

**THE
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES**

OFFICIAL REPORT

[VOLUME 5]

**PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE THIRD SESSION OF THE NATIONAL
ASSEMBLY OF THE SECOND PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA UNDER THE
CONSTITUTION OF GUYANA**

38th Sitting

2.00 p.m.

Friday, 17th December, 1971

MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

Speaker

His Honour the Speaker, Mr. Sase Narain, J.P.

Members of the Government

People's National Congress

Elected Ministers

Prime Minister (1)

The Hon. L.F.S Burnham, S.C.,
Prime Minister

Deputy Prime Minister (1)

Dr. the Hon. P.A. Reid,
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Agriculture

Senior Minister (9)

The Hon .M. Kasim, A.A.,
Minister of Communication

The Hon. H.D. Hoyte, S.C.,
Minister of Finance

The Hon. W.G. Carrington,
Minister of Labour and Social Security

The Hon. Miss S.M.Feild-Ridley,
Minister of Health **(Absent - on leave)**

The Hon. B. Ramsaroop,
Minister of Housing and Reconstruction (Leader of the House)

The Hon. D.A. Singh,
Minister of Trade

The Hon. O.E. Clarke,
Minister of Home Affair

The Hon. C.V. Mingo,
Minister of Local Government

The Hon. W. Haynes,
Minister of State for Co. operatives
and Community Development

Appointed Ministers (5)

The Hon. S.S. Ramphal, S.C.,
Attorney- General and Minister of the State **Absent**

The Hon. H. Green,
Minister of Works, Hydraulics and Supply **Absent**

The Hon. H.O. Jack,
Minister of Mines and Forests

The Hon. E.B. McDavid,
Minister of Information and Culture

The Hon. C.L. Baird,
Minister of Education **Absent**

Parliamentary Secretaries (4)

Mr. J.G. Joaquin, J.P.,
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Finance

Mr. P. Duncan, J.P.,
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture

Mr. A. Salim,
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture

Mr. J.R. Thomas,
Parliamentary Secretary, Office of the Prime Minister

Mr. C.E. Wrights, J.P.,
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Works,
Hydraulics and Supply

Other Members (14)

Mr. J.N. Aaron
Miss M.M. Ackman, Government Whip
Mr. K. Bancroft
Mr. N.J. Bissember
Mr. J. Budhoo, J.P.
Mr. L.I. Chan-A-Sue
Mr. E.F. Correia
Mr. M. Corrica
Mr. E.H.A. Fowler
Mr. R.J. Jordan
Mr. S.M. Saffee
Mr. R.C. Van Sluytman
Mr. M. Zaheeruddeen, J.P.
Mrs. L.E. Willems

Members of the Opposition

People's Progressive Party (19)

Dr. C.B. Jagan,
Leader of the Opposition
Mr. Ram Karran
Mr. R. Chandisingh
Dr. F.H.W. Ramsahoye, S.C.
Mr. D.C. Jagan, J.P., Deputy Speaker
Mr. E.M.G. Wilson
Mr. A.M. Hamid, J.P., Opposition Whip

(Absent - on leave)

Mr. G. F. Lall, J.P.
Mr. M.Y. Ally
Mr. Reepu Daman Persaud, J.P.
Mr. E. M. Stoby, J.P. (Absent)
Mr. R. Ally
Mr. E. L. Ambrose (Absent)
Mrs. L.M. Braco
Mr. Balchand Persaud
Mr. Bhola Persaud (Absent - on leave)
Mr. I. R. Remington, J.P.
Mr. L. R. Durant (Absent)
Mr. V. Teekah

United Forces (3)

Mrs. E. DaSilva
Mr. M.F. Singh (Absent)
Mr. J. A. Sutton

Independent (1)

Mr. R.E. Cheeks (Absent)

OFFICERS

Clerk of the National Assembly- Mr. A.F. Narain
Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly- Mr. M. B. Henry

The National Assembly met at 2 p.m.

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair.]

Prayers

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS – FIRST READING

The following Bill was introduced and read the First time:

Miscellaneous (Fiscal Enactment) (Amendment) Bill.[**The Minister of Finance**]

PUBLIC BUSINESS**MOTION****APPROVAL OF ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURE 1972**

Assembly resolved itself into Committee of Supply to consider the Estimate of Expenditure for the financial year 1972, totalling \$197,846,560.

Assembly in Committee of Supply.

The Chairman: By agreement we are going to deal with the first Heads which fall under the Prime Minister. Page 15.

HEAD 1 – PRESIDENT

Question proposed that the sum of \$74,742 for Head 1, President stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Will hon. Members please indicate the subheads on which they wish to speak.

Head 1, President, \$74,742, agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Mr. Reepu Daman Persaud: Is there a plan to move the President from his present site?

The Chairman: There is no provision under Capital Estimates, so there is nothing to raise on it.

HEAD 6 – OMBUDSMAN

Question proposed that the sum of \$15, 486 for Head 6, Ombudsman, stand part of the Estimate.

The Chairman: Will hon. Members please indicate.

Mr. Jagan: I should like to ask one question on the whole Head.

Dr. Jagan: I would like to speak on item (1).

The Chairman: This is a statutory provision.

Dr. Jagan: I want to make an observation.

Head 6, Ombudsman - \$15,486 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

HEAD 7 – PUBLIC AND POLICE SERVICE COMMISSIONS

Question proposed that sum of \$253,683 for Head 7, Public and Police Service Commissions, stand part of the Estimate.

The Chairman: Will hon. Members please indicate the subheads on which they which to speak.

Head 7, Public and Police Service Commission - \$253,683 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

HEAD 9 – OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER AND CABINET

Question proposed that sum of \$1,019,490 for Head 9, Office of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, stand part of the Estimate.

The Chairman: Will hon. Members please indicate.

Mrs. DaSilva: Item (15), Director. I just want to ask how the hon. Prime Minister will tell us how the Youth Corps is getting on since last year. He promised to take me to Tumatumari and I hope has not forgotten.

The Prime Minister (Mr. Burnham): The Youth Corps now consist of over 400 Corps men and women. They have produced over \$50,000 worth of food during the past year and hope to be completely self-sufficient by 1972, except for rice and sugar and salt.

My undertaking to the hon. Member to Tumatumari still stands, and the invitation will be formally extended as soon as weather and my convenience permits.

2.25 p.m.

The Chairman: Page 30.

Mr. Hoyte: Mr. Chairman, may I propose an amendment to page 30. First of all, there are some words in the legend, against subhead 2, which should have been blocked out. The words “Community Development and Food Divisions respectively to Head 13” should be deleted.

Secondly, delete to words “and Social Welfare” against subhead 10, so that the subhead will now read “Grants to Voluntary Youth Organisations.”

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Minister, I am advised that words “correction” is a better term to use than “amendment”. Could we deal with page 30 now? Will the hon. Members please indicate the subheads on which they wish to speak?

Mr. Sutton: Subhead 10.

Dr. Jagan: Subhead 2, 3 and 13.

Mr. Balchand Persaud: Subheads 11 and 17.

Dr. Jagan: I merely wish to point out that the expenditure for Transport and Travelling under subhead 2 and for the Maintenance and Operation of Vehicles under subhead 13 –

The Chairman: Are you dealing with subhead 2 and 13 at the same time?

Dr. Jagan: Yes, sir. The expenditure under these subheads seems to be increasing insignificantly. I wonder why it is costing so much more now than in 1970 and 1971 for transport and travelling and maintenance and operation of Vehicles. Surely there must be serious attempt to cut down expenditure in view of the general observation we have made about the deficit in the budget. Perhaps the Prime Minister will say why these expenses are increasing so significantly.

Under subhead 3 there is an item, Sundries, for \$15,500. Since this is a rather large sum to put under Sundries perhaps the Prime Minister will tell us what these sundries.

The Chairman: Hon. Prime Minister, will reply to these as they asked, or do you prefer to answer all at the same time?

The Prime Minister: As usual.

The Chairman: Hon. Member, Mr. Sutton.

Mr. Sutton: I wonder if the Prime Minister will be good enough to tell us which are the youth organisations that benefit from these grants at subhead 10.

Mr. Balchand Persaud: Subhead 11, Promotion of Youth Work. I wish to ask the hon. Prime Minister if he can indicate what plans the Government has for the promotion of youth work in 1972.

There has been an alarming increase in juvenile delinquency in the country. As is known, young people consist a majority of our population and I would expect the Government's youth programme to be such as to embrace a sections of the community and that the Government would make its plans in such a way as to guide them for a future way of life.

As I see it, the Government does not seem to be tackling the growing rate of juvenile delinquency. We see in the new papers that a lot of young people are being sent to prison, a lot of young people are clamouring for jobs, a lot of young people, boys and girls, are walking the streets. They are unemployed and, as a result, many have to succumb to different influences in the society in order to earn a living.

I do not think that this is very good for our nation. Unless the Government's Youth Programme is brought up to date, I do not think that our country's future will be what we want it to be.

Under subhead 17, the sum of \$120,000 is being sought for Rations. I wonder if the hon. Prime Minister can indicate for which purpose this amount is being requested.

The Prime Minister: The sum spent under Transport and Travelling is increasing because the scale of allowance for public officers have been upped and, also, since this subhead covers travel by air, where necessary, it had to be increased to mirror the increased rates charged by the Guyana Airways Corporation.

Sundries are what the subhead says – telegrams, stationery and matters like that.

The youth organisations which are receipt of grants include Guyana Assembly of Youth, Boy Scouts, Girl Guides, Y.M.C.A, Y.W.C.A., and the Children's Dorcas Club. During the course of 1972 I shall take a careful look at the organisations to which grants are given and unless, on the advice of my Parliamentary Secretary for Youth, they can show that they are carrying out a programme in keeping with Government's national trust and policy they will not be in receipt of any further grants.

2.35 p.m.

With respect to youth work, this should be a subject matter for debate. I will not deal with it. Rations are what they say, rations equal food.

The Chairman: Page 31.

Mr. Ram Karran: I wonder if I can ask a general question embracing 23, 24 and 26 on the equally new subheads.

Mr. Reepu Daman Persaud: Subhead 32

Mr. Jagan: Subheads 23, 25 and 26

Mr. Balchand Persaud: Subhead 22, if necessary.

Mr. Sutton: Subhead 22

The Chairman: The hon. Member Mr. Reepu Daman Persaud.

Mr. Reepu Daman Persaud: Mr. Chairman, the agricultural development is being carried out by more than one Ministry. Since I deal with this particular subject in Parliament and since subhead 22 is a new item which has been created by supplementary estimates, I should like to know where are these expansions. Although it does not speak of expansion I assume that it is expansion or a new farming will be carried out. Can the Prime Minister tell us how many people will be involved, how many different areas will be taken in and what will be the basis for selection of people to work on these farm projects? The sum is not substantial when we speak of agriculture but it is quite a large sum outside the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Agriculture.

Mr. Sutton: Sir, the questions I intended asking in subhead 22 most of it has been asked by the hon. Member Mr. Persaud. But there is still one which I hope the Prime Minister could give us information. Could the Prime Minister tell us if these farms are already going and when they get going if there is any projection as to the question of the earning of income? Are they going run purely on basis of training the person or persons thereon? Or will an effort to be made to make them self-sufficient and possibly earn some money?

Mr. Balchand Persaud: The question which I should like to ask has already been asked.

Mr. Ram Karran: I wish to enquire whether the hon. Prime Minister will tell us what head these expenses were paid prior to 1971 and in the case of “Bedding” and “Upkeep of Hostel” for this year? I should also inquire where is this Hostel and how long is it run for the year? It seem to me that the taking away of all the buildings and compounds to be maintained under separate head would not be as economical – presuming that the Ministry of Works, Hydraulics and Supply runsits business economically away from the Ministry and that normally these heads unless they are for a temporary period and I presume that it is for a short period,

these heads should really refer to maintenance of building and compounds to the Ministry of Works, Hydraulics and Supply.

Mr. Jagan: Your Honour, dealing with subhead 23, I see here that in 1971 the amount was \$6,000, can the hon. Prime Minister say whether \$6,000 is the expense for the whole 1971? Because if it is for the whole of 1971 could he tell us why is it necessary to have \$12, 000 for the coming year?

The Prime Minister: Mr. Chairman, the farm consists of several hundred acres which can be expanded into thousands of acres on the opposite side of the River Bank from that one on which actually the Youth Corps building stands. Farming is done by Corps men and Corps women, and there are a few experienced framers in the area whose services are used from time to time.

Of course, they are on the staff of the Corps a number of persons including the director who are trained and professionally qualified agriculturalists. It is proposed that the framing exercise would provide for all the feed for all the Corps men and staff except in those items which cannot be produced up there. The surplus is to be sold so it would be income earning. During last year the surplus of eggs was sold in Bartica and also some surpluses arising from the growing of root crops. These surpluses would not normally be shown here because they are paid in the general income under the Constitution and relevant legislation.

I can assure my hon. Friend Mr. Sutton that I, as Minister responsible for the Youth Corps, am anxious not merely that they feed themselves but as far as it is practicable that they earn a surplus which could bring income.

So far as the question posed by the hon. Member Mr. Reepu Daman Persaud is concerned, I would say that quite obviously the Ministry of Agriculture could not be responsible for the agricultural exercises of the Youth Corps, because training in agriculture is one or the

things the members of the Corps go there for and it is supposed to be a relatively self-contained unit.

The hostel referred to at subhead 26 is a hostel at Bartica which is used for transit purposes. If the Corps men are travelling from the Coast to Tumatumari very rarely, if at all, is it possible for them to get from the Coast to Tumatumari in one day? Travelling by the Bartica steamer they get into Bartica rather late to go by road to Tumatumari. It is for that purpose that the hostel exists.

The maintenance of buildings is separate from the general maintenance of buildings and compounds, part of the Ministry of Works, Hydraulics and Supply, because a large part of this maintenance is done by the Corps men themselves under the supervision of some member of staff like the carpenters, the masons and other skilled technical staff.

2.45 p.m.

It is not the sort of general maintenance head, because as in the case of agriculture, the idea is to train the Corpsmen rather than have a service done by regular employees of the Ministry of Works, Hydraulics and Supply.

The laundry has gone up for 1972 because the increased input of Corps men came rather late this year, and during 1972, it is expected that the numbers will increase even further to approximately 600. That is the reason for it. I believe I have attempted to answer all the questions.

Head 9, Office of the Prime Minister and Cabinet - \$1, 019, 490 – agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

HEAD 10 – PRIME MINISTER**GUYANA DEFENCE FORCE**

Question proposed that the sum of, \$7, 0142, 901 for Head 10, Prime Minister, Guyana Defence Force, stand part of the Estimates.

Mr. Reepu Daman Persaud: Subhead 101.

Mr. Ram Karran: I wish to speak on the same subhead. If he deals with it, I will not worry.

The Chairman: The hon. Member Mr. Reepu Daman Persaud.

Mr. Reepu Daman Persaud: Issues of farm produce. In 1970, the amount earned was \$58, 000 and we notice it has been increased to \$150, 000. I should like to ask the hon. Prime Minister, since there is no legend alongside this particular provision, would he give us some explanation.

Mr. Ram Karran: Recognising that this is a “secret: item, we cannot ask anything on this page but I should like to find out whether the Prime Minister does not think it is a waste of time to spent \$7 million, even though the pre-occupation of those concerned would be bearing arms and things of that kind, when only \$150, 000 could be recorded as being issues of farm products. Why can it not be more? We are told by the hon. Prime Minister that these soldiers, who are being trained to defend our territorial integrity, are occupied on the road in peace time. Is this all they can yield? To me, it is a shame.

The Prime Minister: The sum of \$150, 000 is an estimate of the food that will be produced by the farm on the East Bank and issued to members of the G.D.F.

Head 10, Prime Minister, Guyana Defence Force - \$ 7, 042, 901 – agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

DIVISION V – PRIME MINISTER

Question proposed that the sum of \$231, 000 for Division V, Prime Minister, stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Will hon. Members please indicate.

Mr. Ram Karran: Subhead 3

Mrs. DaSilva: Subhead 3

Mr. R. Ally: Subhead 3

The Chairman: Hon. Member Mr. Ram Karran.

Mr. Ram Karran: Subhead 3, Youth Development. Mr. Chairman, if you look along this line you will see that we have spent under this head, for the purchase of miscellaneous equipment and the development of miscellaneous activities, the following sums: in 1969, \$339,000, in 1970, \$499,000, in 1971, \$220,000, and this year's estimate amount, \$231,000. Here a foreign loan is anticipated. I should like to know whether these items I read out relate to the same miscellaneous equipment and development of miscellaneous activities. In short, if it is so, it seems to me that the youth development programme is taking a lot of equipment. It may be for miscellaneous activities. Perhaps the Prime Minister would enlighten this House as to what these amounts related to in the past, and what the specific head, miscellaneous equipment and the development of miscellaneous activities, relates to, what do they really mean, and what sort of equipment are they acquiring for use in the Youth Division.

Mrs. DaSilva: Mr. Chairman, the hon. Member Mr. Ram Karran has asked what I would have liked to ask.

Mr. R. Ally: I see in this legend a provision for miscellaneous equipment and the development of miscellaneous activities. I do not see anything for the purchase or repair of furniture. These youths do a lot of damage to school furniture. Just September last the Y.S.M. went to the Scots Schools –

The Chairman: Hon. Member Mr. Roshan Ally, it speaks about provision of miscellaneous equipment and the development of miscellaneous activities. Not about damages.

2.55 p.m.

Hon. Prime Minister, will you reply to the hon. Member Mr. Ram Karran.

The Prime Minister: Last year, it was attracted to the attention of this House that the head was considerably reduced because a number of posts that used to be lumped together under Capital were separated after it was decided to establish a Youth Corps on a permanent basis and to offer a career to various person who are involved as members of the staff or as bakers, mechanics and so on. That accounts for the considerable reduction as between 1970 and 1971.

Indeed, this question was asked last year, but, but in the tradition of the Opposition, they ask questions for the sake of asking and are disgustingly repetitious. The question was asked last year and I answered it. Now, again this year, because of democracy, I have to answer it.

The Chairman: They are entitled to ask.

The Prime Minister: And I am entitled not to answer. The term “miscellaneous equipment” includes things like land rovers, trucks, boats, boat engines, fishing tackle and farmers’ tools.

Division V, Prime Minister - \$231,000, agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

HEAD 11 – PUBLIC SERVICE MINISTRY

Question proposed that the sum of \$314, 226 for Head 11, Public Service Ministry, stand part of the Estimates.

Mr. Ram Karran: Subhead 1, items (5) (8) (12) (16) (17) (18) (20). This is a question that was possibly asked last year. I would like to make the observation that we have had many changes in holders of posts in this and other Ministries. Messengers have possibly reached the top post and gone back to the bottom again with so many changes taking place in these Ministries. Are these changes related to job evaluation? Can the hon. Prime Minister explain this to this House?

The Chairman: Are you speaking on all the items?

Mr. Ram Karran: Yes, sir. They are all related. One cannot understand how in the brief period of one year there can be so many changes in the holders of posts, as shown in the estimates for the Ministry. What sort of a Government is that? Is this the reason why there is so much dissatisfaction in the Public Service? When is there going to be an end to these changes so that the civil servant, without political connections, can get into the stream and get his promotion as he should get it?

I know of one case where a station master at Enmore on the East Coast, Kowlessar by name, refused to act as the P.N.C. headman in that district and was posted to West Demerara. This sort of thing has to stop at the top as well as the bottom. If it does not stop it is going to create a lot of trouble in this country, the trouble that we have been warning about.

The Prime Minister: I do not propose to answer the earlier observations made by the hon. Member Mr. Ram Karran, but I want to refer to him mentioning people by name. The man, Mr. Kowlessar, who was removed from Enmore, saw both the Minister and myself. First of all, he assured me that he was an undying member of the P.N.C. Secondly, he said he had given information to the police against P.P.P. terrorists.

It was explained to him that the reason for his transfer was that he was rather a senior and since the East Coast railway was going to be phased out before the West Coast railway, his transfer to maintain his continuing in office.

Mr. Kowlessar has assured me that he is a supporter of the P.N.C. and he give the Police information about P.P.P. terrorists.

The Chairman: Page 35

Head 11, Public Service Ministry, \$570,000, agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

DIVISION VI – PUBLIC SERVICE MINISTRY

Question proposed that the sum of \$570,000 for Division VI, Public Service Ministry, stand part of the Estimates.

Mrs. DaSilva: Subhead 1, Conditional Scholarships and Training Courses. I would just like to know how many scholarships we granted during the year 1971.

The Prime Minister: Over 60, in various fields.

Division VI, Public Service Ministry - \$570,000, agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

HEAD 12 – MINISTRY OF PUBLIC CORPORATIONS

Question proposed that the sum of \$10,450 for Head 12, Ministry of Public Corporations, stand part of the Estimate.

The Chairman: Will members please indicate the subhead under which they wish to speak.

Mr. Ram Karran: Subhead 1, Personal Emolument. I noticed that that under subhead 1, item (1), there is a Permanent Secretary. There is National Insurance under subhead 2 and Transport and Travelling, but nothing else. Is this sum of money for one man? Has he got a staff? Can the Minister tell us where the Ministry is located and what are its functions and activities?

3.05 p.m.

Mr. Reepu Daman Persaud: I wish to speak on the head generally. When the Guyana Development Corporation was established there was no Ministry of Public Corporations and, in fact, there was no Guystac. I have been informed that the G.D.C. has become redundant in view of the new Public Corporations Ordinance. As a matter of fact, the officers in the G.D.C. hardly have any functions to perform and the Guyana Development Corporation is not as active as it was once. I am not say it was so good in the past, and now it is totally defunct; it has now gone

worse. In view of the fact we have all these Corporations and G.D.C. is not play the role that it should play – I am saying that it does not have a place, it has a place, the G.D.C. could have been playing an effective role. Would the Government not consider closing it down? I am urging the closing of the Guyana Development Corporation, because despite the fact that we have the G.D.C. we are still establishing more and more corporations every day. Only a week ago the Minister of Mines and Forests intimated to this House that a Forest corporation will be established. We can see more super structures, more spending and hardly any real development in this country. Can I pose another question: What new factories has the Guyana Development Corporation established within the last two years? The only project the hon. Prime Minister can probably point to is the Chronicle.

The Prime Minister: Mr. Chairman, the Guyana Development Corporation is advisory, promotional to research and consequently the establishment of other corporations, for example, the Shrimping Corporation does not make the G.D.C. redundant. From time to time as a matter of convince the G.D.C. has been used as the holder of Government equity until the establishment of a corporation as in the case of Guybau. I think my hon. Friend's criticism is based on naivety and ill-conceived. If one remembers the amendment which was passed in this House, to the Public Corporation Ordinance, establishing Guystac, one will recognise that Guystac itself is a corporation and corporations do not come under the Estimates. There is a provision in the law itself – *[Interruption by the hon. Member Mr. Ram Karran]*

The Chairman: Hon. Members, within the past few days the behaviour in this House has certainly been found wanting both from the Government side and the from the Opposition side. I think we ought to conduct ourselves with the dignity befitting this House. I am sure, and I am confident, that I can look forward to better behaviour. I will also ask that heckling and small talk be confined to a minimum, because it is the contention of the Government that because of the attitude of the Opposition it has taken the stand it has taken. The Opposition on the other hand is saying that, because of the attitude of the Government it is taking that position. Well, two wrong do not make a right. Could we in future conduct ourselves with the dignity befitting a Parliament?

The Prime Minister: I am sorry. I apologise, sir. It will also be recalled that in the legislation which was passed was stipulated that the Secretary of the Guyana State Corporation should be a Permanent Secretary. Therefore so far as the Civil Service Establishment is concerned there is only one person covered here in the Ministry of Public Corporations. Guystac itself of which the Permanent Secretary is secretary is a public corporation under the Public Corporation Ordinance and consequently nothing else has to appear here.

Mr. Ram Karran: Sir, will the Prime Minister deny that Guybau which he called a corporation is a private company.

The Prime Minister: Mr. Chairman, I do not deny that, but I am not responsible for the lack of intelligence of my hon. Friend who introduces the concept of Guybau when we were discussing Guystac. The only thing they have in common is the prefix.

The Chairman: Hon. Prime Minister you ought not to have committed yourself to answer the question.

Mr. Ram Karran: I beg to move the deletion of this item.

Question put and negatived.

Head 12, Ministry of Public Corporation - \$10,450, as printed, agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 43.

HEAD 14 – MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Question proposed that the sum of \$1,971,421 for Head 14, Ministry of Economic Development stand of the Estimates.

The Chairman: The hon. Member Mrs. DaSilva.

Mrs. DaSilva: Mr. Chairman, at the risk of being told I asked this question last year. I should like to ask it again this year because last evening the Prime Minister gave a long list of goods and items that we were not going to have in future in order to help the development of the country.

3.15 p.m.

I did ask last year, that I am condemning any contribution to any worthwhile organisation as UNICEF, but I did say, could we please ban the importation of Christmas cards from overseas, except the ones from UNICEF as such like organisations, in order to promote local Christmas cards. I rather hoped it would been done this year but still the shops are filled with holly and snow and all the others, and not many Guyanese Christmas cards. Is there going to be any consideration given to this? Surly, this is something that could be done, except for the UNICEF cards, and the money save by the non-importation of Christmas cards further help save Guyana dollars. Could the hon. Prime Minister say whether this will be considered for 1972?

Dr. Ramsahoye: This scheme for the remigration of Guyanese appears to be very welcome adjunct to the proposals which we hear from time to time put forward by Mr. Enoch Powell, who is very well known to us here. I should be grateful to learn from the hon. Prime Minister what is the nature of this scheme. I shall be grateful also if I can learn how many people have so far remigrated under the scheme and what is the procedure for any person, who desires to return under the scheme, to get assistance.

The Prime Minister: The Government welcomes the proposal of the hon. Member Mrs. DaSilva with respect to Christmas cards and I can assure her in the year 1972, the holly and snowflakes Christmas cards, though some exception will be made for organisations like UNICEF, which are international and basically charitable organisations. The scheme for remigration operates quite simply. The Embassies and High Commissions of the Government of Guyana all carry officers to whom any qualified and qualifying Guyanese can repair with a view of coming to serve Guyana. After consultation with the Ministry of Economic Development, the Public Service Commission, the Public Service Ministry with Guystac, it is then decided whether there is an actual vacancy or a potential vacancy. I say potential, because sometimes when one looks at the establishment as it is, one does not find a vacancy for say, a chemical engineer, we find that he would fit into the proposal expansion of the Guyana Marketing Corporation in the food technology.

This sum proposed here is to actually cover the travel expenses of the remigrant. May I say this, that not only in many cases it is recoverable from another head, for if under this scheme a civil engineer was brought in, his normal expenses should be covered from the Ministry of Works, Hydraulics and Supply, but this provision is to lend expedition. Furthermore, we can use these circumstances, repatriate persons to work in one of the Guystac Corporation, in which case, the expenses are borne but the particular corporation, or as we have been doing for a fee, we may recruit persons from Guybau. In so far as Guybau is concerned, since it does not come under Guystac, it treated separately, and it pays a fee for services of this type.

Perhaps my learned and hon. Friend is quite correct that the British ought to give us some further funds to ensure the more rapid remigration of persons whom they consider undesirable because of their excessive melanin. For the past two years, approximately 300 remigrants have come.

Head 14 Ministry of Economic Development - \$1,971,421 – agreed to, and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

DIVISION IX – MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Question proposed that the sum of \$6,479,000 for Division IX, Ministry Economic Development, stand part of the Estimates.

Mr. Ram Karran: Subheads 6, 9, and 12

Mr. Sutton: Subhead 11

Dr. Ramsahoye: Subheads 10 and 11

Mr. Balchand Persaud: Subheads 6 and 11

Mrs. DaSilva: Subhead 3

Dr. Jagan: Subhead 2

The Chairman: Hon. Leader of the Opposition

Dr. Jagan: The note under subhead 2, Industrial Development, reads: "To provide in the participation in joint ventures, industrial and agro-industrial ventures, and for the continual development of industrial estates." That is in the sum of \$1 million.

3.25 p.m.

I wonder if the Prime Minister will tell us about some of these ventures because this is rather vague. Apart from the factory for textiles which has been mentioned, we are not aware that any specific mention has been made of any industrial plans on the part of the Government.

Perhaps the Prime Minister will be good enough to tell us exactly what has been done in this respect.

Mrs. DaSilva: I use this subhead 3, Co-operative Development, to speak some enlightenment in the of co-operatives and to clarify a statement a statement that was made during a debate by the hon. Minister, Mr. Singh, when I made a mistake and rose to a point of order instead of raising to a point of correction.

I should like to know what is the position. We hear in this House about the co-operatives and the wonderful strides that they are making, the new co-operatives that have been started, the amount of money they have deposited with the National Co-operative Bank.

Outside of the House, we hear of the co-operatives that not working successfully. This only natural when going through the teething stage as we are. There must be some ventures that are successful and those that fail.

I asked where the failures are and I have not been given any answers. We hear of co-operatives in the Matthews Ridge area, in the Marudi Mountains and we hear of the Victoria's Canefarmers Co-operative, the one I spoke of in detail. The hon. Minister, Mr. David Singh, quite wrongly stated that I said that was the only failure. I never said that. I asked how many failures to make sure that failures do not recur and that our plans for co-operatives go forward without any problems.

In case of the co-operative at Marudi Mountains, there is rich, fertile land and excellent tomatoes and cabbages are produced, but the co-operative is not able to transfer them in time because communications are poor, the roads are not in good condition. It is not use having fertile lands and excellent crops if the crops cannot be transported before they rot.

The information I was seeking and did not get was this: Are any of these co-operatives failing and, if so, where? And also: Are we learning from this experience?

Mr. Ram Karran: I would like to enquire whether the Government has abandoned the investigation on investigation on hydro-electricity and to observe that we have, on repeated occasions, referred to reports made to the Government of Guyana and warned that unless the country is in a position to harness hydro-power rather quickly in this decade, we will have to install very expensive thermal plants in Georgetown and in other parts of the country.

It was pointed that Government gas made a blunder on electricity and continues to blunder, so much so that we are, at the moment, load shedding. It is for that reason, particularly, that I should like to find out from the Government what is its thinking on the investigation of hydro power.

Not long ago, I heard on the radio one Mr. Shruti Kant, a friend of the Prime Minister, I believe –

The Prime Minister: Mr. Chairman, I must object to these snide remarks. Mr. Shruti Kent is no friend of mine. He is a Principal of a school run by a friend of the P.P.P.

The Chairman: Hon. Member, Mr. Ram Karran, I ask that you carry out the debate in the manner in which it should be done. If not, I will definitely take remedial action.

Mr. Ram Karran: With my hand on my breast, I say that Mr. Shruti Kant told me that he was a personal friend of the Prime Minister's.

The Chairman: What has that to do with hydro power?

Mr. Ram Karran: It has, sir. In making a broadcast over the air, Mr. Shruti Kant said, in a matter relating to this subject, that the Town Council was inserting the pipe, bottoms up, for the sewage system in Georgetown. The tops of the pipes were rotten and the Council was placing these pipes with their bottoms up so that sewage and waste matters could be disposed of from the city.

The Prime Minister: I have nothing to do with the Town Council. The Town Council is a separate corporation established under separate legislation.

The Chairman: Hon: Hon. Member, Mr. Ram Karran, please continue.

Mr. Ram Karran: I happen to know that the Town Council is separate. I am speaking on subhead 9.

The Chairman: I thought you were speaking on subhead 6, Hydro-Power Investigation.

Mr. Ram Karran: No, sir, Subhead 9, U.N.D.P. Projects, “to provide for the carrying out of studies related to sewerage disposal, drainage and the provision of water.” I made the observation about Mr. Shruti Kant’s broadcast relating to the disposal of sewerage in Georgetown. I wish to know from the hon. Prime Minister whether the study relates to Georgetown or whether it is a study related to his building in the Botanical Gardens.

The Prime Minister: I have no building in the Botanical Gardens. In the Botanical Gardens is a building owned by the Government and placed at the disposal of the Prime Minister for his official residence.

Mr. Ram Karran: I know it is the Government’s property.

The Chairman: If you know, why are you making these remarks?

Mr. Ram Karran: Because it comes under sewerage.

The Chairman: You are making that remark and drawing personalities into it.

Mr. Ram Karran: If the Prime Minister wants to behave like a child this afternoon, he can do so. The House gets on much better when the Prime Minister is outside. I want to know if this study is going to be undertaken in Georgetown.

The Prime Minister: If he wants to know if the study will be undertaken in Georgetown, then he can ask that question. What has this got to do with the Prime Minister's residence?

Mr. Ram Karran: The Prime Minister does not direct this House how questions are to be asked.

May I ask whether the Government has given up all ideas about providing lands for Amerindians? We had a long debate last night in which our friend the Amerindian spokesman, Mr. Duncan, talked about the difficulties in getting surveyors. If this is the answer how long does the Government expect that there will be a shortage of surveyors in the country so that this subhead 12, Amerindian Land Commission, carries no money at all. Are the Amerindians going to get their lands or not? Will the Prime Minister tell us when surveyors will be available and when Amerindians will get their lands?

Mr. Balchand Persaud *rose* –

The Chairman: I shall not allow any discussion on subhead 6 as there is no provision voted for it.

Mr. Ram Karran: That is why I asked the question. It is related Government policy.

The Chairman: Hon. Member, Mr. Balchand Persaud, you will speak on subhead 11.

Mr. Balchand Persaud: On subhead 11, Feasibility Studies, I wish to ask the hon. Prime Minister if he can say what fields these feasibility studies will embrace.

Dr. Ramsahoye: Your honour, in relation to subhead 10, Specialist Assistance, and subhead 11, Feasibility Studies, I wanted to ask the same question that the hon. Member had asked under sub 11. What areas would attract specialist assistance this year and what feasibility studies are proposed? In particular, are any feasibility studies being done this year in relation to hydro – electric power?

Mr. Sutton: Subhead 11, Feasibility Studies. We see the substantial sum of \$3,200,000 being provided for feasibility studies. On seeing this amount, one would come to the conclusion that it is the policy of the Government to have feasibility studies of all economic ventures and all projects where the Government wishes to know whether the ventures will be viable or not.

3.35 p.m.

Would the Prime Minister be good enough to say whether the feasibility studies are obtained or Government is involved? I hope the answer would be yes, because it would appear that it is of vital importance for the Government to have a projection which can be had through a feasibility survey in any undertaking or joint venture it may decide to go into wholly. Finally, if these feasibility surveys are in fact done by the Minister of Economic Development I wonder whether they would be laid in this House a part of the policy of the Government so that the House would be in position to judge, question and constructively criticise all the matters that were the subjects of feasibility surveys.

The Chairman: You will reply to the questions except subhead 6 and 12.

The Prime Minister: Industrial development includes not only the textile factory, but also a leather factory to be established. There is also pig iron works to be established. There is also a canning factory to be set up during next year. Of course, there is a continuation of the shrimping and fishing exercise which was started during the course of this year. This is just to name a few that will come directly out of, so to speak, the Ministry of Economic Development on the basis of Government expenditure funds or Government's having taken the responsibility for manufacturers' credit etc.

But then you have an institution like Guyana, which with Government's agreement and co-operation is going ahead with kaolin exploitation because of the physical proximity of the kaolin to bauxite, and it is also expected that work will be done on recovery of either iron or titanium from the red mud during the course of the year.

I would have expected the hon. Leader of the Opposition to have raised the question of the apparent inadequacy of the sum of 41 million. I would say that on the face of it, it may appear inadequate, but not only do you have suppliers' and manufacturers' credit, but in some of these joint ventures that are to be established, the Government proposes that the access to the raw material itself should form the substantial part of Government's equity. I may mention that in other cases there are proposals for joint ventures where the work is carried out by the entrepreneur and the entrepreneur is to be repaid in the form of product.

The Chairman: Question were asked under subhead 3.

The Prime Minister: Things like Marudi were not so much failures of the co-operative movement but failures on the part of over-enthusiastic persons in interior settlement. I would prefer not to say much more on Marudi in the light of certain matters which are now *sub judice*.

The Chairman: Subhead 9.

The Prime Minister: Subhead 9, U.N.D.P. Project is what it says. Subhead 10, Specialist Assistance is not only specialist assistance, it is, as I explained when we were discussing Supplementary Estimates, a head which covers counterpart staff on the part of the Government of Guyana when it gets technical assistance personnel from abroad are paid. As I further explained when we were seeking a supplementary vote on this particular item earlier this month, it is also used sometimes as a sort of bridge when re – migrants return until they are finally fixed in a Ministry or a Corporation and then the fund itself is, so to speak, replenished.

It is to be noted that out of the \$3.2 million \$3 million of that is USAID funding for projects on which feasibility studies have been or are to be done after agreement between USAID and the Government of Guyana. This is the sort of head from which the feasibility studies of the Corentyne road before construction, of the Soedyke/Linden Highway, and of the approaches to Georgetown, are done. It is a fund that the USAID uses for feasibility studies in keeping with the United States law with respect to projects in which they may be interested from the point of view of being lenders.

3.45 p.m.

It has just been drawn to my attention that Black Bush and Tapakuma rehabilitation and the extension of the internal works feasibility study is also to be done under this. With respect to \$200,000 that amount would cover studies done by the Government, Government officials, Government departments, Government co-operations. Take, for instance, the feasibility of canning pineapples on the Soesdyke-Linden highway. That study would have been financed out of this smaller sum; what appeared as Other Finance last year, 1971, would have been a source for financing studies like that.

I can appreciate my hon. Friend Mr. Sutton's desire to have these feasibility studies before the House but that would be an unnecessary waste of paper, because a number of feasibility studies are done but they are not printed for public distribution. When one comes to things like

Black Bush and Tapakuma, they are heavy, but certainly, either by application to the Ministry of Economic Development or to the G.D.C., which is Government's instrument for the second set of feasibility studies, a Member of Parliament could get the necessary information and no doubt a copy of the Report, but to circulate them in the House, Government considers would be an unnecessary expense.

Mrs. DaSilva: Mr. Chairman could I ask a supplementary question? The co-operative is an important thing in our lives. Still, I appreciate the hon. Prime Minister's answer but I feel we ought to know more. This is a co-operative Republic and we dedicated to feeding, clothing and housing ourselves by 1976. We have 990 co-operative societies involving some \$171,115 more this year. We do not hear how many are failing. It is not that I am asking this in a malicious way. We should both sides of the story. If you try it one way and you find it is not working, you try it another way. I do not want to use any isolated case. Surely they must have the figures.

The Prime Minister: Mr. Chairman, my hon. Friend understand that the Prime Minister is not going to walk with a list of 1,100 societies showing that this has failed and that has failed. The judgement of failure can be subjective. You may have a failure in terms of the whole thing folding up. You may have a failure in that your margin of profit is not high, but when you consider the other social benefits you consider it good enough. You may have a failure according to careful analysis, in terms of production not being high. One does not expect the Prime Minister to be a walking encyclopedia with respect to the details of 1,100 societies and there is a Report that is laid in this House. If they want the details, for goodness sake, I ask my hon. Friends to read the Report instead of badgering Ministers here about minutiae. I am responsible for policy.

Division IX, Ministry of Economic Development - \$6,470,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: That completes the Heads which came under the control of the Prime Minister. We will now revert to page 22.

HEAD 4 – PARLIAMENT OFFICE

Question proposed that the sum of \$113,476 for Head 4, Parliament Office, stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 22. Page 23.

Mr. Jagan: I would like to speak on this Head generally.

Mr. Teekah: Subhead 10.

The Chairman: Hon. Member Mr. Jagan.

Mr. Jagan: I should like to find out, in view of the fact that there is some confusion as to who is in charge of the Parliament, whether it is the Leader of the House or the Speaker, in respect of the disposition of Opposition business, among other things, the question of the debate of Opposition Questions, Motions, Bills, whether the Government does not think that the running of the Parliament as contemplated by the Standing Orders should be carried out, maybe if not to the letter, well then to the spirit of the Standing Orders. The Standing Orders in no uncertain terms say that Wednesday should be set aside to provide for the discussion of Opposition business.

The Chairman: Under what omnibus provision can I permit that?

Mr. Jagan: Under the Standing Orders dealing with the Estimates, one can speak generally on the head itself, and this has always been the practice.

Mr. Reepu Daman Persaud: Mr. Chairman if you would refer to Standing Order 65 (2)

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Mr. Jagan: I would say that the last sentence of 65 (2) would give me power really to deal with the way in which the Parliament is being run and whether the money should be voted for the service we are having here. Apart from the question of allowing debates on Opposition Motions, I would say that one of the Standing Order specifically states that Private Members' Business should take precedence on Wednesdays but, because there is some doubt as to the interpretation of that Standing Order, the Government in the past never called a Meeting on Wednesday. Lately, a Meeting was called and in fact there was no Opposition Business stated on the Order Paper, and the Government argued that since there was no Opposition Business on the Order Paper, it could not take precedence. The Government is stretching the wording of the Standing Order.

I do not concede that it could be interpreted that way but if, for the sake of argument, it can be argued that way. I would wish to say that whole intention of the Standing Order is that Private Members' Business should take precedence on Wednesday and the Government should see to it that once there are matters to be dealt with by private members - -

The Chairman: Do you not require a substantive Motion to amend the Standing Orders to give clarification?

Mr. Jagan: Apart from the practice, there is some doubt as to the interpretation. Even conceding that the Government's interpretation is correct, what I wish to draw to the Government's attention is whether the Spirit of the Standing Order should not be honoured. As I said, when the P.P.P. was in the Government, it permitted Mr. Burnham who was a member of the Opposition, to make a Motion under Urgent Public Business after the tea break at 4.45 p.m., although it could not be permitted to be done under the Standing Orders. It only goes to show how the Government, when the P.P.P. was in Government, used to carry out the business of the Parliament.

p.m.

I would advise the Government in order to have an effective Parliament, one does not have to stick to the wording of the Standing Orders but one can carry out the works of the Parliament properly if the Government would accept not only the strict interpretation of the Standing Order but the spirit of what the Standing Order intends.

3.55 p.m.

In fact, if there are matters to be dealt with by private members, Government should see to it that certain days are allocated that those matters could be dealt with. The Parliament here, unlike the Parliament on the United Kingdom, does not meet every day, because there is not much business to be dealt with by the Government. There are not many matters to be dealt with and therefore there are many days Parliament could meet to deal matters brought forward by private members.

I urge the Leader of the House to see to it that private members' matters are dealt with in the Parliament.

The Chairman: Hon. Member, Mr. Teekah.

Mr. Teekah: I observed in 1971 the sum of \$15,000 was provided for the office of the Leader of Opposition and in 1972 a sum of \$12,000 is to be voted. I raise this point because I know for a fact the hon. Leader of the Opposition has made several requests for a number of items so that the office could be better equipped. Rather than grant those requests, we see that the vote is now being reduced. The provision, rather than being increased, is being decreased.

Mr. Ram Karran: I wonder if I can move the deletion of subhead 7, Grant to Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. The sum to be provided is \$17,257.

Mr. Sutton: Mr. Chairman, as you said that you were taking page by page, I do not realise that you were taking pages 22 and 23 together.

The Chairman: Hon. Member, Mr. Sutton, we are on page 23.

Mr. Sutton: Subhead 2

Mr. Jagan: I would wish to speak on subhead 7.

Dr. Jagan: Subhead 10

Mr. Sutton: With respect to subhead 2, Provision for Travelling Expenses and Subsistence Allowances for the Speaker, Members of the Cabinet, Clerk and Deputy Clerk and Members of the National Assembly, I should like to make the point that when this subhead was originally put here, the means of travel, which was by the Transport and Harbour Department, was made available to every member of the House.

There are several sections of the country which are previously served by the Transport and Harbour Department which are now not so served and the only means of getting to these areas is by the service provided by the Guyana Airways Corporation.

The Chairman: Hon. Member, Mr. Sutton, my attention has just been drawn by the fact that subhead 2 is a statutory provision upon which there is no division.

Mr. Ram Karran: I think the interpretation of that is that member may be able to criticise, but not alter and, sir, the tradition in this House has been for member to be able to speak on statutory provisions.

Mr. Sutton: I assumed that he could make observations.

The Chairman: Hon. Member, Mr. Ram Karran, I am advised that that has not been the practice.

Mr. Ram Karran: From recollection, we have spoken. In fact, only this afternoon, I mentioned two subheads on which no money was shown, because the ruling in this House has been that Government's policy is reflected in the absence of any money from a subhead.

The Chairman: I am advised that this is not so once the provision is statutory.

Mr. Ram Karran: I regretfully submit that the advice is not in keep with the traditions of this House.

The Chairman: We will now put the Motion for deletion of subhead 7. If it is deleted there will no longer be a debate on it, as it will no longer appear of the Estimates. If it remains, then, certainly, you will be entitled to speak on it.

Mr. Ram Karran: May I speak on the Motion?

The Chairman: You may speak on the deletion.

Mr. Ram Karran: We on this side of the House have often observed that the performance of this House has not been in the interest of the country and, indeed, Parliament is farce.

In so far as the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association is concerned, you will recall, sir, that the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association is no arm of the Guyana Government. It is supposed to be an association of all the members of Parliament.

All the members of Parliament meant in this House and took a decision in connection with a conference by the parent body which was to be held overseas. It was known that the cost of travel to this conference was the responsibility of the parent body and the hotel expense and other incidental expenses would have been bought by the host country.

After a decision was reached at that meeting of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Branch, another meeting of the Branch was called and we were told that the Government frowned upon sending such a delegation, for what reason I do not know. The Government has a majority in the Parliamentary Association Branch and can direct it or could direct this Assembly.

It is observed that the Government of Guyana has a majority because of rigged elections and is afraid. It cannot allow exposure. In fact it does not seem to mind what happens in Guyana but it fears to have its misdeeds exposed in the circle of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, because it wants to appear progressive.

This is a very cheap way in which the Government has deprived the legislature, including its own members, from attending a conference at which a great deal of experience would have been had through association with others and listening to the view of other members of the Commonwealth.

Such actions this House should deplore and deprecate and if the Government –

The Chairman: Are you going to be much longer on this subhead?

Mr. Ram Karran: No, sir. I think it is better to finish now. I wish to formally move the deletion of this subhead and for us to inform the parent body that the Guyana Government and the majority in the Guyana Parliament cannot stand exposure in the world community.

Assembly resumed.

Sitting suspended at 4.05 p.m.

4.40 p.m.

On resumption –

Assembly in Committee of Supply.

The Chairman: Hon. Members, I wish to make one or two announcements before we proceed. It has been decided and agreed on between the Opposition and the Government that the House will sit up to 6.30 p.m. today, 6.30 p.m. Monday, 6.30 p.m. Tuesday. I have also decide after consultation that I will not permit any debate on statutory provision because it is very clear in the Resolution by the Minister of Finance that statutory provisions are excluded and it is also exclude by virtue of the Constitution Section 111 (2).

Hon. Member Mr. Ram Karran: Will you please continue on the Head.

Mr. Ram Karran: I was making a very important point that if the wishes of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Branch in this country are to be thwarted by the Government for no reason at all, then we might as well delete the item. Perhaps the Government after listening to us might decide to do so.

I wish also, sir, with your permission to raise the question of Motions and Questions tabled by the Opposition. In all democratic Parliaments, particularly in the Commonwealth, the Members of the Opposition are treated with greater respect and in view of the fact that they have the minority in the House the Speaker I would say leans backward to see –

Mr. Chairman: As I have been doing.

Mr. Ram Karran: Yes. The Speaker leans backward to see that the parliamentary minority is not treated contempt.

But I have observed that all of the attempt we may make to co-operate and to assist the Government in this co-operative period that the minority in this House is treated with contempt continually. I have, for instance, a very important Motion, a Motion that is based on the principle which I would say, is respected by all Parliaments. I tabled a Motion in this House urging that one of the Ministers of the Government should be censured for something that came out in the newspaper relative to a High-court Sitting in Barbice. In that Motion, a senior Police Officer was alleged to have admitted to interfering with the democratic processes of this country. I noticed that Sukhu has been dropped. I hope that is not an indication of what is likely to happen to my friend the hon. Minister allegedly involved in this matter.

Mr. Chairman: Is that a correct statement? What is correct and what is the fact is that he is no longer Chairman.

Mr. Ram Karran: It is a small drop, sir, it is coming down; he will be there soon as so many have found themselves.

I strongly urge that somebody, perhaps the hon. Leader of the House should indicate to this House the reason why that Motion and why other Motions tabled by members of the Opposition have not seen the light of day. As you know, sir, a member may not publicise a Motion until it is on the Notice Paper or in fact the Notice Paper is itself publication of the Motion. We want to play the rule correctly and decently and all we ask is that the Government play the rules according to the game. I strongly urge that that particular Motion and other Motions related to the business of the House should be put on the notice paper as soon as

possible and to ask the hon. Leader of the House to tell us why it has not appeared on the Notice Paper.

Mr. Jagan: Your Honour, this item was a question of debate during the last estimates. Your Honour, will recall, I do not know, maybe you were not here at the time, but year after year we are voting sums contribution to the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association being the amount that the Guyana Branch has to pay. I think since 1969 the Guyana Branch has not been represented in regional conferences and also the annual conference for 1970 and 1971. My hon. and learned Friend Mr. Bissember who was until recently an executive member of the C.P.A. said at an executive meeting that the Guyana Branch will participate in these conferences, both the regional conferences and also annual conferences. Last year after Guyana was not represent at the Regional Conference in Grenada and the annual in Australia, when this question came up for debate I asked whether the Government did not consider it a waste of taxpayer's money to vote this sum of money if in fact Guyana would not take part in these conferences. The hon. Minister of Health who was then the Leader of the House had given us an undertaking that Guyana will be represented during 1971 at both conferences. Sad to say, sir, the regional conference in 1971 was held in Bermuda and the annual conference was held in Malaysia, and Your Honour knows, being the Chairman of the local branch, what eventually happened with respect to the selection of delegates.

4.50 p.m.

Your Honour, we would like find out from the hon. Minister whether it is the intention of the Government to allow Member of the Branch to take in these conferences, because at the annual conference the Government does not have pay any expense for the Members attending, hotel expense, travelling and so on and one wonders if the Government is afraid to allow these Member to the conferences. People are saying maybe the Government feels that the people attending these conferences may expose the manner in which Parliament is being run. I do not

know if that is one of three reasons why Government does not want Members to attend these annual conferences.

I understand by the Secretary-General of the C.P.A. that an undertaking was given by the Guyana Branch that the annual conference for next year is to be held in Malawi, and that the Guyana Branch has given an undertaken that Guyana will be represented. I should like to know whether that is so. If it is not so it is a waste of taxpayer's money to subscribe to this Association unless Members can derive some benefit from the money being spent. If the Government does not have any intention of having Guyana represented at the regional conference or the annual conference for 1971, then I would ask the Government to move that this sum be deleted because there is no use in our being a member of this Association and allowing the Government to waste the taxpayer's money in this way.

Dr. Jagan: Subhead 10. My colleague, the hon. Member, Mr. Teekah, has already referred to the office of the Leader of the Opposition. I find it very difficult to obtain the co-operation of the Government to furnish this office with all that is necessary to make it function smoothly. Many times I have made requests for items such as typewriters, but they have not been given. Chairs which were sent were not only inadequate but they were always breaking down. This kind of furniture, I do not know if they want to kill the Leader of the Opposition. My colleague, the hon. Member, Mr. Derek Jagan, has just said, why waste money for a grant to the C.P.A. when they do not want it to function. It seems that, while it says it recognises the Opposition and wants to hear constructive criticism, the Government does not want either the Opposition to exist or function adequately. If we look through the Estimates we will see that there are many heads which are expending far greater sums of money than what is allocated to this statutory office. I would hope that Government will not only see to it that office is properly equipped but also give consideration to an increase of the monthly grant or allowance of \$1,000 a month, because, as the hon. Minister of Finance will know, this sum is inadequate to pay even the minimal staff of this office. I hope the Minister will keep this in mind if he really wants this office to function as it really should.

Mr. Ramsaroop: Sir, all this song and dance has been made over the question of the responsibilities and functions of your esteemed office and the Government. First of all, the office of the Speaker is a constitutional office and it would be injudicious for me to make any regards thereon. Secondly, the province of the Government with respect to the selection and disposition of parliamentary business has been the outcome of years and years of practice and usage and convention, and, there again, it would be carrying bauxite to Linden to remark on what is acknowledged as the practice which sanctified by years and year of usage.

One hon. Member, Mr. Vincent Teekah, again in a fantasy of ignorance, quarries what appears to be a discrepancy in the grant to the Leader of the Opposition. Many of his delusions have been exploded during the general debate and I will have to explode another one here and now. What appears to a discrepancy is explicable of the fact on the basis that the sum in 1970 appears to \$3,000 more than the sum in 1971 and 1972 because it makes provision for three months' payment in the previous year 1969. I merely enlighten you my friend who does not seem to know this, and, indeed, the legend is extremely bald and that may be the source of his confusion.

The office of the Leader of the Opposition is, to my knowledge, tastefully and sumptuously appointed. A short while ago a list was handed to me of the many items of furniture which adorn that office and maybe for the nation and for this Parliament I can read them out. He has, sir, wall to wall carpet. *[Interruption]* He has, sir, a new brand typewriter, I understand, a proper executive-type desk, and he has recently made a request for an air-conditioner, which request will be honoured in a short while. Comfort, sir, is always a relative word and what may be comfortable for him, some of us may not regard as comfortable, but from very authentic information reaching me, I understand that he is working in very salubrious and accommodating circumstances. *[Interruption]*

Indeed, for the benefit of this House, I may mention another since the Leader of the Opposition has the audacity to question the very generous support that this Government has given him. My colleague the hon. Minister of Finance has informed me that the original request by the Leader of the Opposition for a grant was to tune of \$500 and it was of the obvious magnanimity of this Government that he is now in receipt of \$1,000.

Some stress has been put on the question of the decision of this Government not to attend the Annual Conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association in 1971. Frist of all, let me correct an error *ab initio*. Decisions with respect to this conference are not made by the Government, but by the Guyana Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

Government's decision with respect to non-attendance at this Conference is explainable in three bases: (a) the general husbandry of external foreign reserves which has been going during 1971 has a conscious policy of the Ministry of Finance and (b) the utilisation, as far as this practicable and expedient, of regional representation for conferences.

I want let my friends know that that there has been no discrimination with respect to attendance at this Conference because, in 1971, other Conferences, of equal magnitude and importance, did not receive representation from the Guyana Government, to wit, the Food and Agricultural Association Conference, and the I.L.O. Conference, which is really the high point of industrial relations every year. Those are international conferences of great repute and the Government did not find it fit and expedient to teams to those conferences.

With respect to the question my hon. and learned Friend, Mr. Jagan raised on our proposed attendance in 1972, I want him to know that finance is the province and responsibility of my friend on my left, the hon. Minister of Finance, and when the time comes the hon. Minister of Finance, having regard for the exigencies of his situation, will have to release such funds that may be necessary for this Conference. It would, therefore, be indiscreet and rash for me to make a commitment with respect to attendance at this Conference.

Those are the questions which have been raised. I think that the explanations should ring an air of conviction in the ears of my hon. Friends.

Mr. Jagan: My hon. and learned friend gave reason why, apparently, we were not being represented. In his second reason, he implied that Guyana would be represented at regional conferences.

The Chairman: What the hon. Member said is that we are making representations on a regional basis, but not that it follows that we will go and make representations in the Caribbean area. That is how I understood him.

Mr. Jagan: I do not understand what the hon. Minister means because Barbados cannot represent Guyana at the C.P.A. Conference. Trinidad does not represent Barbados or Guyana. Each country has its own Branch of the Association and therefore each country is expected to attend each one of these regional conferences. If the Minister is implying that a country in the region would represent the whole region, then he does not know what he's talking about.

On the point dealing with finance, I have been informed by my hon. and learned Friend over and over that that it is the parent body, the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, that pays fares hotel accommodations and all expenses for the annual conference. I think that the only allowance that this Government pays is the out-of-pocket allowance, which is \$10 a day to members of the Opposition and back benchers Government side, and \$65 or \$70 a day to Ministers.

The hon. Minister said that he does not know whether finances would permit Guyana to be represented next year. Will the hon. Minister then give us an undertaking that if Guyana is invited to the conference, Guyana will be represented where the Government will have to incur no expense whatever and that if the Government cannot afford to pay the out-of-pocket expenses

of members and member are willing to go without out-of-pocket expenses, then they will be permitted to go?

The Chairman: Do you wish to reply, hon. Minister?

Mr. Ramsaroop: Your Honour, I made my position incontestably clear when I made my intervention a short while ago and I do not think I must pander to the kindergarten mentality of my friends to explain to them again what is happening. I have made the position clear. Let me state again that I cannot and would not commit my colleague, the hon. Minister of Finance, with respect to the financial provision for attendance at conferences.

Mr. Ram Karran: Before you put the Question, sir, I wonder if the hon. Minister is in a position to answer the question I asked about the tabling of Motions.

The Chairman: I thought he said it was a conventional practice.

Mr. Ram Karran: What I understand is that the Government has the right to deny members of the Opposition the right to have their Motions put on the Order Paper.

The Chairman: I shall now put the question for Head 4, Parliament Office.

Dr. Jagan: We would like, if possible, to take a division on subhead 7, Grant to Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

The Chairman: There is no proper amendment moved.

Question that –

Head 4, Parliament Office - \$113,476 stand part of the Estimates.

Question put.

Assembly divided: (Mr. Sutton, did not respond when his name was called.)

The Chairman: Hon. Member Mr. Sutton, do you wish to exercise your vote before the count is taken?

Mr. Sutton: I was not paying attention to the Motion and I am not quite certain what No or Yes means. If it is for the deletion of the grant to the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association I am prepared to vote for the deletion. If it is for the deletion of the whole Head, then my vote will be No.

The Chairman: The Motion is for the retention of the entire Head.

Mr. Sutton: I vote for it.

Ayes 28, Noes 13, as follows:

Ayes

Mr. Sutton Mr. Teekah
 Mrs. Da Silva
 Mrs. Willems
 Mr. Zaheeruddeen
 Mr. Van Sluytman
 Mr. Saffee
 Mr. Jordon
 Mr. Fowler
 Mr. Corrica
 Mr. Chan-A-Sue

Noes

Mr. Remington
 Mr. Balchand Persaud
 Mrs. Branco
 Mr. Ambrose
 Mr. R. Ally
 Mr. Reepu Daman Persaud
 Mr. M.Y. Ally
 Mr. Wilson
 Mr. D. Jagan

17.12.71

National Assembly

5 – 5.10 p.m.

Mr. Budhoo
Mr. Bissember
Mr. Bancroft
Miss Ackman
Mr. Aaron
Mr. Wrights
Mr. Thomas
Mr. Salim
Mr. Duncan
Mr. Jaoquin
Mr. Haynes
Mr. Mingo
Mr. Clarke
Mr. Ramsaroop
Mr. Carrington
Mr. Hoyte
Mr. Kasim
Dr. Reid

- 28

Mr. Chandisingh
Mr. Ram Karran
Dr. Jagan

- 13

Motion carried.

Head 4, Parliament Office - \$113,476 ordered to stand part of the Estimate.

5.10 p.m.

The Chairman: Page 24, Head 5, Audit. Will hon. Members please indicate the subheads on which they wish to speak?

HEAD 5 – AUDIT

Question proposed that Head 5, Audit - \$386,018 stand part of the Estimates.

Head 5, Audit - \$386,018, agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 51

HEAD 18 – MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND CULTURE

Question proposed that the sum of \$920, 508 for Head 18, Ministry of Information and Culture, stand part of the Estimates.

Mr. Teekah: Subhead 1, items 1, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 15, 18 and 22.

Mr. Wilson: Item 21.

Mrs. DaSilva: Are we doing page by page?

The Chairman: We are doing it page by page. We are at page 51. The hon. Member Mr. Teekah.

Mr. R. D. Persaud: I should like to speak on item 10.

Mr. Teekah: I should like to ask the hon. Minister if the post for Permanent Secretary has been filled. I know for a fact that Mr. Pat Dial was acting in the post for about a year and he is now at the Ministry of Economic Development. I think Mr. Orderson is now acting Permanent Secretary. If post has not been filled could the Minister say how early the post will be filled?

Item 6, Chief Information Officer: I want to observe that when Mr. Forsythe went on leave about three months ago Mr. Halder was brought from the Ministry of External Affairs to act. I know for a fact that Mr. Percy Haynes who was the Principal Information Officer was being de facto Chief Information Officer. It was rather strange that Mr. Haynes was not given the post. Therefore, I should like to ask the Minister why is it that a senior officer like Mr. Haynes was so crudely jumped and not –

The Chairman: Hon. Member Mr. Teekah is not that a matter for the Public Service Commission?

Mr. Teekah: No sir! It is the Chief Information officer.

The Chairman: Chief Information Officer? Please proceed. I am only saying that the two questions you have asked up to now are matters for the Public Service Commission. I do not know what are the other questions.

Mr. Teekah: The fact is, the hon. Minister is very nice gentlemen to his parliamentary colleagues but the man I am told behaves like a tyrant in the Ministry and he uses his influence to get rid of all officers who do not see eye to eye with him. He pressures the Public Service Commission to remove persons. He is a member of the Cabinet. His Cabinet colleagues control the P.S.C., which comes under the Public Service Ministry and which is controlled by the Prime Minister who is his boss. Therefore it is a wheel in a wheel and everybody works together.

The same thing goes for item 7. Now that Mr. Haynes has been transferred to the Ministry of External Affairs could the hon. Minister of External Affairs could the hon. Minister say when the post of Principal Information Officer will be filled?

Concerning items (8), Senior Information Officer, I do not know if there is a mistake. Maybe the hon. Minister will be in a position to say. As far as I know, there are three senior information officers. They are Mr. Jordan, Mr. Dundas and Mr. Munroe. As a matter of fact, Mr. Jordan was Senior Information Officer, Press Division, and when he went on leave, one Mr. Dundas was brought and still is, I am told, Senior Officers, Press Division, and then there is Mr. Munroe, Senior Information Officer, Publications, so therefore, there are three senior information officers I am rather surprised that only one is mentioned here.

The Chairman: I do not follow your argument. The establishment is two.

Mr. Teekah: I am proceeding to item (9), Chief Films Officer. Again, I must query why Mr. Young, who was not at all involved in the field of films for some time now, was brought to take that position when there is a senior person to him, Mr. David, and who was by-passed. On the same question of films officer, I should like to make an observation that when the German Government gave a films laboratory, rather than the Ministry of Information, or the Government, or the Public Service Ministry, or the Public Service Commission, trying to recruit a suitable Guyanese to take of that laboratory, an American was imported for the post.

Item (10), Information Officers. I understand that they are supposed to be fourteen information officers. For a long time now we have had only about four information officers. As a matter of fact, many of them are complaining that they have too much to do. Would the Minister do something to speed up the appointment of these persons?

On item (13), Photographer, I should like to ask the Minister if they are not ten photographers. I know the names of the gentlemen there, I can call them out, Mr. Bledman, Mr. Davis, Mr. Goring, Mr. Ogrippa, Mr. Wharton, etc. Is it that only one officer is appointed under this item and the others are being appointed on the open vote and so Parliament is misguided in providing for one item under a particular vote and then that vote is being used for other things?

On item (15) and (16) Technical Assistant Grade I and Technical Grade II, at present I am aware that these posts are vacant. I am aware that two persons were brought from the University of the West Indies and one from Canada to fill these vacancies but because of the tyrannical behaviour of the Minister, all three persons resigned and two are now the Ministry of Education. How early, sir, will these two posts be filled?

On item (18), Artist Designer, I should like to ask a question. Why is it that an American, Mr. Tom Fieldings was brought to take the position? Why couldn't a Guyanese be found to be appointed Artist Designer, so many persons are unemployed in this country?

On item (22), Secretary, National History and Arts Council, I have been following the Ministry of Information very closely, at one time it was attached to the Ministry of Education, and we never had so many problems in the Ministry until the hon. Minister Mr. McDavid was appointed. The trend seems to be emphasis on foreigners, people outside the country and not our own Guyanese who are qualified. An opera singer was brought to be assistant secretary of the Council and we have people like Mr. Jeffrey and Mr. Gobin Ram. I am told that when Mr. Jeffery protested, the Minister told that when Mr. Jeffery protested, the Minister told him to get out of the Ministry in five minutes and although he is paid from the Ministry of Information, he is now sitting in an office at the Ministry of Works, Hydraulics, and Supply. I understand he is to be appointed Secretary to the Steel Band Association so that the man with more power can take care of him, but our Guyanese citizens cannot be so badly treated by Ministers who are accountable to the Parliament and the nation as a whole.

Speaking on the National History and Arts Council, what has happened to cultural publication *Kaie*? Is it still being published? If not, why is it not being published? If it is the intention to publish it, how early will it be published?

I observe that there has recently been a directive from the hon. Minister to the effect that there should be emphasis on opera singing in Guyana. Clearly, opera singing should not take precedence over Guyanese folklore, steelband music, and such things. I would urge that any sort of directive would be contrary to the national spirit and what is Guyanese in character.

Another point is that a new History and Arts Council has been appointed recently by the hon. Minister. As a matter of fact, I was told that he had a meeting with new members of the Council but their names have not been published. Why is it that the names of the new members of the Council have not been made known to the nation?

The Chairman: The hon. Member, Mr. Wilson.

Mr. Wilson: Mr. Chairman, I wish to speak on subhead 21 and not on item (21).

The Minister of Information and Culture (Mr. McDavid): Mr. Chairman, I would be wasting the time of this honourable House if I attempt to answer the questions posed by the hon. Member, Mr. Teekah, because the statements he made are not in fact accurate. It shows once again that the Opposition is treating this House with contempt and is turning it into a football field. It is using the Guyanese people as a football.

The hon. Member, Mr. Teekah, knows that matters of appointment lie within constitutional perimeter of the Public Service Commissions and, therefore, it is not the Minister's duty to take decisions on appointments. If the hon. Member were to attempt to carry out his duties as Shadow Minister of Information more studiously, he would note that not only were the names of the members of the National History and Arts Council published in the Official Gazette, but he would have been told by those people who obviously inform him of what happens in the Ministry that the lady in question, who is assistant secretary National History and Arts Council, is a Guyanese. I did not know that she was an opera singer.

It seem, by the remarks made by the hon. Member, Mr. Teekah, that the Opposition has no quarrel with Ministry of Information and that is why these frivolous questions, which are really non-existent, were brought up.

The Chairman: Page 52. The hon. Member Mrs. DaSilva

Mrs. DaSilva: Subheads 8, 11, 17 and 18

Mr. Teekah: Subhead 21

Mr. Wilson: Subhead 17.

Mr. Roshan Ally: Subhead 21.

Mr. Yacoob Ally: Subhead 17.

Mr. Chandisingh: Subhead 17, if necessary.

Mrs. DaSilva: With your permission, sir, I should like to take subheads 8 and 11 together. It has been said many times in this House that “guesstimates” and not estimates are presented and this appears to a case where subhead 8 and 11 are concerned.

The Revised Estimate against subhead 8, Purchase and Production of Films, Photographs and other Visual Aids, is \$142,400 for 1971, yet the sum that is being asked for 1972 is \$80,000, that is, \$10,000 more than the sum approved for 1971. It does state in the legal “Increase production of films, etc.” The Government is going to come back later in the year and ask for the supplementary provision. We never get a true picture of what is required.

Subhead 11, Fees for Performing Rights, has gone to the other way. The Government has asked for \$3,800 in spite of the fact that the Revised Estimate for 1971 is \$100. These are two instances in which we could have had more accurate picture presented to the House.

With respect to the purchase and production of films, the Minister himself has said that he intends to increase the local production of films, that we will have films of Guyanese culture and films suited to the people of this country. This is all the more reason why he is going to need more than \$80,000, so why does he not ask for \$142,400 and be done with the matter?

I hope that we will get films of the Guyanese way of life and that these films will not just be used as a means of broadcasting Government's propaganda and propaganda for the P.N.C. We want for Guyana and for all Guyanese are not members of the People's National Congress.

With respect to subhead 17, Expenses, Film Censorship, we understand that the hon. Minister is taking a keen interest in film censorship. This is very admirable on the part of the Minister. Could the hon. Minister tell me whether it is true that the cinema owners choose their censors for certain films because it is well known that some people are more lenient than others and that some have a more liberal approach than others? The cinema owners know who is who on the Board of Film Censors and if there is a film which they think one set of censors will not pass, they choose another set. Is anything being done about this, because there is still the same story of murder, rape and crime in films? Will the Minister tell us how he is getting on with film censorship?

We come now to subhead 18, Public Free Library. I understand on good authority that the *Guyana Graphic* is not available at the Public Free Library for public to read.

A Public Free Library is suppose to and does its best to provide all papers, all types of books. Naturally they do not provide anything that will be against the State. But is it true that the Guyana Graphic is not being allowed in the Library? If this is so, could the hon. Minister please say why it is not being allowed to be read at the Public Free Library?

Mr. R. Ally: According to this, the sum of \$14,000 is allocated for the maintenance and operation of motor vehicles. I want to inform the hon. Minister that these vehicles are being misused by the people who operate them. For instance, during the early part of this year a van owned by this Ministry was seen on No. 63 Beach at midnight. I am sure there was a projector and film also in this vehicle. These people went there sporting and it appeared that they did not have any knowledge of the Beach. They went in to the Beach about 45 rods and the van was stuck in the drift sand, the vehicle was left there until the next morning; the tide came up and washed the van. The next morning, they had to send to Skeldon for a winch as to get the van from there. A truck from the Ministry of Works and Hydraulics had to tow it to a workshop.

I should like the hon. Minister to tell us what has become of this vehicle, whether this vehicle is still in operation or whether it had to be condemned, to what extent was the damage and whether there was a projector in the van? I want him to tell us also who is responsible for this? Because a few days after the incident I went to the Ministry of Information and I questioned an officer in respect if this vehicle and admitted that the vehicle was misused. The taxpayers will have to pay lots of money to maintain these vehicles and some of these people feel because they are friends of the Government they can do what they like and no one has the right to question them. I wish the Ministry would do something about this and rectify the situation.

Mr. Teekah: Subhead 17, Expenses, Film Censorship. This could be very effective if used properly. I think that all Guyanese are outraged by the number of films displaying murder, crime and things which are so irrelevant, damaging, and harmful to our society. About 90 percent of the films being shown today poison the minds of the Guyanese nation, the young people in particular. I have the hon. Minister saying on the radio when he was discussing the situation that

something must be done. But the things that need to be done are that Government ought to set down the policy to the Film Censor Board. Just do not leave it to the Board to do so at its discretion.

Today every Guyanese who is interested to see this country develop to see it is free of violence of corruption, is sickened to see what is shown at the cinemas, only violence we are seeing all the time. Therefore, Government could have formed a policy and ban such films and Film Censors Board should be told that no films should be allowed in this country. These are some of the things that are directly responsible for the upsurge in crime, juvenile delinquency, rape, and such things. It should have firm policies. If the Board does not have proper direction, it is the Minister's fault. If the Minister cannot do it let them go to the Cabinet, and if the Cabinet cannot do it let us have a debate in Parliament as to what films ought to be allowed to be exhibited in Guyana.

Subhead 19, Publishing and Publishing. I observe that since the new Minister has taken over there are many new publications put out by the Ministry. "*Fax*", "*Defallon*", "*Guynews*." But this House will be shocked to know at what expense these things are being put out because of carelessness in the Ministry. I should like to point out (1) that 50,000 copies of the "*Dafallon*" were dumped and burnt because the whole thing had so many errors they had to be rejected and new supply was provided. If the hon. Minister says, "No", he is not telling the truth. Secondly, could the Parliament be told why the publication "*Guynews*" was taken away from a small printer after the Ministry had lodged down \$1,000 and sent to Guyana Printers, the Chronicle? Is that not a waste taxpayer's money?

5.50 p.m.

Number three. It is a fact and the hon. Minister would be speaking with tongue in cheek if he does not agree with the truth, that many P.N.C. publications are printed at Chronicle and the

Ministry of Information foots the bill under this very subhead. That is why it is going up. This nonsense must stop.

The fourth point, all these copies of *Fax* and *Falloon* are only wasting people's money. The people are not interested because they attack people and call them enemies of the State. They send thousand to the Police Force and to the G.D.F. We come here and pass this sum and waste a lot of the Guyanese money.

On subhead 20, History and Culture, it is shocking to know that it was during Mr. Mc David's term of office that an American writer was brought here to write a story book for Guyanese children. We would not be promoting Guyanese history that way. It is supposed to be enriching Guyanese culture – the thoughts of Forbes Burnham! The Ministry of Information is publishing a book about the thoughts of Forbes Burnham! Let the Ministry use the people's finances to put out other things to enrich Guyanese culture and history.

Not because the Minister has the power to do these things he should abuse it. I want to strongly urge the Minister of Information and Culture, since this bit of information has now escaped the four corners of the Ministry and is now public, that he should desist we do not like it. Please do not take Guyanese money and public such rubbish. Let the people who want to read the thoughts and quotations of the Prime Minister read the *New Nation* where they will be found.

Mr. Chandisingh: Mr. Chairman, in dealing with the subhead 17, Expenses, Film Censorship, I, too, would like to express some thoughts on this question which, perhaps, is a reflection in the House of the interest that has been shown generally today by wider sections of the Guyanese public, if one is to judge by letter to the press on questions relating to the type of films and what ought to be the policy of the Government on such a question. We have heard that the Government, through the Minister of Information, is thinking in terms of re-orientation of the type of films to the need to import more films from the underdeveloped countries, Asia, Africa,

presumably, also other parts of Latin America, and that is perhaps a welcomed sign of what is needed, but I would like to make one or two points on this question.

It seems as if there is likely to be extremes on this question and I do not wish to take the position either of one who adopts the point of view of a prude, who regards everything as sex or violence as harmful, or on the other hand, I do not wish to disregard the possible effects of certain types of films on the moulding of the public mind and attitude. It is likely that there may be a lot of pressure from various sources. Some people take the point of view that all violence and sex in films is wicked and should be considered such questions very carefully.

It is true that many of the films which portray violence are absolute trash and perhaps they cause even harm, but I would not say that all such films cause harm and we should be very careful when we devise policies for film censorship. For example, the Italian Western has come in for categorical castigation. While it is true that many of them have been churned out to meet a certain type of demand, yet one must ask oneself what is the total effect on the minds of people who see such films, what is their reaction. Some of them have a lot of violence, sometimes unnecessarily overdone so many people shot down in the course of a few minutes on the screen yet, some of them which are relatively well done have this moral effect of creating the feeling of opposition to injustice, of advantage being taken of people. With that in mind I would like to suggest that one needs to consider such questions very carefully.

On the question of the sex or even nakedness or semi-nakedness in films, it is a question which ought to be considered very seriously very carefully. There may be some people who regard every film, even sex education films, as being detrimental to the morals of the public. Here again, I feel that this is not necessarily the case, and any attempt to formulate a policy on such questions will have to be carefully guarded.

There is another danger, however, which I should like to point to and that is, the feeling by people – I hope that the Government spokesmen are not going to use this in their own interest

– that films mainly are the cause of more youths taking to crime. I feel one has to go into this very carefully also to also to see whether this is so or not. I have no way of telling if this is so, or not, but it seems to me that this would just be an excuse for justifying the raising rate of crime. I am not saying that films of violence do not contribute in some way to leading young people into the path of crime. This is undoubtedly so. One must admit such a point of view, but on the other hand, can we say that the films are mainly responsible for the growth of crime?

6 p.m.

This is not the case. We must look more deeply for the source of the rising crime wave, unemployment and so on. I do not intend to probe into this but merely to touch on these points so that the hon. Minister may be apprised or, at least, have an opportunity to hear some of these points.

I think that, apart from this very careful approach which ought to be made before a definite policy is made, this is not only a question of negative approach towards films. In other words, it is not just a question of banning or censoring certain types of films, which need to be banned or to be censored. We ought also to approach the question of film from a positive point of view and we should know to what extent films are going to encourage new orientation, a new type of attitude.

We on this side of the House, the P.P.P. section, who not only claim but are quite definitely socialist, are not sure what the hon. Member opposite really mean what they say when they talk about the co-operative, socialist republic. Taking them at their word, if this Government intends to bring any socialism in Guyana, even by this method, then it is incumbent on our society to encourage the development of new ideological orientation.

I would go further than the hon. Minister so far has gone and suggest that we that we think in terms not only of getting to Guyana more films from what are called Third World or

underdeveloped countries, the newly independent countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, but that we should positively seek to have films from the socialist world, from socialist countries. Those of us who have had an opportunity to see many films from socialist countries can testify to the type of moral upliftment which one gets from such films.

Of course, one understand that in attempting to change other people's customs or even there likes and dislikes in terms of films, it is quite possible that some people may prefer the American type of films, but, gradually at least, if not immediately, we should move in the direction of having more films from the socialist world and fewer from the capitalist world.

One last point I should like to make before I take my seat and that is that a lot of attention, as I said before, has been focused on films of violence, murder, sex and so on. I have already indicated certain views on this question, but I consider even more harmful than films where people are killed and blood is shed on the screen, the type of film which are more than the ideological orientation of Guyanese people, and many of them do not depict murder, violence or sex, at least the overt expression of it.

Many of the films from the United States and other western countries which seem to be nice family films and no murder, violence or open sex, yet inculcate deceptively, so to speak, an ideological orientation towards capitalism, towards individualism, against the spirit of collectivism. They are anti-socialist in the net effect of their portrayal.

This why I say that, in assessing this whole question of censorship, what policy should be adopted by the Government with respect to films, we would need – the Government and its advisors would need if they are really to do proper job in the best interest of Guyana and its future – to go very carefully and to have a very broad picture and a very comprehensive approach to this whole question.

Mr. N. Y. Ally: Mr. Chairman, I am in full sympathy with the hon. Minister. We are still getting complaints about moral degeneration, the criminal assault and the obnoxious films that are being shown. Is it a breakdown on the policy of the Government on film censorship? Is merely the appointment of Tom, Dick and Harry or friends or family on the Board of Film Censors that is causing this breakdown on morality?

There was a policy of appointing censors from a cross section of the community so that films that are shown would reflex would respect the wishes of the entire community. But what do we find? As the previous speaker (Mrs. DaSilva) explained there are people who can easily get their friends to pass a film. I think this is what is wrong with the board.

I think we should look into this and I am asking the Minister to do his best. He is new to the job and Guyana, a young nation, needs films that will its young people. We should encourage what is right and prevent that which leads to evil. This should be the criterion used by the Board of Film Censors.

Mr. Wilson: Mr. Chairman, it was on the 23rd of February, 1970, that we became a Co-operative Republic, and it is really nauseating to see this subhead 21, Museum Committee and Royal Agricultural and Commercial Society Museum and Zoological Gardens. Which royalty is being alluded to here? This IS the Ministry that ought to be doing its best to decolonise the Guyanese citizens. The members of the Government are harking back. They say that they are decolonised yet in this Ministry we have a subhead dealing with the **Royal** Agricultural and Commercial Society. I would suggest that if they want to retain the “R” in R.A.C.S. it could stand for “Republican.”

Dr. Jagan: You will recall, sir, that there has always been a great deal of hilarity in this House when the name Barney Johnson was mentioned. *Ad nauseam* we hear from the members of the Government side how Barney was made into a teacher. You will recall, sir, that this was

done in connection with the formation, during the P.P.P. regime, of a national steelband, whose member were paid out of the education vote.

I refer to this because it has occurred to me that the Government, if it is really serious, if it want to encourage Guyanese and to find talent right here in Guyana, ought to take positive steps to stop the radio station from daily, hourly, playing canned music which comes from abroad.

Not only do we have music, but we have soap operas; we even have Garner Ted Armstrong on the Government radio talking a lot of nonsense everyday and, in fact, more than once a day.

6.10 p.m.

The excuse we hear is that this providing a lot of money to the radio stations. Is this how the Government intends to decolonise Guyanese to change their orientation?

I wish to make this point that the Government should give serious consideration to demand, to insist that the radio station give a substantial amount of time to Guyanese with talent – singers, musicians. In the same way as some countries say, I think Venezuela has such a law that 75 percent of all people holding jobs in Venezuela must be Venezuelans. We understand that there is mention in the *British Times* that a certain percentage of all films must be commonwealth films. In the same way I think perhaps half of the time, if not more, on the radio stations should be devoted to Guyanese music, Guyanese plays, Guyanese songs and so on. Many of our artistes, we know writers and others have to leave the West Indies and go to the United Kingdom and other places in search of a living because there are no opportunities for them here.

I do not know how much royalty the radio stations pay to the foreign record manufacturers and the people who make those records, the singers and artistes, but that same

amount of money could be paid to Guyanese people to encourage them so they can devote more time. This was the intention of the P.P.P. Government when it took two men from each steelband and put them on the public payroll to create a national steelband. This can be extended to one sector of the radio network which is Government. It can easily be done, also in the private sector, Radio Demerara.

I should like to urge that facilities must be given by the Government radio station to these artistes in Guyana so that they can have their works recorded properly, because they are no such institutions or factories in Guyana. Consequently, we find that Guyanese cannot buy, even if they want to, music of this kind. There are few and far between records made outside.

I purpose this point about film censoring. I should like to make an observation here also. When I was in Moscow last year there was a very big Film Festival being held there. Distributors and exhibitors not only from socialist countries but from many capitalist countries were exhibiting their works there and many prizes were won by countries in the Third World and these were won on the basis of technical competence in addition to content, humanism, socialist realism and so on. The Minister, if he is interested could certainly get in touch with sponsors of this festival to get a list of a lot of these films, not only the ones which won the major prizes but those which had honourable mention and perhaps even see they come to this country.

At one time there was film club but this folded up for one reason or another. I do not know what the reasons were. What we find is that the trashy films are coming to this country, most of it is to emphasise sex and violence. My colleagues the hon. Mr. Teekah and Mr. Chanisingh have spoken on this. But should like to say the other aspect of this is that the Government should do something positive about this because I do not think merely asking the Film Censor Board to censor the films will be enough. Much depends upon the exhibitors at the distributors – what they bring to this country – we know this is a wheel within a wheel. They have even got the people so conditioned that they want some of these trashy films.

Since the government has embarked in bring goods into the country through the External Trade Bureau perhaps the Government should consider bringing something for the brain, for cultural development and import some of these films that I mentioned. The Minister can get access to these films, as I said, not only from the Third World Countries but progressive countries, and here again some provision should be made for exhibiting them in Guyana. I do not see why some positives steps such as these cannot be taken. Merely issuing instruction to the Censors Board will not achieve the objective which we want. Because first of all, those members are of a mixed bag. One cannot be assured that they are going to apply the yardstick that Minister may want to apply in getting what we want. Secondly, as I said, the distributors themselves are so tied up that they do not necessarily go out of their way to bring other films. In Bombay I remember attending a cocktail party of film producers, actors and others and one producer said to me, "Doctor, I realise that a lot of the films we produce are thrash. We would like to, at least I should like to, producer good films, but this is a business. I have to survive, I have to compete with other who are in the game to make money." And as it goes. The exhibitors here who are tied up with these producers they have all the cinemas wrapped up.

6.20 p.m.

Any other agency that tries to break into that finds great difficulties. If the Minister really want to make a breakthrough for the minds of the Guyanese people, and this is just as important as filling his belly, because positive steps will have to be taken by the Ministry, because no one else, in my view, will be able to do this under the present circumstances in Guyana.

Mr. McDavid: I will try to be very brief in response to the various poses. Dealing with the simplest of questions and that was the one from hon. Member Mr. Yacoob Ally, I was not Minister before 16th August this year and therefore, it is only natural that might not be familiar with incident that he brought up, but I will look into and find out what has happened in the case of the vehicle.

It is a pity that this forum is the only platform that the Opposition could use to bring incidents of this nature to the attention of the Ministers, whereas a single letter or phone call could bring action, rather than waiting until a Budget Debate. I hope the Opposition members will use other channels of communication to bring matters of this nature to the attention of the Ministers.

Not because the vehicle of the Ministry of Information was stuck on the beach of Corentyne, automatically means that there was misuse because in fact, the technical officers might have been getting a film shot of sunset as a back up to some film, so without information as to the exact nature of the purpose, I would sustain the accusation that there was misuse of the vehicle. We do take back-up shots of the beaches for our films and might well be that one was taken by the Corentyne. I do not know, I will investigate the matter.

The hon. Member Mrs. DaSilva raised three questions. She pointed out that there was in fact a gap between the amounts of money spent last year under subhead 8, as compared to the money allocated this year. I should like to make two points. A Ministry is not always given what it asks for, because in the context of one scarce resource the Ministry of Finance has to allocate its money in order of priorities and, therefore, it might well have been that we asked for more but we are grateful for what we got. The under revise estimate \$142,400 is in fact so high because the Crown Agents who use to handle our processing did not submit accounts for 1969 and 1970 until very later, so this the reason the figure is so high.

I will deal with film censorship generally as that seems to be the topic raised by most people. I would like to assure the hon. Member that, in fact, the Library does purchase three copies of the *Graphic* every day and the public is allowed to read to the *Graphic*. The *Mirror* is also purchased because, beside the scurrility of its contents, it is a Guyanese paper and it is part of our socialist policy to support indigenous institutions, despite the fact they may not be worthy of this support.

Dealing with the shadow minister of misinformation, and I think he has justly laid claim to that title, the hon. Member Mr. Teekah once again came forth with a series of inaccurate facts and, in fact, he should read Fax because that is the only true journal which gives that facts of what happened in Guyana. He accused my Ministry of dumping 50,000 copies of the Falloon. He must tell his spies to give him more accurate information because we print only 10,000 copies of the *Falloon* and none have been dumped. The dignity of this institution is lowered by bringing up inaccurate statements. He went into a tirade of abuse and accusation when he claimed that my Ministry uses its vote to print publication on behalf of the P.N.C. Once again I would like to raise the point that I raised when I previously spoke, in that I am not capable of schizophrenia of distinguishing between the party and the Government. It is obvious that whatever Government publishes would be the wishes and policies of the party. Once again I am confused by that false dialectic.

The hon. Member once again brought up his favourite part about Americans and, again, I should like to remind him that the goodly wife of the hon. Leader of the Opposition is an American, who has made a sterling contribution to our national development. I do not think that any of us would doubt it. We would question the use of this contribution and the quality and value of it, but she has made a contribution. She is in fact an American and someone said earlier, she is a socialist. The point is, whoever said that, upholds the point that there can be socialist Americans who can contribute to Guyana, therefore, I put forward the thesis that the three Americans who are here now, who are working with my Ministry, are in fact here to train the local people in skills which we at this point do not have, and as soon as this training programme is over, they will return whence they came.

The hon. Member Mr. Chandsingh showed typical opposition hypocrisy when he attempted to support the policy of tight censorship and later on claimed that we must really look at the way in which we are censoring, because “X” and “Y” and “Z” may not be the cause of certain problems. Government has laid out policy, this policy was verbally adumbrated to the

film censor board, and also a policy statement was issued to the film censor board, and the board, as far as I am concerned, is fully equipped in terms of guidance to carry out its duty.

6.30 p.m.

I accept that there are certain problems with censorship. The hon. Leader of the Opposition brought forth, in his more sober remarks, that it depends on the value of judgement of the member of the board. If the members of the Opposition are serious in their support of the Government's present policy to improve the films that come into the country then let them publicly say so and offer some assistance, but do not let them use this forum to mouth the normal clichés.

I welcome the advice from the Leader of the Opposition about films from socialist countries and if he is willing give the necessary information I would be agreeable to contracting those agencies in order to obtain films.

As I stated before, I think when all the hurrah is over and when the hypocrisies and game have been played by the Opposition, in some instance they will be able to assist us in carrying out some of our policies, if they want to. They may be able to assist in ensuring that we have the policies and system of censorship and the type of films that can bring about the change in attitude that we require. I think that in this instance we forget the normal political football match that they play.

Going back to what the hon. Member Mr. Teekah said in terms of publication, I should like to point out that my Ministry does not consider the Opposition the target, or focal point, of its attention, because one does not seriously pay much attention to what the Opposition say or does, but we consider it or national and sovereign duty to assist in the political education of the nation, which embraces all groups. We should try to adumbrate the new role that our citizenry has to play in the development of our country.

Therefore, any increase in the vote for publications is solely for the purpose of producing more material to assist all citizens in fulfilling the task of feed, housing and clothing themselves by 1976, a policy which is not only revolutionary in the socialist context, but which we can also go a far way towards solving our unemployment problem. Therefore, we are not really concerned with the Opposition because the political history of Guyana can be simply described by the story of an egg where the P.N.C. has emerged as a chicken which has grown to a full-fledged bird and has left its shell behind, a shell which has now become an empty vessel.

I contend that the policy of my Ministry is solely geared at assisting the nation in achieving its goal.

Mr. Roshan Ally: I should like to make a correction. The hon. Minister said that when members on this side are aware of anything that happens they should report the matter to the Minister concerned. I believe that the hon. Minister was not paying attention to what I was saying. I said that I went to an officer at the Ministry and when I questioned him about the misuse of the vehicle all he could tell me was that the vehicle was misused.

I would like to tell the hon. Minister that I reported the matter to the *Mirror* and the *Mirror* carried the report. That is why I think that all Ministers who want to see their face and what they honestly look like should read the *Mirror*.

Mr. McDavid: I am glad the hon. Member has informed us why in fact the *Mirror* is called the *Mirror*. It does not necessarily reflect what happens in our Ministries, but it could reflect the empty shell I spoke about not too long ago.

Head 18, Ministry of Information and Culture - \$920,508, agreed to order to stand part of the Estimates.

Assembly resumed.

ADJOURNMENT

Resolved, “That this Assembly do now adjourn until Monday, 20th December, 1971, at 2 p.m.”

[The Minister of Information (Leader of the House (Mr. Ramsaroop))]

Adjourned accordingly at 6.35 p.m.
