims at preparing people for a change and giving them some understanding of what is happening in education, the inventions being made to education, explaining to them perhaps trying to move towards what is happening in education. That programme, as some people might know, comes over only once a week and we feel that that kind of communication with the public is essential.

We feel it is inadequate and I think comrades and hon. Members might be interested to learn that the programme has met with some success because it sometimes involve parents and citizens and teachers from whom we get responses about how they have accepted the programme.

The money spent there is money well worth spending because we have found that many of the innovations have been accepted by the public. I am not saying that the programme is the only means by which we achieve this, but it is one way of getting the support of the nation.

With reference to the concern he hon. Member expressed for the people in business education, we share the same concern. I have met representatives from the commercial schools and we discussed other motivations and programmes and we are workings ..... for entry into those schools. As the hon. Member said, I thing a person who is not competent in the English Language cannot qualify for work in that area. We believe in offering any form of education that should be related. If it is to be meaningful it must be related to what we identified those problems

to be and so we have been ascertaining from employers what kinds of attitudes they like to see developed in their employees. Best of all, the Ministry hopes to mount courses at the G.T.I., courses which we feel will be more meaningful to the workers who serve at this end.

The very first question asked was about subhead 1, item (2), Supernumerary Permanent Secretary. The provision was made to preserve the rights of an officer. The officer has now retired and this post has been removed from the Estimates.

With respect to the Supernumerary Assistant Chief Education Officer, again as a result of the difficulty of identifying personnel with the kind of expertise, you need to co-ordinate technical education from primary people who are rarely available. We have, during the course of the year, to get technical assistance and so this post will enable us to get the technical assistance we want. The salary scale for the post would be inadequate to contract someone and this is a very important post. It concerns not only the co-ordinator but the planning and implementing of training programmes with supervision and identifying people who can fill these positions. Dr. Elbert, the Chief Gadgets Officer, was recruited specially to organise and set up the Guyanese programme. That does not mean only to set up, it means to train teachers, teacher educators and so on in the whole of Guyana. Dr. Elbert is a highly qualified specialist. His role was concerned with setting this kind of programme. It was not possible to contract someone with his expertise and with the salary offered, so he came here with Technical Assistance which has since been withdrawn. I can assure the hon. Members that so far this programme of guidance system has been proving effective because, as far as I know, it has been instituted in several schools and over one thousand teachers have been trained.

**Mrs.DaSilva:** Mr. Chairman, there is just a short supplementary question I would like to ask. Before doing this, I want to thank the hon. Minister for her answers. We have grown accustomed over the years to her very frank straightforward answers and we thank her very much for her assistance and for all the information she has given us, particularly the very full information she gave about the Caribbean Examination.

4.12.75

National Assembly

5.20 – 5.30 p.m.

This brings me to the supplementary question I want to ask. I should like to ask the hon. Minister, in view of the fact, as she told us, that we would not be ready for the Caribbean Examinations before 1978 and, as I understand it – I am subject to correction – we are withdrawing from those overseas examinations, what will happen in the next two years? If they are still having their overseas examinations, will we continue then with the G.C.E. 'O' Levels, as we know it, in 1976 and 1977?

**Cde. Baird:** I think there is a misunderstanding here. The University of London is phasing out the external degree examination, but we have not been informed about any phasing out of examinations in 'O' Level and 'A' Level.

With respect to the query about what Guyanese will do, this will be decided in time and I will be pleased to give this information to the hon. Member.

*Head 41, Ministry of Education and Social Development - \$12,777,789 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

*Assembly resumed.*

**The Speaker:** Comrades and hon. Members, as I indicated last night we will complete the Heads, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Justice irrespective of the time it takes. The sitting is suspended for 10 minutes.

*Sitting suspended at 5.33 p.m.*

6.10 p.m.

*On resumption*

*Assembly in Committee of Supply.*

**The Chairman:** Page 130

**HEAD 42 – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT  
IN-SERVICE TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMME**

Question proposed that the sum of \$362,375, for Head 42 Ministry of Education and Social Development In-Service Teacher Training Programme, stand part of the Estimates.

*Head 42, Ministry of Education and Social Development, In-Service Teacher Training Programme - \$362,375 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Pages 131 and 132.

**HEAD 43 – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT  
PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

Question proposed that the sum of \$36,277,535 for Head 43, Ministry of Education and Social Development – Primary and Secondary Schools, stand part of the Estimates.

**Mrs. DaSilva:** Sir page 131, subhead 1, items (6), (9), (10) and (11). Subheads 7 and 11. On the next page 132, subheads 13, 16, and 17. Before beginning I would like to ask the hon. Minister if it is possible for her to reply to let me have items, numbers and subheads. Thank you.

Page 131, subhead 1, item (6) deals with Acting Teachers: In 1975 we were asked to vote \$1,732,000. The Revised Estimates for 1975 showed a figure of \$1,729,988. Now we are being asked to vote \$1,818,600 for acting Teachers. If you look at the number on the Establishment, you will see that in 1975 we had 930 teachers. In 1976, next year, we will have 913 teachers. The

Revised Estimate shows that \$1,729,988 was used. Now why is it in 1976 the number of teachers will drop to 913. We are being asked to vote more money, that is \$1,818,600. I think the hon. Minister should explain this.

Now we come to item (9) which deals with Nurses which appears for the first time in the Estimates and we are being asked for \$10,240 for 16 Nurses. This is quite a large amount of money for 16 Nurses and of course the legend gives the explanation that it is a new item. Could we have some explanation about the functions and duties of these Nurses. I think I am right in saying we had Senior Nurses before. I wonder what they do. Also, the salaries seem to be small.

Subhead 1 item (10) deals with the Sweepers/Cleaners. I am not questioning the vote. But I want to ask the hon. Minister whether she remembers something that I had mentioned last year and might have mentioned the previous year, about the discrepancy the salaries that exist in between Sweepers/Cleaners in Gant. Schools or Gant. Aided Schools? I ask this in view of the fact that the Government will be taking over all the schools in 1976. The wages for cleaners at the Aided Schools are lower than the Government Primary Schools. In view of the fact that Government will control schools in 1976, could the hon. Minister say whether the salaries of the cleaners and sweepers at the Aide Schools will be brought in line with those of the Government schools?

**6.15 p.m.**

Subhead 1, item (11) Farm Labour is appearing for the first time and the sum of \$118,800 is being requested. Could the hon. Minister tell us about these farm labourers? Are these professional people and are they for the school farms? Will they share their knowledge? They are going to be 66 of them.

Subhead 7, Supplies to Government Schools. We query this head because in the 1975 Approved Estimate the sum of \$45,146 was voted and the Revised Estimate for 1975 shows that

the same amount, \$45,146. Now for the year 1976 there is to be a fantastic increase in the grant. Could the hon. Minister tell us why there has been such a fantastic increase?

Subhead 11, Supplies and Equipment for School Farms and Agriculture Plots. The sum of \$60,000 was approved in 1975; the Revised Estimate shows that this amount was used, but we are being asked to vote \$100,000. We know where the accent is and we fully support it but, according to the hon. Minister instead of this grant of \$100,000 it is more realistic to put in for additional money which will be used by more and more schools to put more and more land under cultivation. We wonder whether this money will be enough. Can the hon. Minister explain to us why there is a request for \$100,000, what they propose to do with it, whether it is to increase personnel or what have you.

Page 132. Subhead 13, Purchase of Exercise Books for free distribution to school children. We know that there were teething problems. Could the hon. Minister say whether the distribution of these exercise books has been satisfactory and whether there is an adequate supply of exercise books for every child in every school in the country.

Subhead 16, Schools Centenary Celebrations. We have been asked to vote \$250,000 for the Schools Centenary Celebrations and the legend tells us that it is a new subhead “to commemorate 100 years of compulsory education in Guyana.” First of all, it is good that this has been spelt out for those who seem to forget that we have had compulsory education in Guyana for 100 years, but I really do not see the need for us to spend this amount of money for this celebration. School children love a party. Why don’t we just give them half-day holiday and a little party where each child brings along some mauby and buns and they all have a nice time together. This \$250,000 can be given to the old folks in the form of an increase in their old age pension instead of that measly sum of \$15 which they get every month.

**Cde. Baird:** Cde. Chairman, the query about the increased emoluments for Acting Teachers can be explained by the fact that we hired the better qualified Acting Teachers and they would have required increased salaries.

Now, I think that item (9), Nurses, under subhead 1 should be “Nursery School Helpers”. With the establishment of Nursery Schools, they are important because we are dealing with small children below the age of five and the nursery staff must be people with nursing skills.

I think the question about the cleaners and the sweepers was asked last year. It is important to remember that the staff in denominational schools are employed by the body and the Ministry allocates grants to them. They pay the sweepers and cleaners from this grant. I do not think that we are in control of the kind of salaries they receive and that we can determine

**6.25 p.m.**

that. I hope I have answered the question.

Item (11), Farm Labour. As members know, we have established farms throughout the country and increased the number of farms and plots. The Farm Labours are those workers who will be employed to do the heavy work on the farms because the students at schools cannot do all the heavy work. These workers will act in some instances as teachers in certain aspects of agriculture so we are justified in providing farm labour.

Subhead 7, Supplies to Government Schools. There was a substantial increase in this grant. If we are developing education, we are not only concerned about expanding in quantitative terms but in qualitative terms and if education is developed we have got to increase the equipment and other facilities to support our development programme. This is the main reason why there is a substantial increase in grants.

Subhead 11 deals with the Supplies and Equipment for School Farms and Agriculture Plots: I think I have answered that. This is in keeping with the expansion in education in the country.

Subhead 13, Purchase of exercise books for free distribution to school children. I think we are satisfied that the schools have an adequate supply of exercise books. The position is being reviewed. We had feedbacks from the schools and the indications are that perhaps people may have been generous in some respects but children all have exercise books.

Subhead 16, Schools Centenary Celebrations. We have had in this country compulsory primary education since 1876 and we are going to commemorate the anniversary of this. I am amused by the comments of the hon. Member because I think she is equating the proposed experience that we intend to give the children to the days when we were celebrating the Queen's Birthday and so on. This is going to be an educative experience both for the students and the nation. This is the education: we will have historical documentation of the development of education. And, the nation will observe that in the tenth decade there will be more development shown than was shown in the nine decades. It is going to be an educative experience.

We have some special features that will be related to this event. For example, the Curriculum Development Unit, that is, the Unit responsible for production of books for the schools, is producing for the first time, basic readers for children in primary schools. The Readers have been called "Timehri Readers". These books will be put into use in September, 1976. The Unit is beginning with the production of books for the younger children in the schools and this will be an on-going exercise. Then there will be mathematic textbooks in primary schools, the first of the kind that we will have produced. Mathematic books for the secondary schools will come into being next year. These are all educative activities.

We also propose to have an exhibition that will depict the various phases by decade of development. This will be a year-round exhibition. I think it is useful for us to know that all the

4.12.75

National Assembly

6.25 – 6.35 p.m.

activities concerned with this event will take place throughout the country. They will be regional and we hope this will prove beneficial to the public. I want to put Members at their ease that it is not a matter of expenditure that will be wasted. It is concerned with the education of the people; it is just another aspect of education.

**Mrs. DaSilva:** Sir, I have been making a habit of asking supplementary questions but I think that the hon. Minister misunderstood me over this question of the cleaning of denominational schools. We fully realise that the denominational schools are given a grant and, unlike the Government, they have to “cut their suit to fit their cloth.” They cannot come back for supplementary provisions in the middle of the year. What we want to know is this: When the Government takes over the denominational schools in line with the cleaners of the Government schools, particularly at the primary level? We hope they will not continue to give the cleaners in the Government taken-over denominational primary schools the same amount of allowance they are presently given.

**Cde. Baird:** I think the reply to that question is obvious. If they become Government workers they will have to be paid according to the Government rates.

6.35 p.m.

*Head 43, Ministry of Education and Social Development – Primary and Secondary Schools - \$36,227,535 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 133.

**HEAD 44 – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT –  
PRACTICAL INSTRUCTION CENTRES**

Question proposed that the sum of \$1,891,202 for Head 44, Ministry of Education and Social Development – Practical Instruction Centres stand part of the Estimates.

**Mrs. DaSilva:** Sir, I am tempted to ask a question on subhead 1, items (2), (3) and (4) which deal with staffing and the situations that are existing right now but I shall not do it because we have had an explanation from the hon. Minister. I just want to ask, however, under this Head, something I have asked before. Again, I make no apology for asking it because it is something that we do need: Occupational Therapists. We need them at the Practical Instruction Centres. We need them in our hospitals. I am not talking about physiotherapists, I am talking about Occupational Therapists who could teach people to make things and keep their minds occupied when they are sick in bed for a long time. It is time that the Ministry of Education gave thought to introducing this as part of the curriculum. It is a very necessary adjunct to medical treatment. Occupational Therapy is recognised as valuable. Surely, this is another way in which the Practical Instruction Centre can train our young people and, of course, provide job opportunities for them as well and fill a very sadly needed and well-wanted aspect of our medical services. could the Minister say if anything is being done on these lines?

**Cde. Baird:** Cde. Chairman, I think I remember this question being posed before and I think I pointed out that there is a fundamental difference between the function of Practical Instruction Centres and places for training people for Occupational Therapy. A Practical Instruction Centre is for students at school in industrial arts and all the practical things. Occupational Therapy is something entirely different. It is to prepare people, adults, to work in Occupational Therapy in health. The course for Occupational Therapy is not concerned with doing things with one's hand. That is a very small part of the whole thing. It has a philosophy behind it and it takes the mature and adult person to be trained in Occupational Therapy. You have to understand human behaviour and that kind of thing. This doing of practical work is only one very small aspect of it. I agree that in our work/study programme our young students will be able, perhaps, to contribute to the welfare of people who need Occupational Therapy. Perhaps they can show them how to do things. I prefer not to consider this as Occupational Therapy, or to

qualify, describe or designate them as Occupational Therapists because that is something quite different. They can help and I think some of them do help in certain respects dealing with the blind and demonstrating skills to them. But, Occupational Therapy is something quite different.

*Head 44, Ministry of Education and Social Development – Practical Instruction Centres  
- \$1,891,202 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

## **HEAD 45 – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **GOVERNMENT TRAINING COLLEGE**

#### **PRE-SERVICE TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMME**

Question proposed that the sum of \$1,095,132 for Head 45, Ministry of Education and Social Development, Government Training College, Pre-Service Training Programme, stand part of the Estimates.

**Mrs. DaSilva:** I would just make a general point on page 134 and page 135 and I have a small comment on subhead 7. Then I will move on to subheads 11 and 14. I appreciate the explanation given by the hon. Minister in answer to the last question about the Occupational Therapists but would offer for her consideration that when she consults with the ministry of Health for some of the programmes ....

**The Chairman:** Hon. Member Mrs. DaSilva, I do not mind your having two bites at the cherry but please speak on it under the same Head. We have moved on to something else.

**Mrs. DaSilva:** Government Training College Pre-Service Teacher Training Programme. Last year the hon. Minister told us that there were approximately 300 resident students and this afternoon she actually said they have increased the number. Could she say how many now in

**4.12.75**

**National Assembly**

**6.35 – 6.45 p.m.**

view of the new schools? Already there are plans to increase the number of students in the College. Have we got enough room to accommodate them?

Page 135, subhead 7, Books and Educational Supplies; We have been asked to vote \$55,000 this year and the legend states: "To cater for free books for students." I am not going to go through the long list again but I do hope that particular care would be taken through the Ministry, the schools, and the university to make sure that the children who use these books take care of them. It is often said: "It is not mine, so I can tear it up. I can leave it in the rain and I will get a new one because I have to have it." I hope particular care has been taken to stress that need and that there are means to make the children realise that if the books are damaged in any way they will have to be paid for.

Subhead 11, Laundry and Sanitation: The amount requested is \$9,000. The Revised Estimate shows that we used \$6,376. This gives me some hope that we are going to have additional students at the Teachers' Training College. Could the Minister tell us if this is so.

Subhead 14, Arable Farm: For this year \$8,000 was voted and we used \$7,027. Now we are asked to vote \$10,000 for 1976. The legend states: "To cater for an expanded Agricultural programme." I suppose this is in keeping with the indication given by the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance that Agriculture will be important next year. I thought that it was important a

**6.45 p.m.**

few years ago. Could the Minister tell us what plans she may be having to increase this vote.

**Cde. Baird:** Cde. Chairman, Head 45. With reference to the Government Training College, the number has been increased and they are functioning in full capacity at the moment. There are 600 students. All are not resident. The residential facilities are being increased.

Now subhead 7, Books and Educational Supplies: These are for student teachers. The hon. Member referred to children. The Government Training College is an institution which prepares young people, young students, to teach, not children. I can assure her that the sum allocated for books is barely adequate because it is very important that our young teachers, our young trainees, be exposed to relevant material.

As for the care of the books, those people who have been ex-students of our training institutions, particularly Government Colleges, know that books are passed on over a period of 7 to 8 years. For instance, you might find the names of the former students recorded in the books and you will know who the students were before the session. I must confess that from year to year these books are cared. In addition, book-binding is a compulsory activity in the Government Teachers Training College and is not only for use in the College for preserving their own books but is passed on to students in classrooms. I think the question about Laundry and Sanitation is answered because we have a new Government Teachers Training College.

Perhaps the hon. Member might consider the importance of agriculture. I am trying to remind her of the importance of agriculture. Education is becoming an expensive commodity and in every area all over the world the cost of education is rising significantly. Part of the solution to the problem is to make educational institutions perhaps pay for themselves by contributing to their own maintenance. The school farm is not only being used to inculcate skills of agriculture in students which can be passed on, but the students will be able to maintain themselves, to feed themselves. In other words I am sure that, as the years go by, you will see that the dietary allocations will be reduced.

*Head 45, Ministry of Education and Social Development, Government Training College, Pre-Service Teacher Training Programme - \$1,095,132 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Pages 136 and 137.

**HEAD 46 – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT  
TECHNICAL INSTITUTE GEORGETOWN**

Question proposed that the sum of \$1,047,941 for Head 46, Ministry of Education and Social Development, Technical Institute Georgetown, stand part of the Estimates.

*Head 46, Ministry of Education and Social Development, Technical Institute Georgetown - \$1,047,941 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 138.

**HEAD 47 – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT  
CARNEGIE SCHOOL OF HOME ECONOMICS**

Question proposed that the sum of \$178,730 for Head 47, Ministry of Education and Social Development, Carnegie School of Home Economics, stand part of the Estimates.

*Head 47, Ministry of Education and Social Development, Carnegie School of Home Economics - \$178,730 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 139.

**HEAD 48 – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT  
QUEEN'S COLLEGE**

Question proposed that the sum of \$506,469 for Head 48, Ministry of Education and Social Development, Queen's College, stand part of the Estimates.

**Mrs. DaSilva:** Co-education has started in Queen's College. I know it is only a term old but I wonder if the hon. Minister would tell us how it is going at Queen's College.

Under subhead 1, item (4) Masters/Mistresses II, there seems to be a staffing problem as is happening at other schools. We have an explanation but at least we would like to find out how they are coping at Queen's College because, in spite of what the hon. Minister said, there are a certain number of places that were left vacant because some students finished their education and found jobs.

There seems to be a shortage of staff. I think they would need a full complement at a time like this. It was hoped to have a full complement in 1975. It appears from the Estimates that we did not use the full allocation this year. The sum of \$260,430 appeared in the Approval Estimates and the Revised Estimate show \$237,222. There are supposed to be 35 members of staff. We are now asked to vote \$277,498. Could the Ministry tell us something about how the vacancies will be filled?

We now come to item (9) page 139, Home Economics Assistant. In view of the fact that this is now a co-educational school are boys at Queen's College compelled to attend home economic classes or is it a question that students attend the classes if they wish and, of course, the girls go to wood-working classes if they are interested. I would stress that it is really most important for the boys to be taught home economics. I hope the hon. Minister is going to say it is compulsory.

We come now to subhead 9 on page 139, Cadet Company. We are asked to vote \$3,000 for it. It does not seem to increase as the years go by. Is it going to be absorbed into the National Service? Could the hon. Minister please tell us.

**Cde. Baird:** With regards to the query about co-education at Queen's College, I am happy to report that both boys and girls are very happy.

4.12.75  
6.55 p.m.

National Assembly

6.55 – 7.05 p.m.

As far as I am advised there are no vacancies at Queen's College. As a matter of fact, from my statistics, 75 per cent of the teachers at Queen's College, are trained for teaching. [Mrs DaSilva: "Why was the vote not fully used?"] From October we had the full complement.

On the question of Home Economics, again they are encouraged to participate and I think it augurs well for the Guyanese society. [Mrs. DaSilva: "Are they doing both?"] There is no compulsion because there are several activities on at the same time and the boys and girls participate actively.

With regards to the question on the Corps I wish to inform the hon. Member that the Cadet Corps has been converted into a National Service Unity.

*Head 48, Ministry of Education and Social Development, Queen's College - \$506,469 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 140, Bishops' High School.

## **HEAD 49 – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **BISHOPS' HIGH SCHOOL**

Question proposed that the sum of \$429,033 for Head 49, Ministry of Education and Social Development, Bishops' High School stand part of the Estimates.

**Mrs. DaSilva:** I should like to ask the hon. Minister how the girls are getting on at Bishops' High School. At the same time I should like to ask whether they are showing interest in wood-work.

**Cde. Baird:** Cde. Chairman, I do not think that we have a special curriculum for boys and girls. The girls do wood-work, they were doing it before the boys went to Bishops' High School, so this is nothing new.

*Head 49, Ministry of Education and Social Development, Bishops' High School - \$429,033 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 141.

## **HEAD 50 – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **ANNA REGINA SECONDARY SCHOOL**

Question proposed that the sum of \$16 for Head 50, Ministry of Education and Social Development, Anna Regina Secondary School, stand part of the Estimates.

**Mrs.DaSilva:** The sum involved is \$16. For general information, what is the position with Anna Regina Secondary School? What is the money being asked for?

**Cde. Baird:** The building will be modified to house the new community high school which will cater for the students in the secondary departments of all-age schools.

*Head 50, Ministry of Education and Social Development, Anna Regina Secondary School - \$16 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 142.

**HEAD 51 – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT  
BERBICE HIGH SCHOOL**

Question proposed that the sum of \$280,311 for Head 51, Ministry of Education and Social Development, Berbice High School, stand part of the Estimates.

**Mrs. DaSilva:** Just a short general question for the Minister. Now that there is supposed to be a multilateral school in New Amsterdam, what will happen to the Berbice High School staff when the multilateral school goes fully into operation?

**Cde. Baird:** The old Berbice High School still exists and it is operating as a school for general secondary education ending at the Fifth Form which caters for up the Fifth Form level. A headmaster from the old Berbice High School is still there and the new school has a headmistress.

*Head 51, Ministry of Education and Social Development, Berbic High School - \$280,311  
– agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 143.

**HEAD 52, MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT  
NEW AMSTERDAM TECHNICAL INSTITUTE**

Question proposed that the sum of \$605,427 for Head 52, Ministry of Education and Social Development stand part of the Estimates.

**Mrs. DaSilva:** Under this Head, New Amsterdam Technical Institute, again there seems to be

apparent staff shortages particularly under subhead 1, items (3) and (4) Senior Lecturers and Lecturers. We had a recent job evaluation when the teachers' salaries were looked into. It was agreed that there should be a more realistic approach to the amount of money that lecturers earn because many of these people will go and work in banks and offices and earn more money than they will receive as lecturers. I urge the hon. Minister to look into this problem if we are to keep these people, because we need them.

**Cde. Baird:** Cde. Chairman, with respect to the staff shortages at the New Amsterdam Technical Institute I think we have discussed this already and I think I have answered this question before. I want to remind the hon. Member that it is not a matter of salary only. It is just that we have now begun to organise education to serve the national objective. We have to produce the kind of labour force we want and this takes time. As far as I know, the New Amsterdam Technical Institute at this moment is well staff. As far as I know there are still, maybe, about three shortages but we are making every effort to fill vacancies in that institution.

*Head 52, Ministry of Education and Social Development, New Amsterdam Technical Institute - \$605,427 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 144.

**HEAD 53 – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT  
-COLLEGE OF EDUCATION FOR SECONDARY TEACHERS**

Question proposed that the sum of \$317,185 for Head 53, Ministry of Education and Social Development, College of Education for Secondary Teachers, stand part of the Estimates.

*Head 53, Ministry of Education and Social Development, College of Education for Secondary*

*Teachers - \$317,185 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 145.

**HEAD 54 – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT  
- CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT UNIT**

Question proposed that the sum of \$1,267,687 for Head 54, Ministry of Education and Social Development, Curriculum Development Unit, stand part of the Estimates.

**Mrs. DaSilva:** Sir, I just have a general question especially in view of the comments made by, I think it was the Principal of the Teachers' Training College, about the need for a new curriculum in schools. I particularly wanted to ask about the preparation of the books. We, on this side, of the House, have received a copy of a book entitled: "How the Peoples came Guyana." Maybe the hon. Minister will tell us very briefly the progress being made with local books for schools.

**Cde. Baird:** Cde. Chairman, I think I would like to issue an invitation to the hon. Member to visit the Curriculum Development Unit because there she will be able to see the work that is being done. When Mrs. Lyken, the Principal of the Government Training College was speaking, she was speaking on a need that is in the process of being satisfied because for the past four years we have been working on the development of a new curriculum. It is an on-going thing which will never end; it will never end; it will go on until the end of time. I am not in a position now to name the books that have been produced but I can assure the hon. Member that they are substantial.

*Head 54, Ministry of Education and Social Development, Curriculum Development Unit  
- \$1,267,687 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 146.

**HEAD 55, MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT  
GUYANA INDUSTRIAL TRAINING CENTRE**

Question proposed that the sum of \$166,410 for Head 55, Ministry of Education and Social Development, Guyana Industrial Training Centre, stand part of the Estimates.

*Head 55, Ministry of Education and Social Development, Guyana Industrial Training Centre - \$166,410 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Pages 147 and 148.

**HEAD 56 – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT  
- PROBATION AND WELFARE SERVICE**

Question proposed that the sum of \$744,856 for Head 56, Ministry of Education and Social Development, Probation and Welfare Services, stand part of the Estimates.

**Mrs. DaSilva:** I have just two question one on subhead 1, item (7) on page 147 and the other on subhead 20 on the next page. Item (7), Probation and Welfare Officer II/Probation and Welfare Officer I. it does appear – and I have to repeat this for the record – that we had approved \$96,156 in 1975; we revised this to \$108,898 and now we are asked to vote \$131,802. We are very pleased to increase votes such as this one because we realise the absolute need we have for Probation and Welfare Officers. They are very necessary not only in connection with probation work but also for helping in the welfare services. In these circumstances, I want to know if, under the heading welfare, I can ask the minister if there is any information on the State Nurseries that we have talked about and which I know finds sympathy on both sides of the

House. As a matter of fact, I think again of the National Park where we had this famous women's rally earlier this year. There was talk then about the State Nurseries and the swift implementation of this policy. I do hope that the Minister will have good news for me, for the nation and for the House on this score and that it will not take the same unfortunate position that the married women have to face with the tax problem.

The other question is on subhead 20 on the next page. Under this new subhead the Government is asking for \$21,000 for Supplies and Equipment, Rehabilitation of Youth on Probation. This is a vote which we will heartily later support but could the hon. Minister tell us very briefly what form this rehabilitation will take? What will they be doing with these young people?

**Cde. Baird:** Cde. Chairman, the salaries of Probation Officers increase as they become qualified. Some of the Probation Officers concerned receive their training at the University of Guyana and as they qualify, naturally their salaries increase.

With respect to the need for day nurseries – I think the hon. Member means day nurseries – this is all part of the nursery school education dealing with those children who are going to have a sort of pre-school education. Day nurseries are really gearing for children whose parents work and that sort of thing. This is all part of the Education Year project and all part of the development. Work has begun; we have programmes; the programme of activities for this kind of institution is now being examined and it is to be completed. The training programme will begin perhaps early next year. This programme will involve training and retraining because Members will appreciate that some persons receive some sort of training which we do not think is adequate or relevant and so we have to do some retraining.

Now, the Youth on Probation. That has to do with the education of some of our young people on probation and the activities take place at the Sophia Centre and Sophia. It concerns

some young people who are being exposed to educational experiences according to need, to vocational training if they are capable and, of course, to a heavy dose of therapy to behaviour modification techniques and things like that. We are trying to re-educate them. The attempt is to re-educate these young people and to integrate them into society. At the moment we are concerned with one aspect of that programme, in schools and this will be a means of employing them at least in the early stages before they are placed in other areas of employment.

**Mrs. DaSilva:** I have just a short supplementary question to ask. I appreciate that the hon. Minister plans carefully in her Ministry. She says so. What I am concerned about is the day nursery where the mother can leave children when she has to go out to work. The hon. Minister explained the programme which I fully understand. It is greatly appreciated and I think it is a very good idea. But whilst that is going on it does take time to complete the building. Are there any places that have been actually identified in the Georgetown area for these day nursery clinics? Are we going to build? What are we going to do, and when?

**Cde. Baird:** I am not in a position to indicate the area in which all nursery schools will be placed. What I do know is that we have plans of the type of building we would like to have. It would take two forms; putting up new buildings and modifying existing ones.

*Head 56, Ministry of Education and Social Development, Probation and Welfare Service  
- \$744,856 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**HEAD 57 – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT  
BYGEVAL/MAHAICA SECONDARY SCHOOL MULTILATERAL**

**The Chairman:** Page 149.

Question proposed that the sum of \$465,406 for Head 57, Ministry of Education and Social Development, Bygeval/Mahaica Secondary School – Multilateral, stand part of the Estimates.

**Mrs. DaSilva:** All these multilateral schools will follow the pattern right through. I will use this Head 57, Bygeval/Mahaica Secondary School Multilateral to give an indication of the general trend of the type of questions we want to ask about each school because each one has to be dealt with separately. If there is a specific item I want to refer to I will indicate it and ask the Minister to answer that question. The general question which I shall deal with appears through all the multilateral schools. It is staffing. They are practically in the same position. If the Minister has any special thing to say that she thinks might be of interest to the House I would like her to use this opportunity. We would appreciate that. I do not propose to ask any questions further down on the multilateral schools until we come to Anna Regina.

**Cde. Baird:** Cde. Chairman, I think I have spoken in this House about the new secondary schools. I would only like to say here that these six new secondary schools are organised on the multilateral basis which means that all these schools are offering a diversified curriculum and it is important to appreciate that these are schools that cater for children of varying levels of ability. It is for the very able, the average and the not so able. They are exposed to a common curriculum for the first three years after which interests begin to vary and abilities show up. They take different kinds of courses. We are not leaving staffing to chance. There is a common problem, the problem of numbers and people who have the proper attitudes. One thing we are very careful about is to ensure that anyone who is to be employed in the new secondary school, organised on the multilateral basis, receives a period of orientation before he or she takes up office. We give them specialist training apart from the normal training that they have. This is an on-going project.

The other thing of importance about these schools is that they are being used throughout the country for further education for people in the community, the out of school youths, adults

and even for teachers. For example, we had a problem increasing the level of science education for teachers and we had to bring them to Georgetown. This is not really necessary because teachers in all parts of the country can receive their training on the spot.

*Head 57, Ministry of Education and Social Development, Bygeval/Mahaica Secondary School – Multilateral - \$465,406 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**HEAD 58 – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT  
ANNA REGINA SECONDARY SCHOOL – MULTILATERAL**

**The Chairman:** Pages 150 and 151.

Question proposed that the sum of \$679,642 for Head 58, Ministry of Education and Social Development, Anna Regina Secondary School, Multilateral, stand part of the Estimates.

**Mrs. DaSilva:** Page 151, subhead 9, Dietary. We are asked to vote \$94,500 for this subhead. I am not questioning the money but I wish to read the legend which states: “To provide for boarding of students at school hostels.” Anna Regina seems to be the only multilateral school that has a hostel attached to it. If there are no others, could the Minister say if it is proposed in the course of time to have others. Could the Minister say if this is planned for the future?

**Cde. Baird:** Cde. Chairman, as with other educational institutions, the allocation for feeding will remain as it is until the farm becomes productive. I think the question asked is whether other schools are residential. At the moment Anna Regina is the only residential school because that was in a special need. It is proposed, in any event, to make other new secondary schools residential.

*Head 58, Ministry of Education and Social Development, Anna Regina Secondary School – Multilateral - \$679,642 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 152.

**HEAD 59 – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT  
BLADENHALL SECONDARY SCHOOL –MULTILATERAL**

Question proposed that the sum of \$496,740 for Head 59, Ministry of Education and Social Development, Bladenhall Secondary School, Multilateral stand part of the Estimates.

*Head 59, Ministry of Education and Social Development, Bladenhall Secondary School – Multilateral - \$496,740 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 153.

**HEAD 60 – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT  
NEW AMSTERDAM SECONDARY SCHOOL – MULTILATRAL**

Question proposed that the sum of \$457,476 for Head 60 Ministry of Education and Social Development, New Amsterdam Secondary School, Multilateral, stand part of the Estimates.

*Head 60, Ministry of Education and Social Development, New Amsterdam Secondary School – Multilateral - \$457,476 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 154.

**HEAD 61 – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT  
CHRISTIANBURG/WISMAR SECONDARY SCHOOL – MULTILATERAL**

Question proposed that the sum of \$377,884 for Head 61, Ministry of Education and Social Development, Christianburg/Wismar Secondary School, Multilateral, stand part of the Estimates.

*Head 61, Ministry of Education and Social Development, Christianburg/Wismar Secondary School –Multilateral - \$377,884 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 155.

**HEAD 62 – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT  
RUIIMVELDT SECONDARY SCHOO – MULTILATERAL**

Question proposed that the sum of \$434,684, for Head 62, Ministry of Education and Social Development, Ruimveldt Secondary School Multilateral, stand part of the Estimates.

*Head 62, Ministry of Education and Social Development, Ruimveldt Secondary School – Multilateral - \$434,684 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 156.

**HEAD 63 – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT  
PORT KAITUMA RESIDENTIAL GOVERNMENT SECONDARY SCHOOL**

*Question proposed that the sum of \$445,348 for Head 63, Ministry of Education and Social Development, Port Kaituma Residential Government Secondary School, stand part of the Estimates.*

**Mrs. DaSilva:** Sir, I am going to do the same thing with the Residential Government Secondary Schools as I did with the Multilateral Schools. I will ask the question on the first one. If there is anything worthy of special mention she will let us know.

These new Residential Schools are to be situated, at least from the hon. Minister's Budget Speech are to be situated, at least from Mabaurma. The Current Expenditure is \$7,000,000. This is a new venture and we would appreciate having from the hon. Minister some information on the proposals. Could the Minister give us some overall information about the proposed plan for these schools.

**Cde. Baird:** Cde. Chairman, these proposed residential schools, as you will notice, are to be sited in areas in the hinterland more or less. We have had the problem of finding accommodation for children who are allocated to secondary schools in Mabaruma, Port Kaituma and so on. Many of them either did not take up the places or they came out on the coastland where they can have boarding facilities. Hence the establishment of residential schools will help in this respect.

I think we should accept by now that there is a pattern that we are following in education to offer what we call diversified programmes in our schools and no longer restrict the position to purely academic work. They will have agriculture and whatever activities are relevant to their particular area. So you would find some basic aspects of the programme. We will also find that their need varies according to the schools.

*Head 63, Ministry of Education and Social Development, Port Kaituma Residential Government Secondary School - \$445,348 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 157.

**HEAD 64 – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT  
KWAKWANI RESIDENTIAL GOVERNMENT SECONDARY SCHOOL**

*Question proposed that the sum of \$106,001 for Head 64, Ministry of Education and Social Development, Kwakwani Residential Government School, stand part of the Estimates.  
Head 64, Ministry of Education and Social Development, Kwakwani Residential Government School - \$106,001 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 158.

**HEAD 65 – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT  
MABARUMA RESIDENTIAL GOVERNMENT SECONDARY SCHOOL**

Question proposed that the sum of \$106,001 for Head 65, Ministry of Education and Social Development, Mabaruma Residential Government Secondary School, stand part of the Estimates.

*Head 65, Ministry of Education and Social Development, Mabaruma Residential Government Secondary School - \$106,001 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 159.

**HEAD 66, MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT  
ST. IGNATIUS RESIDENTIAL GOVERNMENT SECONDARY SCHOOL**

Question proposed that the sum of \$106,001 for Head 66, Ministry of Education and Social Development, St. Ignatius Residential Government Secondary School, Stand part of the Estimates.

*Head 66, Ministry of Education and Social Development, St, Ignatius Residential Government Secondary School - \$106,001 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 160.

#### **DIVISION XXVI – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

Question proposed that the sum of \$5,000,000 for Division XXVI, Ministry of Education and Social Development, stand part of the Estimates.

**Mrs.DaSilva:** Subheads 1, 2, 15, and 16. Subhead 1 deals with Primary, Nursery and Secondary Schools. Under Capital Expenditure we are being asked to vote \$1,000,000. We are not quibbling about the money. Money spent on our schools is well spent but we are asking for a little more explanation for \$1 million to provide the construction of schools. Where will these schools be?

Subhead 2, Technical and Vocational Schools: The sum of \$100,000 is to provide for the construction of three technical schools. Here it specifies a number of schools. Does the hon. Minister think that \$100,000 can build three schools or is this just the beginning? Will she be coming back for more?

Subhead 15, Technical Institute, Georgetown, subhead 16 Technical Institute, New Amsterdam: The sum of \$180,000 has been asked for each of these institutions and the legend states in each case “To provide for additional facilities.” The Minister did tell us a while ago

**4.12.75**

**National Assembly**

**7.35 – 7.45 p.m.**

about schools in the hinterland in specific areas. Has anyone really gone into the needs for these two institutions or have they just down \$180,000 because they want that figure? It seems a very funny thing that these two institutions will each need the same amount of money. What are the plans for these two schools?

**7.35 p.m.**

**Cde. Baird:** Cde. Chairman, I am not in a position to name the areas in which these schools will be built but what I can assure the hon. Member is that the schools are not built at random.

The Ministry of Education has a Planning Unit and builds schools according to certain criteria. This is received from time to time so before any decision is taken as to placing a school this is carefully considered.

Technical and vocational schools: This allocation is for completing one school at Friendship on the West Coast Demerara. Subheads 15 and 16, Technical Institute Georgetown and Technical Institute New Amsterdam: These allocations were carefully gone into. There are a lot of things in common. As a fact, I want to believe that it was a coincidence that the same sum was allocated for both schools. But this evaluation of the needs of institutions goes on over a long period all through the year, and before any decisions are made a lot of things are taken into consideration. This is no haphazard arrangement.

*Division XXVI, Ministry of Education and Social Development - \$5,000,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 161.

**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**  
**DIVISION XXVII – IBRD/IDA PROJECTS – FIRST EDUCATION PROJECT**

Question proposed that the sum of \$2,000,000 for Division XXVII, Ministry of Education and Social Development, IBRD/IDA Projects, First Education Project stand part of the Estimates.

*Division XXVII, Ministry of Education and Social Development, IBRD/IDA Projects, First Education Project - \$2,000,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 162.

**DIVISION XXVIII – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**  
**IBRD/IDA PROJECTS – SECOND EDUCATION PROJECT**

Question proposed that the sum of \$3,000,000 for Division XXVIII, Ministry of Education and Social Development, IBRD/IDA Projects, Second Education Projects stand part of the Estimates.

*Division XXVII, Ministry of Education and Social Development, IBRD/IDA Projects, Second Education Project - \$3,000,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** We will commence the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Justice, pages 18 and 19. Before we proceed further, there is a slight correction on page 18 under subhead 1 item (3) the legend should be amended. Pages 18 and 19.

**HEAD 2 – SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE**

*Question proposed that the sum of \$898,722 for Head 2, Supreme Court of Justice stand part of Estimates.*

**Mr. Singh:** Mr. Chairman, I will be very brief on this Head. I propose speaking on subhead 11 on page 19, but before I do so let me say that I note that this is the first time the hon. Minister is appearing to answer for heads under his responsibility. I want to pay a public tribute to the way in which the hon. Minister has been acquitting himself since his appointment. We all know that his public relations have always been admirably excellent and now filling this most important office of Minister of Foreign Affairs and Justice his stature in this respect, to my mind, is in no way diminished. But I want to say from personal experience that he has consulted with us, made himself available when necessary and, indeed to my mind, he is one of the most approachable Ministers of the Government in this egalitarian society of ours which we are trying to build. He has been courteous and forthright and he has been frank in Parliament. We compliment the hon. Minister and we have no doubt that this good record will continue.

Page 19 subhead 11, Editing Law Reports: Sir, year after year we are providing \$2,880. We all know that the cost of living has gone up, that prices have gone up and that the cost of services has gone up. To my mind the amount being requested for this subhead is inadequate. I feel that there should be an increase in this subhead to remunerate these people who are involved in this exercise and I feel fortified in asking this because I am aware that the Law Report for Guyana are in arrears. I am not saying that this is so necessarily because of the remuneration but the Law Reports are significantly in arrears and as we do have our revised edition of the Laws of Guyana it seems only right that to go along with that, we should have the Law Library up to date also. And in this respect I would ask the hon. Minister whether he could pay some particular attention to this so that the situation could be remedied.

**The Chairman:** Cde. Minister.

**The Minister of Foreign Affairs and Justice (Cde.Wills):** Cde. Chairman, I must thank the hon. Leader of the Opposition for the endowment of praise he sees fit to bestow upon me. I must let him know that I am impressed that he and the stout lady at his side have now allowed the paucity of their numbers to diminish their vigilance and their homework in handling the affairs of so many different Ministries between themselves. I am also pleased to note that the question I am about to answer is a question where the Opposition feels we should get more money. I am quite sure my friend the Minister of Finance has taken due cognisance of this. Having said that, I must assure this House that I feel that the position on law reporting in this country is entirely unsatisfactory. One cannot have a viable system of jurisprudence without an adequate system of law reporting and that means that one must pay for it. I am only a few months in harness as you are aware and I intend to look at this along with the other many matters, I can assure you, very vigilantly next year.

Let me say that law reporting has been the historical concern of a few. The authorities are hard to find and very often they suffer from a loss of memory and tiredness so that while some debate proceeds, what they thought the judge ought to have said becomes more prevalent in their minds than what the judge did, in fact, say. So, I agree with my friend that it is in a very bad state and I can assure him that I shall have a close look at it. I must say, of course, that we have not had any requests for more money and it is nice to know that there are others who feel even more anxiously that those reports should be coming in and that the money should be more. I assure him, however, that I shall look into this matter very closely. I shall do the very best I can to clear up this inadequate system of law reporting and put it in a more acceptable state to make the law much more readily available and easily understood for the practice not only of the lawyers themselves but the general public because we have this maxim which says that “Ignorance of the law is no excuse”.

*Head 2, Supreme Court of Judicature - \$898,722 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 20.

### HEAD 3 – MAGISTRATES

*Question proposed that the sum of \$1,181,278 for Head 3, Magistrates, stand part of the Estimates.*

**Mr. Singh:** I should like particularly to speak on page 20, subhead 5. Before I go so, let me say that I am very happy to note that the Magistrates' Department has been re-organised with the establishment of the posts of Chief Magistrate, Principal Magistrate and Senior Magistrate with the attendant salaries. I spoke on this last year and I am really very happy that it has been done. The hon. Minister of Finance should be commended for having provided the money for these people because the posts were created long ago but the money has not been forthcoming.

Subhead 5, Books and Publications, again involves suggesting to the hon. Minister of Finance, through the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Justice, that more money should be provided in this vote. These books and publications are intended to serve the Magistrates' Court throughout the country. I do not consider the sum of \$800 to be at all adequate. This cannot really service and keep and keep supplied the Magistrates' Courts throughout the country with the books and periodicals, particularly the reference books, which are so necessary in all our Courts in this country. The Magistrates have to work with books, particularly reference books, and I have been amazed at the paucity of books in their Courts.

Perhaps this is another area to which the hon. Minister can direct his attention. I know that he is of recent vintage and I know that there have been priorities to which he has had to devote his time but I would hope that during the forthcoming year he would give his attention to this to see that books and publications are provided not only for the Magistrates' Courts in New Amsterdam and Georgetown but for every Magistrates' Court in this country.

**Cde. Wills:** I must thank my friend again for his concern about the reading material made available to the magistrates in this country. I must not let him feel, however, that I endorse the reference he makes because I feel that most of what they do get is unsatisfactory for a socialist country and I want to be very clear on that. I feel that too often magistrates get reading material which is irrelevant to the circumstances of Guyana so, while I promise him that I shall very closely look into the question of increasing the reading material and whereas I promise him that I shall do my best to make this available all over the country, I also promise him that I shall get rid of the irrelevant nonsense that is found in the material that magistrates read and sometimes try to apply. We shall look around very carefully to see where we get our reading material from and I hope that when we will have done so, those who are to administer justice in this country will show a corresponding desire to read, absorb and inwardly digest and apply what they read. I do not believe in the tradition of the past of supplying material which no one reads. I assure him, however, that such material will be countrywide and will be readily available for Magistrates in the New Year. May I assure him also that the sum of \$800 is not all the truth and that there are funds elsewhere and books are made readily available to Magistrates.

*Head 3, Magistrates - \$1,181,278 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 26.

## **HEAD 6 – OMBUDSMAN**

Question proposed that the sum of \$35,222 for Head 6, Ombudsman, stand part of the Estimates.

**Mr. Singh:** It is necessary for me to choose an item and I will choose subhead 1, item (4) and speak on Secretary to the Office of the Ombudsman. How much work does this Secretary really have to do? I know that the post of Ombudsman is provided for under the Constitution like

the post of Elections Commission Chairman. We have aired it very often. But, sir, let us ask the question – and this is with no disrespect to the Ombudsman at all because he is constrained –

**7.55 p.m.**

How effective is this entire department?

Some considerable time ago the hon. Prime Minister agreed that the powers of the Ombudsman were very limited, that they needed to be revised and expanded. There was talk in this House and there was a promise that this would be looked into so that his powers could be expanded. Nothing has been done about that so far. I am casting no aspersions on the Ombudsman. I am saying that you have to work with your tools within the ambit of what you are allowed and if the man does not have the power to do things, well then he cannot do them. That is the problem here. Under the existing law he does his work, he submits a report and that report, under the law, has to be laid in Parliament. The last general report was in respect of 1970. I know from statements and publications that there was a recent report dealing with an allegation in respect of a Minister and a former member of the diplomatic service. That report has not been brought to this Parliament. What is happenings with ...

**The Chairman:** Hon. Member let me hasten to correct you. No such report was laid. A report was prepared but was not sent to the Office of the Speaker to be laid in Parliament.

**Mr. Singh:** Very well, sir, that is exactly the point I am making. From items in the newspapers I read there were no denials of that. I read that a report had been made. I have not seen that report; it has not come to this Parliament. Nobody was contradicted, neither has the Office of Ombudsman contradict that the report had, in fact, been made, prepared and submitted. To whom was it submitted? The position is that we are waiting for it here in Parliament and that is what worries us here. The lack of reports coming to Parliament is worrying us and the fact that the powers of the Ombudsman have not been expanded, as was promised.

**Cde. Wills:** Cde. Speaker, of course it is the duty of the hon. Leader of the Opposition, as he sees it fit, to make comments. The Office of the Ombudsman has been expanded. A Committee was set up to enlarge the powers of the Ombudsman. A member of a certain political Party, called the People's Progressive Party, has been invited to take part in the Committee. By their own default, they have caused this committee not to function. This puts me in a position to sympathise with the Leader of the Opposition. But that is the position in respect of the committee.

With respect to the Ombudsman's alleged failure to lay a Report before Parliament, my friend should know that there is no legal requirement for a special report of that kind to be laid before Parliament. What is an obligation is an Annual Report. But there is no requirement for a report of that kind indicated to be laid before Parliament. My friend might feel that it should be inserted in the Constitution but certain steps can be taken to change the Constitution. I cannot really answer the allegation that a man ought to do what he is not entitled by law to do when his office is statutory, when his powers are statutory. There is no custom involved here, and to ask him to do something which is not enjoined by statute is to my mind insupportable.

*Head 6, Ombudsman - \$35,222 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

## **HEAD 9 – PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS**

**The Chairman:** Page 29.

Question proposed that the sum of \$212,287 for Head 9, Public Prosecutions, stand part of the Estimates.

*Head 9, Public Prosecutions - \$212,287 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**HEAD 15 – MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

*Question proposed that the sum of \$10,115,408 for Head 15, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, stand part of the Estimates.*

**Mrs. DaSilva:** There is just one question on this Head 15, page 43, subhead 1 item (18). This deals with our Ambassadors, High Commissioners and Accredited Representatives. We have been asked to vote \$135,000 and the establishment, since 1974, calls for nine such Heads of Mission. What I am going to ask for is general information and not advance information. We are interested to know what is happening with Peking. We have not had an Ambassador there for quite a long time. I cannot remember when the last Ambassador vacated that position, but I think there was no Ambassador during 1975.

This reminds me to mention that it is interesting to note that the sum of \$135,000 is shown in the 1975 Approved Estimates, the Revised Estimates show that we used \$135,000 and the last Ambassador has not been there for practically the whole year. There should be some saving in that vote. I would not say the same for India because the gentleman who was there same out not so long ago. Could the hon. Minister tell us the position with regard the filling of these vacancies? Could he also give us some idea of the plans for the deployment of the ambassadorial staff.

**8.05 p.m.**

**Mr. Singh:** Just one question on page 44 subhead 16, Expenses of Guyana Boundaries Commission. In 1975 the sum of \$10,000 appeared in the Approved Estimates and this has been revised to \$10,000. For next year we are asking for \$10,000. Is this Boundaries Commission really active? I am happy that we seem to have got over what was worrying us at one time. The pressure is certainly off. Is this Commission still in existence and still working?

**Cde. Wills:** Cde. Chairman I am heartened by the activities today and the most heartening thing is the hon. Member's concern, having regard to the socialist philosophy of my Government, that we have no Ambassador in Peking.

I hold the view that the foreign service must not be filled willy-nilly as they expect. I feel that one cannot afford to make errors of judgement in personalities in selecting Ambassadors. I also feel that one should carefully weigh the circumstance, not only of the person involved but the kind of relations one wants to maintain with the territory, before decisions are taken. And if there is any delay in filling these vacancies, I, first of all, wish to assure the Opposition that it has been delayed because of my own personal desire to weigh the circumstances carefully and not merely to parcel out posts and jobs for the sake of filling them, for the sake of patronage or what have you. I do not wish to put people there because they have to be there. Having said that I want to assure the Opposition that in respect of India, Peking and Surinam, I shall be in a position to make announcements by January 1976.

With respect to Surinam, I can add that they have changed over to Republican status. With respect to Peking we have made requests and the thing is very much in train. The vacancy in India we will fill by January 1, 1976.

Now having assured the Opposition that we intend to fill these vacancies by January 1, 1976; that we have people in mind and that we have steps being taken, I must turn to the question of the Boundaries Commission raised by the hon. Leader of the Opposition. I feel that the Boundaries Commission is an important diplomatic instrument for the solution of problems we have at the moment. I feel also that it needs a new shoulder behind the wheel and a new ethos to give it that influence, that dynamism and that drive, that will reactivate, or further reactivate it. I should say, also, that its work can be in the interest of all Guyanese. It forms an essential part of my diplomatic plans for the rest of this year and next year. I ask him to accept my assurances and I merely state it is very important that he does.

*Head 15, Ministry of Foreign Affairs - \$10,115,408 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 46.

#### **DIVISION IX – MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

Question proposed that the sum of \$909,000 for Division IX, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, stand part of the Estimates.

*Division IX, Ministry of Foreign Affairs - \$909,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Pages 47 and 48.

#### **HEAD 16 – ATTORNEY GENERAL**

*Question proposed that the sum of \$467,393 for Head 16, Attorney General, stand part of the Estimates.*

**Mr. Singh:** Just one question sir, in respect of subhead 1, item (25) on page 47 Payment to Graduate Law Students: This we know is a new scheme. The Approved Estimate 1975 was \$7,200. The Revised Estimate is \$8,100 and we are asked to vote \$8,100 for increase in allowances as listed in the legend. I wonder whether the hon. Minister would take this opportunity to tell us something more about this scheme. I know it deals with the Caribbean Lawyers being put out by the U.W.I. and I do know something about the Scheme. The Ministry seems to be playing a very important part in the post-graduate training of these students and I think that, for the benefit of the public, the hon. Minister should have the opportunity of telling the nation.

**Cde. Wills:** Cde. Chairman this refers to those Graduate Law Students who have had practical training in Barbados and elsewhere and who come and are used in the Attorney General's Chambers and with the Director of Public Prosecutions, one feels, and I endorse it entirely, that if you utilise a man's skill he should receive remuneration for it. It is all the more necessary to assist because they do more work than the amount would suggest. The purpose of this Head is to give them some emolument, some reward, some return, some consideration for the work that they do when they come back on their holiday and at other times and are at the Attorney General's Chambers and with the Director of Public Prosecutions doing work for Guyana.

*Head 16, Attorney General - \$476,393 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 49.

#### **HEAD 17 – ATTORNEY GENERAL OFFICIAL RECEIVER**

Question proposed that the sum of \$136,780 for Head 17, Attorney General, Official Receiver, stand part of the Estimates.

*Head 17, Attorney General, Official Receiver - \$136,780 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 50.

**HEAD 18 – ATTORNEY GENERAL  
DEEDS REGISTRY**

Question proposed that the sum of \$199,940 for Head 18, Attorney General, Deeds Registry, stand part of the Estimates.

**Mr. Singh:** Sir, there are some points I should have liked to raise about staffing. I have raised them before so there is no point reiterating them. I shall raise them privately with the Minister.

The general point I want to make is that I have been going into this Registry on several occasions during this year and I have been alarmed to see that very valuable records, handwritten record books – because the clerks have to write in books like Record Book of Drainage, Deed Polls, they have to record the registration of companies, etc. and these records date back years – are in a critical state. It is not merely a question of binding, it is a question of the paper not being able to stand up to this daily handling.

In the days when I went there to work, as far back as 1952, we did have an operation whereby the Government voted money and special people – I think, they were retired people – were employed. Books were bought for them to transcribe from these old books into the new record books. They transcribed everything so that there was a new record book to use.

I should like the hon. Minister to visit the Registry and he will see what I am talking about. These books are on the counter and they are used all the time. The pages start to get worn and from some of these records parts are missing. These things must be re-written as early as possible and I should like to make a plea to the hon. Minister of Finance for the necessary money to buy books, for money to employ separate staff. The present Registry staff cannot do his work; they are fully occupied. To my mind, if the hon. Minister visits the Registry he would see that

they are crowded into a small space. Desks are put one against the other. Something must be done as early as possible to safeguard these records otherwise we shall have very serious problems.

The last matter I want to speak on is subhead 3, Miscellaneous. It does appear as though this hon. Minister is very fortunate. I seem to be talking more in respect of increasing funds rather than cutting down on expenditure. In this case I am not as happy about the vote. I do see from the record on this miscellaneous subhead that it has always been relatively high. The revised estimate of the amount which is envisaged to be spent in 1975 is \$4,425. If the sum of \$4,425 was spent in 1975 one would hardly expect that \$1,160 would be adequate for 1976. But we have always known that this head is for small matters. We were regaled on one occasion in this House with a list of things purchased from the Miscellaneous head, so one would not expect that they would be small items. There should have been no special reason for this large amount in 1975. We will probably have a request for supplementary estimates under this Head.

**The Chairman:** Cde. Minister of Foreign Affairs and Justice.

**Cde. Wills:** Cde. Chairman, the hon. Leader of the Opposition has told you that he has worked for some years in the Deeds Registry. I respect his experience and take note of all he has said. Of course, I stand by all the Government's proposals.

*Head 18, Attorney General, Deeds Registry - \$199,940 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

*Assembly resumed.*

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**Cde. Ramsaroop:** Before I move the formal adjournment, there is a Motion, notice of which was given yesterday, that we propose to take tomorrow after the Appropriation Bill shall have been taken. The Ministries tomorrow will be: Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security and the Ministry of Finance. I wish to move the adjournment of this House to Friday, 5<sup>th</sup> December, at 2 p.m.

**Adjourned accordingly at 8.30 p.m.**

\*\*\*\*\*