

THE
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
OFFICIAL REPORT
[VOLUME 3]
PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE NATIONAL
ASSEMBLY OF THE SECOND PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA UNDER THE
CONSTITUTION OF GUYANA

50th Sitting

2.00 p.m.

Thursday, 25th November, 1969

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

[Mr. Deputy Speaker *in the Chair.*]

Present

His Honour, the Deputy Speaker, Mr. O. E. Clarke

Members of the Government

Ministers

The Honourable L. F. S. Burnham, Q. C.,
Prime Minister

Dr. the Honourable P. A. Reid,
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance

The Honourable M. Kasim,
Minister of Communications

The Honourable H. D. Hoyte,
Minister of Home Affairs

The Honourable N. J. Bissember,
Minister of Trade and Parliamentary Affairs

The Honourable C. M. L. John,
Minister of Local Government

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

The Honourable B. Ramsaroop,
Minister of Housing and Reconstruction

The Honourable S. S. Ramphal, Q. C., C. M. G.,
Attorney – General and Minister of State

The Honourable M. W. Carter,
Minister of Information

The Honourable H. Green,
Minister of Works and Hydraulics

The Honourable H. O. Jack,
Minister without Portfolio

Dr. the Honourable Sylvia Talbot,
Minister of Health

Parliamentary Secretaries

Mr. P. Duncan,
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Local Government

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

Mr. W. Haynes,
Parliamentary Secretary,
Ministry of Works and Hydraulics

Mr. A. Salim,
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of
Agriculture and Natural Resources

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

Other Members

Mr. J. N. Aaron
Miss M. M. Ackman
Mr. K. Bancroft
Mr. J. Budhoo, J. P.
Mr. L. I. Chan – A – Sue
Mr. O. E. Clarke, Deputy Speaker
Mr. E. F. Correia
Mr. M. Corrica
Mr. E. H. A. Fowler
Mrs. P. A. Limerick
Mr. S. M. Saffee
Mr. D. A. Singh
Mr. R. C. Van Sluytman
Mr. C. E. Wrights
Mr. M. Zaheeruddeen, J. P.

Members of the Opposition

Mr. Ram Karran
Mr. R. Chandisingh
Dr. F. H. W. Ramsahoye
Mr. D. C. Jagan

Mr. G. H. Lall
Mr. M. Y. Ally
Mr. R. D. Persaud, J.P.
Mr. E. M. Stoby
Mr. R. Ally
Mr. E. L. Ambrose
Mrs. L. M. Branco
Mr. Balchand Persaud
Mr. Bholu Persaud
Mr. I. Remington, J. P.
Mrs. R. P. Sahoye
Mr. V. Teekah
Mr. E. Cheeks
Mrs. E. DaSilva
Mr. M. F. Singh
Mr. J. A. Sutton

Clerk of the National Assembly – Mr. F. A. Narain

Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly – Mr. M. B. Henry.

Absent

His Honour, the Speaker, Mr. R. B. Gajraj, C. B. E., J.P. - **on leave**

The Honourable R. J. Jordan,
Minister of Agriculture and National Resources - **on leave**

Mrs. the Honourable S. M. Patterson,
Minister of Education

Dr. C. B. Jagan,
Leader of the Opposition

Mr. E. M. C. Wilson
Mr. A. M. Hamid, J. P. - **on leave**
Mr. E. M. Stoby
Mr. R. Ally

PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

The Hand-in-Hand Mutual Fire Insurance Company (Amendment) Bill

Mr. Singh: On behalf of The Hand-in-Hand Mutual Fire Insurance Company Limited I seek permission to introduce a Private Bill to amend the Hand-in-Hand Fire Insurance Company Ordinance.

The Clerk read the Petition as follows:

“To the Honourable Members of the
National Assembly of Guyana

THE HUMBLE PETITION OF THE HAND-IN-HAND MUTUAL FIRE INSURANCE COMPANY LIMITED, of 1, 2 and 3 High Street, Robbstown, Georgetown, respectfully sheweth as follows :-

- 1) Your Petitioner is a Company incorporated by the Hand - in - Hand Mutual Fire Insurance Ordinance, Chapter 208 (hereinafter referred to as the Principal Ordinance);
- 2) Your Petitioner is desirous of promoting a Bill (hereinafter referred to as the Bill) to amend the Principal Ordinance;
- 3) The object of the Bill is to modify the provisions of the Principal Ordinance relating to the capital of the Company and the publication of the list of its directors and of its by-laws in the Gazette and other related and incidental provisions which are considered desirable and expedient in the interests of the Company;
- 4) The amendments to the Principal Ordinance sought to be made by the Bill were approved at a general meeting of members of the Company on the 30th day of August, 1965;
- 5) On or about the 17th day of February, 1966, a Petition to the House of Assembly for permission to introduce the Bill was delivered to the Clerk of the Legislature but before it could be presented to the House of Assembly, the House was dissolved;

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- 6) Your Petitioner is desirous of having the Bill introduced in the National Assembly and enacted by the Parliament of Guyana;

WHEREFORE your Petitioner humbly prays that the Honourable Members of the National Assembly may be pleased to allow your petitioner to proceed.

And your Petitioner, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

Signed this 18th day of September, 1969.

For and on behalf of THE HAND - IN - HAND
MUTUAL FIRE INSURANCE COMPANY
LIMITED

(sgd.) Druce Gomes	Chairman
(sgd.) R.K. Steele	Director
(sgd.) C.P. Pitt	Secretary”

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Hon. Members in accordance with Standing Order 57 (4) I shall now put the question which is “That the promoters be allowed to proceed.”

Agreed to.

2.15 p.m.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS

The following Paper was laid:

Annual Report of the Post Office Savings Bank for the year ended 31st December, 1968, together with the Report of the Director of Audit on the Accounts thereon. [**The Minister of Finance**]

PUBLIC BUSINESS

MOTION

FINANCIAL PAPER NO. 7 OF 1969

“Be it resolved that the Committee of Supply approve of the proposals set out in Financial Paper No. 7/1969 – Schedule of Supplementary Provision on the Current and Capital Estimates for the period ending 30th November, 1969, totaling \$8,404,679.” [The Minister of Finance]

Assembly in Committee of supply.

The Minister of Finance (Dr. Reid): In terms of article 80(2) of the Constitution of Guyana, I hereby signify the Cabinet's recommendation in connection with Financial Paper No. 7 of 1969.

The Chairman: Hon. Members, we will proceed to consider the supplementary financial provisions page by page. May I say that we are going to proceed in the order in which they are listed? We will not jump from top to bottom and then come back to the middle.

Mr. Ram Karran: In that case you will have to inquire in advance who wishes to speak on what item.

The Chairman: Yes, I will. Page 1.

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Mr. Lall: I wish to speak on item 8.

Mr. M.F. Singh: I wish to speak on item 2.

Mr. Jagan: I wish to speak on item 4.

The Chairman: Item 2 – the Hon. Member Mr. Feilden Singh.

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE

Personal Emoluments

Mr. M.F.Singh: I notice here that the legend to item 2 states:

“Voted provision inadequate on account of new posts created this year with token provisions.”

I should like to ask the Hon. Minister why token provisions were put down when, in truth and in fact, it appeared that substantial provisions were in fact necessary. Further, what are these new posts? The new posts – I should like to be corrected if I am wrong – were not really new posts as much but an upgrading of posts. For example, one post of Secretary was increased to two posts of Secretary while the four posts of Senior Clerical Assistant became three posts of Senior Clerical Assistant; one post of Librarian was increased to two posts of Librarian, and the post of Assistant Librarian was abolished. Obviously, \$11,000 is a lot of money and one would want to know why token provisions were provided when, as I said before it seemed quite obvious that substantial provisions were necessary. Or is it that the vote was short in any case?

The Attorney-General and Minister of State (Mr. Ramphal): May I perhaps attempt to throw some light on the matters referred to by the Hon. Member. I would have thought that the Hon. Member would have been familiar with the system under which, where posts are created by supplementary provision, in the middle of the year, only a token provision is made in the supplementary estimates because there is always the possibility that there will be savings under the personal emoluments vote which will cover the increased expenditure. It is only as you come towards the end of the year and you can examine the personal emoluments vote in the light of

acting appointments, vacancies, transfers and such like, that the Ministry of Finance can have a real estimate of the expenditure and the new finance that is needed. This is why a number of these new posts came into this House in June of this year under supplementary provision and a token provision of \$1 was then requested. The amount required will now be met by supplementaries sought in the schedule.

Mr. Ram Karran *rose* - -

The Chairman: Does the Hon. Member wish to speak on the same item?

Mr. Ram Karran: I wish to refer to what the Hon. Attorney – General said about the token provision of \$1 being inserted in the schedule of supplementary provision which was brought to this House in the middle of the year and to observe that it does not follow in the present request by the Government because, on page 2, we notice that under the Head Magistrates a token provision of \$1 was sought previously and \$1 is again inserted, which certainly disproves what the Hon. Attorney - General said. One can understand that, in the middle of the year, in the personal emoluments vote particularly, except on very rare occasion, the Ministry of Finance would be unable to work out the actual figures required.

The Hon. Attorney – General told us about acting appointments. We know that every ministry has a special token vote and it certainly would not apply here. I think this is due to a great deal of laziness on the part of the Ministry of Finance – to be blamed on the Minister of Finance. We are now in the month of November. In a few weeks' time we will have come to the close of 1969 and at item 9 on page 2 we see that the sum requested is one Guyana dollar – not U.S. What does that mean? The Government ought to be frank about this and tell us exactly what the amount is going to be.

The Chairman: The Hon. Member Mr. Jagan.

Miscellaneous

Mr. Jagan: Under item 4, we see the Hon. Minister is asking for \$500 to provide services for an additional Court. May I inquire where this additional Court will be located? Right now a Judge's Chamber is being used partly as a Chamber and partly as the Supreme Court. There is the other one, which my Hon. and learned Friend the Prime Minister usually referred to as the "Toilet Court", which is still in existence. Can the Hon. Minister tell us whether he thinks that \$500 would be adequate to provide services for an additional Court? At least two Courts in the Supreme Court need extension, renovation, and so on. I do not know whether the Hon. Minister has in mind these two Courts, or another Court. Can the Hon. Minister tell us?

The Attorney – General: When I have had all the questions.

The Chairman: The Hon. Member Mr. Lall.

2.25 p.m.

Mr. Lall: Government announced that the retiring age for civil servants will be 55 years. Under item 8, I observe that \$4,000 is to be voted for the contribution by the employer to national insurance. I should like to know, when a civil servant retires at 55 years, what would happen, whether the scheme would proceed to pay him at the age of 55 years while the age at which retirement benefits may be paid is now fixed at 65 years.

The other point I should like to make is, if the civil servant has to retire at 55, would he be able to make the maximum weekly contribution of 750 payments? I should like the Government to answer.

[The Hon. Attorney – General and Minister of State offered no reply.]

The Chairman: Page 2.

Mr. M. F. Singh: Item 11. I am not sure what the position is as regards this vote, Books and Publications. In the Estimates for 1968, the amount was \$950; the revised estimate for 1968 was \$950, and the estimate for 1969 was \$500 with the legend that a few numbers of back issues were to be purchased. Now it is to be increased by \$350 and according to the legend, the reason for the increase is to meet the cost of legal books urgently needed. Something seems to be wrong. The fact of the matter is that in almost every court of this country these books are needed and I should like to ask the Minister whether \$350 is enough to supply all the books needed in the Magistrates' Courts.

We are still operating under a system where the binding doctrine of precedent obtains. We must have books in order that the law may be properly carried out. The Magistrates have to operate with books as also the Supreme Court Judges. Let us have a systematic approach to this and let us have a consistent supply of these books to the courts.

The Chairman: Page 3.

Mr. Ram Karran: I should like to ask a question on the last item. Would the Hon. Prime Minister indicate to this House the reason for this? We note that (i) and (ii) seem to be the same. At item (iii), there is the post of Manager, Food Aid Projects. What is this all about? Perhaps the Government might be able to tell us who administered this food aid before and why it is necessary to have an additional burden on the taxpayers.

The Prime Minister (Mr. Burnham): Mr. Chairman, the first post was to raise the status of the Prime Minister's Confidential Secretary because of the burdens and responsibilities which are hers and which cannot normally be performed by a person of a lower status and less experience. The second administrative post is attached to the office of the Minister without Portfolio who is operating under the same curtilage as the Prime Minister. Some of the services

that have been given that particular Minister are done by members of the Prime Minister's staff and it was thought necessary in the interest of proper administration that there should be an administrative officer detailed to carry out the duties related specifically to the Minister without Portfolio.

The third post represents the result of an earlier decision to centralize food aid for its better organization and more efficient administration. Prior to this, a number of Ministries had to deal with it. We have signed an agreement recently with one of the United Nations agencies, as a result of which the food aid is expected to be over \$2 million. It covers a number of varied projects, self – help projects, health projects, youth projects, education, agriculture, and matters which have to do with interior development. It was therefore thought that dual or divided responsibility for food aid in all the various aspects would make administration rather difficult and efficiency rather elusive, and that we should centralize food aid. As a consequence, it became necessary to appoint a Manager for that purpose.

The Chairman: Page 4.

Mr. R. D. Persaud: Numbers 27 and 31.

Mr. M. F. Singh: Numbers 28 and 30.

Mr. Balchand Persaud: Numbers 27 and 30.

The Chairman: The Hon. Member, Mr. Feilden Singh.

Mr. M. F. Singh: Item 27, Government Entertainment. If we should trace the history of this sub – head, we would find that the actual expenditure for 1966 was \$9,520, in 1967 the actual expenditure was \$7,996, the revised estimate for 1968 was \$18,600 and the 1969 estimate of expenditure was \$15,600. We have already had supplementary provision of \$16,000, making

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the provision \$31,600 and now there is this provision for \$7,000 to make the astronomical figure of \$38,600.

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\$38,600 as compared with \$7,996 in 1967 and \$9,520 in 1966. In these days when we are told in this country to gird ourselves, that it is necessary to work harder and to eat less, is it not really shameful that this Government should be spending as much as \$38,600 on entertainment?

Mr. Chairman, if we look on page 38 we will see that this is not really the only item on entertainment - -

The Chairman: Let us deal with this page!

Mr. Feilden Singh: \$20,000 was provided - -

The Chairman: Let us wait until we get to that!

Mr. M. F. Singh: I am just making a reference as to what is asked for. We cannot call on the people of this country to spend less when the Government self is not setting an example.

Mr. R. D. Persaud: I want to support my Hon. Friend Mr. Feilden Singh on the question of Government Entertainment and the Hon. Prime Minister will support me that at least I do not go for freeness. When we examine the figures we originally have a vote, then it is increased. We have about one month left for this year to come to an end. Whom will the Government entertain for the rest of this year to the tune of \$7,000? The Government is calling on the people of this country to make the sacrifice but the Hon. Prime Minister will not eat less, sleep less and work harder. If he wants the people to do this the Government must set the example and I, therefore,

suggest strongly that this additional \$7,000 applied for should be removed from the Supplementary Provisions because \$31,000 has already been voted for entertainment. If we were to go scrupulously in this, we would find other items for entertainment under different heads. The Hon. Prime Minister already has at his disposal provision for entertainment at The Residence and he can in a modest way provide entertainment there for the remainder of the year and not burden the people of this country financially. I am, therefore, opposed to the increase.

The Chairman: The Hon. Member Mr. Balchand Persaud.

Community Development Workers

Mr. Balchand Persaud: I wish to speak on item 28 – Community Development Workers. There is provision for \$12,000 for additional expenditure on account of the acceleration of community development projects. This is a matter of very great concern because this is where money is being spent for the development of various communities. One would expect that officers of the Government especially the Community Development Officers would try their best to ensure that the policies which they carry out are for the best of the nation. Some preach segregation at all levels when carrying out their duties; I feel that for us to mold the nation and to get the races to work together emphasis should be placed on having the Community Development Officers encourage their communities to co – operate, but we have seen that most of the persons who are racialists and who preach segregation are also activists of the P. N. C. ‘party’ in those areas. I remember when the - -

The Chairman: Is the Hon. Member questioning the expenditure?

Mr. Balchand Persaud: Yes, sir. It all comes back to the attitudes and I am questioning the expenditure of this amount as the Community Development Officers are not carrying out their duties properly; they are carrying out the policies of the P. N. C. not on the basis of what Guyanese would like to have but on the basis of what the P.N.C. would like to have. But the way

that things are going we have more racial tension; more favouritism and these persons are using monies provided by the taxpayers of the country to carry out the propaganda of the P. N. C. they must be free political interference, they must be free political motivations but they must be genuine persons who do not use their time to do political work for the P. N. C.

The Chairman: Item 30.

Guyana Defence Force – Personal Emolument

Mr. Balchand Persaud: The Government is asking here for \$95,000 more. The amount already voted is inadequate on account of the filling of vacancies. I would like to know what type of vacancies the Government intends to fill, and whether we will have expatriates from the U. S. A. and the British military personnel section? Will they come here to educate members of our defence force to be loyal only to the ruling class? Will their propaganda be so geared as to mobilize Guyanese against other Guyanese? If the workers do not like something and go on strike or agitate for something in their own interest, the Government will use the Guyana Defence Force as was done at Black Bush Polder where the people were suppressed and silenced. Why are so many people leaving the country? [**The Prime Minister:** “Why do people come back? This place more profitable than Russia?”] Which vacancies are to be filled? Are they to be filled with expatriates? Or does the Government wish to expand by getting more recruits? Large sums of money will be used to pay the expatriate to come and control the minds of persons in the Guyana Defence Force and keep the workers under suppression.

The Chairman: Before the Hon. Prime Minister replies - -

Mr. Feilden Singh *rose* - -

Mr. Ram Karran: May I, before the Hon. Prime Minister replies, speak on item 31?

Mr. M. F. Singh: Mr. Chairman, I wish to deal with item 31, Transport and Travelling for the Guyana Defence Force. I am sure that all Hon. Members of this House would be one hundred per cent in agreement if money is to be spent on defending our territorial borders. But the fact of the matter is that today is the 25th November and we are being asked to approve of \$325,000 to be spent between today and the end of the year. There is note stating that the money has been advanced from the Contingency Fund. All through these provisions, we see in the legend where money has been advanced from the Contingency Fund; it is stated wherever that is so. It is not stated in this case. How are we going to spend \$325,000 between now and the end of the year? What is it for? Is there, in fact, unauthorized expenditure? Is it to cover up for inefficiency? Is it to finance trips here and there?

Mr. R. D. Persaud: Mr. Chairman, I like the Hon. Member Mr. Singh I feel that no one is opposed to financing or Defence Force in order to protect our territorial borders. In a matter of five weeks the Government propose to spend \$325,000 for transport and travelling for the Defence Force, I wish to state that I was informed that instead of protecting our borders the officers very frequently come in contact with civilians in the Interior areas. As a matter of fact, on the 10th November, civilians and soldiers had a “free – for – all” at Mabaruma to the extent that they disturbed the hospital in the area. [An Hon. Member (Govt.): “What time did it happen?”] If the Ministry of Home Affairs were efficient it would have known.

If we are to spend money on our soldiers they must do their work; they must not use public funds to go and fight innocent people who are unarmed and incapable of defending themselves, and worst of all, the indigenous people of this country. That is why I thought it fit to state the date that the incident occurred.

It is fashionable these days that people in high places find pleasure in assaulting people. I am informed that on the 7th November one Mrs. Atkinson alleged that she was assaulted – [Mr. Ram Karran: “What a shame.”] – and the matter was reported. Because of her report the Superintendent of the No.1 Division ordered an investigation of the matter so the allegation by

Mrs. Atkinson is valid. Are we going to sit here as Parliamentarians and pass provision to such exorbitant sums to finance our soldiers to go and fight civilians in the Interior? I hope that the Government would see to it that these soldiers perform their proper duties and do not use their position to go and fight the people in the Interior, and worst of all, the Amerindians. Further, let the Hon. Prime Minister tell us how the Government proposes to spend this amount.

The Chairman: The Hon. Member Mr. Ram Karran.

Mr. Ram Karran: While I support the contention of my colleagues who have spoken already, I still believe that there is some error in this figure. It will be seen that the Government sought originally the sum of \$75,000, during the year \$80,000, and now the massive sum of \$325,000. When we add these three amounts together, we get a total of \$480,000. I was doing some calculations in my head to find, assuming each of these trips were made by air to, let us say, Kaieteur, that we have transported 13,700 people to the Kaieteur which is about \$35,000 per trip. I am sure the Defence Force, and I do not want to know is whether the Minister will apologize - - [**The Prime Minister:** "For what?"] You don't know? The Hon. Prime Minister does not know, sir. He is asking me for what. [*Interruption*]

I am sure that there must be some error in this. The Defence Force is comprised of how many people – 100, 2,000 or whatever it is, but to carry 13,700 people to the Kaieteur shows that there has been some error. I think that that is most unreasonable. I should like the Hon. Prime Minister to tell us why such a huge sum – half a million dollars – which is a massive drain on the resources of this country.

The Chairman: The Hon. Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister: Mr. Chairman, on the question of Government spending money on entertainment, I must concede that the need for extra provision has arisen because we have had more visits from overseas dignitaries. This is one of the concomitants of our new status.

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Previously, we would not have had visits from representatives of foreign Governments from persons such as the Deputy Foreign Minister of Yugoslavia. In the past, we would not have been asked, for instance, to host the Jaycees National Convention or the Conference of Surveyors and Land Developers. It is one of the concomitants of our status not only in constitutional terms but of international tribute. I share the Hon. Member Mr. Singh's concern that the sum is a large one but I suppose that some contribution can be made by those who feel so strongly by their refusing invitations which would help to cut down the catering costs.

As far as the community development vote of \$12,000 is concerned, I am unimpressed by the Hon. Member Mr. Balchand Persaud's sophistries and the fact that he speaks without sensitivity or basis for his facts.

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It is his duty, since the tape recorder was turned on in his mouth, to speak about racialism, but no doubt he would consider it a pattern of racialism to build the largest self – help school at Lenora, to build several schools and attendant buildings at Essau and Jacob and at Burma in the Mahaicony creek and at places like that.

It may surprise the Hon. Member to know that he is thereby accusing one Mr. Bulkan, one of the finest community development officers in the country, of racialism because the bulk of the work on the West Coast Berbice has been done on the initiative and with the assistance of Mr. Bulkan.

Perhaps it is racialism to build sea defences starting from Cotton Tree and going through to No. 8, because no doubt one ethnic group lives between Cotton Tree and No. 8 village. A certain mythology is permitted but mythology cum ignorance is to be deplored.

We are asked about the expenditure on transport. Let me say – and I am not going to apologise – some of this money is already committed and some is already spent. Were we to wait in the cases of Camp Jaguar and Rupununi to come here for the approval of my good democratic friends before dispatching the planes to Camp Jaguar or Pirara? So long as I am Prime Minister I am going to spend this money. If they like they can throw me out. Defence is not a matter on which we can afford to come to Parliament before we spend a few dollars on the defence of the territory. Instead, those without integrity have nothing to defend. We had said that there was going to be additional expenditure on defence. Some of these bills have come in and this is anticipated to be the amount which we will need until the end of the year for transportation.

Somewhere St. Paul wrote – or is alleged to have written – “a little learning is a dangerous thing”. A little association with figures is also a dangerous thing for the uneducated. A certain friend of mine calculated that this sum represents 13,000 men taken to Kaieteur. Does he not know – he used to be Minister of Communications and Works once – that every passage is a passage. If I go to Kaieteur three times that is three passages, but he will count me as three, no doubt.

Mr. M. F. Singh: Mr. Chairman, may I be permitted one supplementary point – *[Interruption]* – on what the Prime Minister has said on item 31. Nobody is saying that in an emergency or in special circumstances money cannot be spent without parliamentary approval, but the proper procedure is to come with a statement of excuse to say that this money is spent and to ask for approval.

The Chairman: Page 5. Page 6.

Mr. Ram Karran: Item 43.

The Chairman: Item 43, Hon. Member Mr. Ram Karran.

PUBLIC SERVICE MINISTRY**Regrading of Post of Deputy Permanent Secretary**

Mr. Ram Karran: Item 43, refers to the regarding of the post of Deputy Permanent Secretary. Hon. Members will recall that this is the only Deputy Permanent Secretary in the whole Public Service. We were told at the time when this post was created not very long ago that it was necessary to upgrade the post of Principal Assistant Secretary, or whatever it was, because of the responsibility in the Public Service Ministry. Lo and behold, a year has not gone by and the salary scale is regarded from f8 to f6.

That brings me to the question of what sort of person is this to have been elevated to Deputy Permanent Secretary in a very short time and to have his salary scale regarded. The second question I wish to ask the Hon. Minister is this: “Is this the means by which the Government hopes to circumvent the recommendation for increased salaries and wages?” not long ago the Collins Commission Report came out. The Prime Minister indicated to me that within six months the Government would be in a position to carry out the recommendations of the Commission or to revise the salaries in the Service. This is certainly not in keeping with that statement.

Every time that Supplementary Estimates come out I have been pointing out that this is not a good way for the Government to go about creating changes in the Service. It brings about a great deal of dissatisfaction in the service. If the Government wishes to create sinecures or to upgrade its friends in the Service – nobody can stop it and a great deal of this has been going on – all well and good, but let us know. Do not come and tell us that a man who was appointed less than a year ago is so efficient that he is going to leave the Service unless you upgrade him. Despite all the upgrading, we have seen in these Estimates every quarter of the year there is much inefficiency in the Service, not only at the bottom and in the middle, but also at the top.

What has the Minister to say to justify this regarding and with respect to the recommendations of the Collins Commission Report?

The Minister of Finance (Dr. Reid): This was essential in view of the fact that it was not only in this Ministry that upgrading took place. There was upgrading in several Ministries. Since this was a new Ministry and the load was heavier it was thought wise to equate the Deputy Permanent Secretary, Public Service Ministry, with the Deputy Secretary to the Treasury. Upgrading was therefore done and at the same time account was taken of the Accountant General, the Comptroller of Customs as well as the Commissioner of Inland Revenue.

The time factor is not important. What is important is the amount of load that a man has to carry. As a matter of fact, in the first instance this officer was giving service even far and above the emoluments he was paid.

Restructuring of the Public Service

Mr. Ram Karran: Item 44, Restructuring of the Public Service, is a new item. I should have spoken on it when I was on my feet just now. Surely, this should not be passed without some reasonable explanation being provided by the Hon. Minister of Finance. What is this restructuring? Let the Hon Minister tell us.

3.05 p.m.

Dr. Reid: It is easy for my friend across there to blow hot and cold. Just now he spoke of the Collins' recommendation. Now effect is being given to the same recommendation made by Collins and he is criticizing that. This new subhead – Restructuring of the Public Service – has been instituted in keeping with the recommendation made by the Collins' Commission.

The Chairman: Page 7.

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Mr. Ram Karran: I want to speak on item 47.

The Chairman: Item 47 – the Hon. Member Mr. Ram Karran.

MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Miscellaneous

Mr. Ram Karran: I wonder if the Hon. Attorney – General and Minister of State will tell us – the last time it was supposed to be a military secret – [Mr. Hoyte: “It still is.”] – what new Missions are anticipated. To what countries and what states do we propose to appoint Ambassadors, etc.? Why is it not indicated here so that we can have a proper idea rather than this vague insertion that the sum of \$10,000 is required:

“To meet increased costs and provision for new Missions.”

What new Missions?

The Attorney – General: I think the Hon. Member knows well enough what new Missions have been established to serve the interest of Guyana during 1969. It is not a question of what Missions is anticipated. We are seeking provision here in supplementary votes to deal with additional expenditure that falls to be borne on the votes of the Ministry as a result of new Missions that have been established. The Hon. Member is aware that a Mission has been established in Jamaica; a Mission has been established in Surinam; a Mission has been established in Brazil; and that there has been a rearrangement of our organizational work in New York and Washington. [Mr. Ram Karran: “None in South Africa?”] Hon Members opposite

must understand that I shall only give serious answers to questions which are intended as serious ones. If the Hon. Member is really seeking information I will give him. There has also been an upgrading of our Mission in Ottawa. All these have been done with a view to improve the efficiency of our Missions abroad and I am happy to say that this is expenditure which is fully justified.

The Chairman: Page 8.

Page 8

Mr. M. F. Singh: I should like to speak on items 52 and 53.

Mr. Ram Karran: I should like to speak on item 52 unless the points I want to make are brought out by the Hon. Member Mr. Feilden Singh.

The Chairman: The Hon. Member Mr. Feilden Singh.

MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Scheme for Remigration of Guyanese

Mr. M. F. Singh: I should like to ask my Hon. and I learned Friend what this is all about. After the 1964 elections - -[**Mr. Green:** "What page?"] Mr. Chairman, for the benefit of those who were not listening to you when you called on me to speak, I am speaking on item 52, page 8. I hope that Hon. Members would pay attention to you, then they would not need to ask on what page I am speaking.

As I was saying, after the 1964 elections, the Government had put out a call to Guyanese to come back and serve the country. We knew that the Government was in fact pursuing such a scheme. Is this the same scheme? Is this to enable Guyanese to come back to Guyana; or to go back where they came from? What is this scheme? Does it involve skilled people, or people on the lower level who have migrated to other countries and who want to come back here? I should like the Government to tell us exactly what this is all about. What would this \$50,000 be spent on? What calibre, what level, or would the Government help any Guyanese to come back to Guyana?

MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Personal Emoluments

May I go on to item 53? I am, personally, very perturbed at item 53 because we have a token provision of \$1 provided and there are additional posts created – ten senior posts in number. For a long time now the Government has been saying that the Co – operative Department will be the basis of the new co – operative Republic. In this department ten new posts are provided. Fair enough. But, at the present time, it is towards the end of the year – not the beginning of the year as we heard earlier. Why then, when we are creating ten new posts towards the end of the year, is a token provision of only \$1 provided? Is it that there are savings in the vote? What has happened to cause so many saving in the vote that we are able to ask for a token provision of only \$1 when, in truth and in fact, we are hearing that the whole basis of the nation will be built on co – operation? How is it that only \$1 is being asked for?

The Minister without Portfolio (Mr. Jack): With regard to item 53, I should like to say that the Co-operative Department has been reorganized into sections. Because of this reorganisation, the necessity has arisen to have these posts put down here. The actual advertisement has not yet been done so there is no need to put more than \$1 here.

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The Chairman: Page 9. *[Pause]* Page 10.

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Mr. Balchand Persaud: I should like to speak on items 68 and 69 on page 19 and items 74 and 75 on page 11.

Mr. Ram Karran: I should like to speak on item 67.

Mr. M. F. Singh: I should like to speak on item 69.

The Chairman: Item 67 – the Hon. Member Mr. Ram Karran.

MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS

Republic Day Celebrations

Mr. Ram Karran: it must be recalled that, with respect to the very huge sum of money spent on the Independence Celebrations, this Government has treated this honourable House with the greatest scorn. Even though the Hon. Prime Minister had promised that an audited statement would be submitted, that has not yet been done. Now the sum of \$70,000 is earmarked for the Republic Day Celebrations – in fact the sum of \$16,000 has already been advanced from the Contingencies Fund – and it seems to me, from our experience in the past, that this is not a true and accurate figure proposed to be spent by the Government.

The Prime Minister and others have been saying that we must play down Christmas, and we have no apples and no grapes, according to the *Evening Post*. We are not going to have any ham, any chicken, any pork. *[Interruption]* The Deputy Prime Minister does not know there is no chicken in the shops.

We must bear in mind what happened with the Independence Celebrations and the scandalous way in which this Parliament was treated because these audited statements have not been presented to Parliament up to this day. Houses were hired from their friends, in which no one lodged. Their friends' houses were repaired and expanded but yet were not used. If Independence Day is no longer going to be a holiday and all our efforts are going to be directed towards Republic Day, voting \$70,000 is only trying to fool the public. I am saying this, that the Government on this occasion should present an audited statement to Parliament. *[Interruption]* This is only for preparation, the Hon. Member says. The final figure for Republic Day will be much higher than the \$480,000 which we used to transport our forces to the interior. This is criminal. This is only going to be a capital charge against the people who have charge of the people's money in a country where people are hungry.

I wish to appeal to the Hon. Minister to let the \$70,000 be enough. It is going to be criminal for the Government to attempt to spend more than this on Republic Day celebrations.

Mr. Balchand Persaud: I wish to speak on the Head itself. For a very long time there have been numerous criticisms in this House where the police have not carried out their duties impartially. This behavior of the police created great fear in the minds of the people and many do not have any confidence in them. Why is it that the majority do not have confidence in the Police Force. They are our own Guyanese citizens who are recruited into the Police Force and yet for all this other citizens do not have confidence in them. This is a burning question and the Government should mount some sort of investigation.

When the charge of discrimination is made, sometimes a Minister of the Government tries to deny this, and sometimes the Commissioner of Police, but there have been instances where discrimination has taken place. As far as I know the police has been giving certain organisations permission to hold fairs and dances at certain times of the week and on certain days. The times of advertisements are specified by the police. Some are given the time for which they apply. In the case of the P.P.P., where members have applied for permission to hold fairs, all along they have had permission to hold fairs on Sunday nights. The police have now decided that the P. P. P. will not be given permission to hold fairs on Sunday nights. Skeldon Community Centre has been given permission to hold fairs on Sunday nights. The police has been giving permission to persons on the Corentyne to hold dances until 4 a.m. the police has been granting permission to advertise between 6 in the morning and 6 in the afternoon. The P. P. P. can advertise only from 4 to 6 in the afternoon.

This is something we should consider. The people who support the P. P. P. cannot have any confidence in the Police Force or the Government when they see blatant discrimination before them. The Government should be able to correct this before this matter gets out of hand. There are many things one could speak about the activities of the Police. I feel the police in this community should be helpful to the people, not instill fear.

There are certain people who have not been long in the Police Force but they have been promoted because of the fancies of this Government. Because they wear stripes and hold officer's rank, they do what they like. They go to spirit shops and if a bartender refuses to give a policeman a drink, he is charged with some offence. The police is concentrating its efforts in the wrong direction.

I wish to deal with this specific sub – head, Transport and Travelling. My observation has been that these officers in this Department are misusing the transportation facilities of the Police Force. I have seen on numerous occasions, the police transporting persons who are not government officers but other persons who are going to various excursions, dances and so on.

The Chairman: Hon. Member, did you read the legend?

Mr. Balchand Persaud: “To meet increased cost of travelling, arrears of revised travelling allowances and also unanticipated increased travelling in the hinterland.” I am speaking on the increased cost of travelling and as far as I can see, there is need for some supervision in this particular department whereby the taxpayers can save some money, whereby the Government can save some money, to be used in other actors of development and on social services. The police is not giving these facilities to all the organisations. It is providing them for the P. N. C.

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This is something which we should try to correct because the Government cannot use taxpayers' money to build the People's National Congress. This should come out of their membership; this must not come out of taxpayers' money. I ask that this matter be given serious consideration.

Mr. R. D. Persaud: Mr. Chairman, while we are providing for increased costs of travelling, we still discover that in many areas police stations are not mobile at all. There is the very recent case of the Springlands Police Station – *[Interruption]* – where a report was made about a child, a boy, who was missing. This report was made at the Springlands Police Station and the father of the child was very anxious to get to the Police Station to assist in the search and when the Police finally decided, after very strong persuasion, to make a search, they discovered that they did not have a vehicle to carry out the search. I am not discussing the question of the Police taking a long time before deciding to make the search; I am not telling Parliament to take into account that the Police tried to prove that the people who were describing the person who took away the child were wrong, but I am merely pointing out that if we have to give the Police more money for travelling, that right there on the public road at Springlands the Police do not have a vehicle. When the Police learnt that from the parents that the search should go into the Interior it was discovered that the Police did not have a boat and could not go and the boy's

father was told that if he could provide a boat the Police would go. The parents of the child had to eventually get a truck.

Could the Hon. Minister tell us what is really happening in this country? Is it a fact that the Springland Police Station is without a vehicle? Is it true that in this matter where several organizations and individuals are concerned the Police Station did not have a vehicle to carry out the search for the missing boy? Is it true that the Springlands Police Station is without a boat? Instead of asking us to pass money – we will pass the money if we are satisfied that the security force will function effectively in all circumstances. They should ensure that when we need help we will receive their help and particularly in the case of the missing children.

Mr. M. F. Singh: here again we are asked to approve the large sum of 4150,000 to be spent between now and the end of the year. We can only presume that it is not spent already and that we are being asked for it to be spent, because nowhere in the legend is it stated that any money is advanced from the Contingencies Fund but, in view of what the Hon. Prime Minister said earlier, it may well be that some of this money is already spent. If this is in fact so – it is a large sum of money to spend between now and the end of the year – is it not a contravention of the Constitution to come asking, in view of the specific provision, for the money now by way of supplementary provisions. I will quote article 111 (3) from the Constitution.

“If in respect of any financial year it is found –

- a) That the amount appropriated by the Appropriation Act for any purpose is insufficient or that a need has arisen for expenditure for a purpose for which no amount has been appropriated by that Act; or
- b) That any moneys have been expended for any purpose in excess of the amount appropriated for that purpose by the Appropriation Act or for a purpose for which no amount has been appropriated by that Act, a supplementary estimate or, as the cause may be, a statement of excess showing the sums required or spent shall be laid before the Assembly.”

If, therefore, the money has been spent without authority, is not the proper procedure a statement of excess to be laid before Parliament? Is it that this money is going to be spent?

The Chairman: The Hon. Minister may wish to reply.

The Minister of Home Affairs (Mr. Hoyte): The Hon. Member Mr. Ram Karran adverted to item 67 and spoke at length on the sum provided for republic celebrations. I think that it was made abundantly clear in the report of the Republic Celebrations Committee, and also in the statement made by the Hon. Prime Minister in this House accepting the report of the Committee, that Government had set a limit of \$100,000 as public expenditure for republic celebrations. This sum of \$70,000 represents the amount which will be spent this year leaving a balance of \$30,000 to be spent next year. It is hoped, and indeed the Committee has been so advised that expenditure would be kept to the minimum. It will be recalled that the Government's policy on the celebrations was very clearly stated, namely, that there should be no lavish public expenditure. But the Government hopes that the people themselves will make the occasion a grand national one by their participation.

On the question raised by the Hon. Member Mr. Balchand Persaud under item 68 on which he did roam at length, it has been the pattern in this House by Hon. Members of the P. P. P. and, indeed, outside of this House, to take every opportunity to malign the Police Force and the Security Forces as a whole. I wish it to be publicly understood that the Forces have the entire confidence of the Government and I would take this opportunity to commend those gallant, hardworking men on their efficiency and their devotion to duty and the way, despite all the difficulties of their jobs, they carry on their work. I reject entirely the allegations made against the Police Force.

The Hon. Member Mr. R. D. Persaud was at pains to allege that there was no transportation at Springlands. Recently, I think it was last week, there did appear in one of the evening newspapers, a picture of the Commissioner of Police in front of a large number of new vehicles which had been acquired for the Police Force. In order to increase mobility and efficiency in the Force, we have withdrawn from service a large number of vehicles which we thought had outlived their usefulness, and we have provided, and are still providing, new vehicles to replace them. I think the Hon. Member on the other side should not live in a sense of delusion. The Police Force must be in a position to act swiftly in the face of civil disturbances, and I give the community the assurance that it is able and ready to ensure public order in this country.

Mr. R. D Persaud: Mr. Chairman, I should just like to clarify a point. It appears as though the Hon. Minister was not listening to me. I was making the point that at the Springlands Police Station there was no vehicle available to join swiftly in the search of a murderer. The Hon. Minister did say that the Police Force acquired some new vehicles. But have these vehicles been sent to the various stations? Is it true that the Springlands Station is without a vehicle at the moment?

Mr. Hoyte: Mr. Chairman, it is not that I did not hear the Hon. Member but out of charity I prefer not to reply to it because I do not accept his veracity. *[Interruption]*

The Chairman: Page 11.

Mr. Y. Ally: Item 74 and 78.

Mrs. DaSilva: Item 78.

Mr. Ram Karran: Item 74.

The Chairman: The Hon. Member Mr. Ram Karran.

Mr. Ram Karran: I wish in the first case to reject altogether the suggestion by the Hon. Minister of Home Affairs that the P. P. P. maligns the Police Force just for the sake of maligning it. The P. P. P. recognises that there is a large number of policemen who are honest and devoted, and who work under very trying conditions. The P. P. P. also recognises this fact: that a good number of decent ones who are prepared to be impartial at all times, are with indecent haste, being chased out of the Police Force. I refer to the recent expulsion from the Force of three men who had not yet reached retiring age. They are Messrs. La Borde, Sobrian and Sobers. The Hon. Minister should not come here and say that the P. P. P. is opposed to the Police Force. It is quite clear how the Hon. Minister thinks. *[Interruption]*

He has not expressed consideration in connection with the deaths of a large number of children. In fact this is how he operates. One day I gave notice of a question calling on the Minister to make a public statement with respect to the deaths of children. He did not bother with the question in Parliament but he got his stooge the C. M. G. – *[Interruption]* I am sorry Sir. He got Mr. Sase Narain, the new – found love, to approach him as if Mr. Narain can get more support than the P. P. P. – *[Interruption]* The question has not yet been tabled. It only shows the fascist tendencies of the Hon. Minister and it is confirmed when he said that he has no time for the children but they have time to take care of civil commotion. He says that the Public Force is sufficiently mobile. When the Government begins to think in terms of civil commotion, they are protecting their skins which show that they are no longer popular. They have to think in terms of whether they are sleeping safely in their beds. *[Interruption]*

My Hon. Friend referred to the case of a gruesome murder of a child – and the children are the richest assets of our country. What is our Police doing? They are looking for a man. Well, that sounds so stupid to people. Then they say they looking for an ant. They reasoned that an ant is incapable of killing all those children, so they are looking for a man called Ramlil. The

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jackasses do not know that Ramlil left the country two years ago. They still publish in the newspapers: They are looking for Ramlil. The P. P. P. has more information to know that a man has left the country although the Government has so many security people around the place.
[Interruption]

What sort of efficiency is this? Is it only efficiency for public commotion that the Government is going to take care of? Are we not going to take care of the children of the community? But, no, they are looking for Ramlil and Anant. My God. Why don't they look for the real criminals, the people who are really guilty and who have committed these acts?

The Chairman: All right, you have made that point.

Mr. Ram Karran: I wish to emphasize that the Hon. Minister and the Police must direct attention to these things; they must not intimidate people who give information, they must not terrify them; the people know where the criminals are.

3.45 p.m.

The G. D. F. is going to spend \$480,000 on travelling; the Police Force is going to spend more than \$480,000 on travelling and we have a very inefficient Police Force. Do you know what is happening, Sir? We are entering a Police State.

The Chairman: Did anyone wish to speak on item 76? *[No reply.]* Mrs. DaSilva, item 78.

MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS

Maintenance of Traffic Lights and Road Signs

Mrs. DaSilva: Under item 78 the sum of \$1,000 is requested for the maintenance of traffic lights and road signs. The legend states:

“To meet heavy unanticipated expenditure.”

I have no quarrel with that because it is very important that traffic lights and road signs should be properly maintained, but there is one question which I should like to ask the Hon. Minister with regard to the traffic lights at the corner of Church and Camp Streets. This is a very busy intersection with a very large school nearby and hundreds of children coming out of school twice a day. These traffic lights have been out of control for a number of months and are only blinking. There are no “Stop”, “Get Ready” and “Go” lights. It is not good enough for these traffic lights to operate in this manner at a busy intersection with so many hundreds of children crossing the road in addition to the persons who pass there on their way to and from work. I should like to know how long it will be before the lights are fixed. I hope that some of this amount of \$1,000 will be used to fix those traffic lights.

Incidentally, I want to add that the traffic lights at Camp Church Streets were done, I understand, by overseas labour and the ones at the ones at Brickdam and Camp Street, which hardly ever give trouble, were done by Guyanese labour. May I ask the Hon. Minister if the same Guyanese labour could be used to see if anything could be done to rectify the Camp Street and Church Streets lights.

Mr. Lall: I do not want to deal with Camp Street; I want to deal with traffic flowing on Vlissengen Road from North to South. The “Go” light there last about half a minute and then goes out again. Just two cars can pass and the green light goes off completely and the red light comes on. I would like to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister to this. Something should be done to that light because many persons are getting charged there.

The Chairman: Did Mr. Ambrose wish to speak on item 78?

[Mr. Ambrose indicated in the negative.]

The Chairman: Mr. Persaud, did you wish to speak on one of these items?

Mr. Balchand Persaud: I wanted to speak on item 74 but it has already been touched on. The Minister of Home Affairs (Mr. Hoyte): On all of these occasions we have to listen to the Hon. Member Mr. Ram Karran going over the same old tirade of abuse against the Police. I have already said that I reject these allegations. It is remarkable how the People's Progressive Party operates, because what the Hon. Member has done today is what the party has been doing throughout the length and breadth of this country, that is, taking the tragedy of simple country folk who have lost their children and turning it into a political, and very often racial question. I scorn, Mr. Chairman, to make any further reply to the Hon. Member on this point. The extent of his rascality is patent.

I think the Hon. Member Mrs. DaSilva raised an important point in relation to the traffic lights at the corner of Camp Street and Church Road. The position is that those lights were struck twice by motor cars involved in accidents at that point, and the technicians have advised that because of the damage to the central unit, it is impossible to repair it. Therefore, a new unit has been ordered. It has taken a considerable time for the manufacturers to deliver it. My latest inquiries have revealed that the unit should in this country some time next month.

I will draw attention to the fact that if motorists will follow the normal indication of the traffic lights there should be very little difficulty because one set of lights blink amber, which means "Proceed with caution", and the other set of lights blink red, which means "Proceed with caution but give way to the traffic which is coming in the other direction".

On the question of local labour and foreign labour. I cannot say I am quite sure what the Hon. Member means by "Labour". I have no doubt she is referring to the technicians who put up the lights. I am unable to say whether she is right or wrong, but I am advised that in the case of

the lights at Church Road and Camp Street it is not a question of any inefficiency on the part of the technicians. Is it just the history of accidents which those lights have had.

The Chairman: Page 12.

Mr. Balchand Persaud: I wish to speak on item 88, sir.

The Chairman: The Hon. Member, Mr. Balchand Persaud.

Probation and Welfare Services

Mr. Balchand Persaud: This Department is very much understaffed because little attention is paid to the provision of proper probation and welfare services to the community. If you should travel in most of the steamers in our country you would be in a position to see how many small children come around when you are boarding the steamers. If you are in a public place like a market, you will see a number of young children between the ages of seven and twelve years begging on the streets. When you ask them, "What is your problem? Why is it that you have to beg?" the answers are "My father is in prison", "My mother is ill" or "My mother is dead". There is nobody to take care of these children.

Every day that you travel on the streets you see children begging. This is a very distasteful sort of affair. This is something which we should take into considerations. We should try to rehabilitate families and see that the best care and attention is given to children. As far as I know, for the past year this Government has done nothing to assist in this direction. It has officers only to sit in offices. It does not have any policy on this activity and the whole problem confronts the working class. Surely, the children of members of the ruling class do not have to go and beg.

The Government claims that it believes in the philosophy to make the small man a real man. If the Government is sincere about this, what about the small man's children? The Government should have a better policy in order to curb these tendencies. Sometimes you see, in the New Amsterdam ferry, a lady with four or five children begging. When you ask her why she has to beg, she says that she cannot maintain herself and children with the small sum she is getting. I am not speaking of one race but all races. Every time there is a show at a cinema, you can see small boys in front of the cinema begging for five cents to see the show. The Probation Officer should ask them why they are not at school. Parents not brought before the courts to say why they are not sending their children to school. The whole system is corrupt because of this Government's inefficiency. I urge the Government to see what can be done to improve the conditions of these underprivileged children.

The Chairman: Does the Hon. Minister wish to say anything on this?

Mr. Hoyte: The Hon. Member, in an excess of enthusiasm, or perhaps suffering from what the Romans called ... has failed to understand that all he has said has no relationship to the item which we are discussing and the matters are not really matters concerning the probation services which are, in fact, specialised services.

The Chairman: Page 14.

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Mr. Ram Karran: I wish to speak on item 90.

The Chairman: Proceed.

Remand Home for Boys

Mr. Ram Karran: This explanation here is very empty: "To meet increased expenditure."

Expenditure of what kind? Is it that there are more boys going to the Remand Home than to school? Indeed, I am wondering whether the Hon. Minister himself should not be an inmate of the Remand Home for Boys, having regard to the fact that he has not so far made his apology. The sum of \$2,500 is required to meet increased expenditure. Perhaps a true explanation of this gives an idea as to whether our society is getting worse or is getting better. If this \$2,500 is going to be spent on better services and facilities for these boys, it is all right. If it is that the Remand Home for Boys is getting more inmates, then something seems to be wrong and the observation made by the Hon. Member Mr. Balchand Persaud, that boys are begging in the streets and all over the place, is an indication that the Government is spending too much to prevent civil commotion and it is not taking enough care to see that the young boys and girls in our country are protected. Perhaps the Hon. Minister can tell us what this \$2,500 will be spent on.

Mr. Hoyte: The sum sought here is very easily understood. There has been an increase in the activities of these boys. There has been, for example, intensified training in agriculture, animal husbandry, and things of that sort, and if you are going to increase your training facilities, of necessity, you will have to find money to buy a miscellaneous description of equipment. I do not think that when this is properly understood Hon. Members will quibble. The sum is small; we think the returned will be great.

Assembly resumed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: This sitting is suspended for half an hour.

Suspended accordingly at 4 p.m.

On resumption –

Assembly in Committee of Supply.

The Chairman: When we suspended the Sitting, the Hon. Member, Mr. Ram Karran, had concluded his remarks on item 99. We go over to page 15 now.

Mr. R. D. Persaud: Item 101.

Mr. Ram Karran: Item 101.

Mr. Sutton: Item 101.

Mr. R. D. Persaud: I discovered here that there is an increase in the deficit of \$200,000. I have been following releases issued by this particular corporation in the newspapers and I always hear that this corporation is going to be so efficient that it can take care of itself. The Government makes several changes in removing incentives to farmers, removing guaranteed prices. All this was done, according to the Government, to make the corporation self sufficient.

Although the Government itself has provided in the original Estimates \$500,000, which it envisaged at that item was sufficient, the Government is now coming here asking for an extra \$200,000. If the Government was in fact encouraging the farmers to choose, by giving them the opportunity of selling all their produce to the marketing corporation, at guaranteed prices, this could have been an incentive to them to produce more and this would have helped them tremendously. The farmers keep complaining about their difficulties and their suffering particularly, on question of guaranteed prices, and in spite of this we are called upon to approve an increase of \$200,000 as a deficit for the corporation.

I am also informed, so far as the produce is concerned, that the Guyana Marketing Corporation selects certain areas in which to sell the produce. The trucks run past Lusignan and Annadale and stop at Buxton. Let the corporation sell to all the people of this country so that the Government would not have to come to Parliament to ask for an increase in the subsidy. One would expect at the close of this year that this deficit would have been a reduced. In fact, it is increased. This shows tremendous inefficiency in the marketing corporation and I would like the Minister to tell us the reason for the increase.

Mr. Sutton: Mr. Chairman, I have no doubt you will remember very clearly when this item was debated and the Estimates were being considered, that the Minister of Agriculture and Natural Resources spoke extensively on it. The Minister at that time assured us that the marketing corporation had been going through a lot of growing pains due to inefficiency at all levels and he was then quite satisfied that that period was past and that the marketing corporation would commence to justify its existence.

Now it is very difficult for anybody to understand how in this year 1969, in the light of those statements made by the Minister at the beginning of the year when this question was debated, that in 1969 a vast improvement would be seen in the organisation, how a sum of \$200,000 could be applied for as a supplementary provision.

Mr. Chairman, it is possibly an open secret that the marketing corporation is trying to export copra, because that is the only corporation of a business nature that after years and years of operation continues to operate and the losses are growing and still it continues to be in business. One would expect that one benefits from mistakes. There is a point where a halt must be called if there is no improvement. The bigger a business becomes, the better one will be able to do because one will have several opportunities for absorbing difficult situations but here we are told that the operations of the marketing corporation are being expanded and instead of this being used to absorb existing difficulties, we find the difficulties are becoming greater and we are now being asked to vote supplementary provision of \$200,000.

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Obviously, we must express our disturbance at this state of affairs because one would like to believe that the Government must have some sense of responsibility in how money is spent. Is this not the occasion to call an investigation in depth? Rumour says that the losses are being carried on copra. This rumour is also to the effect that one of the causes of this situation is that several different co – operative societies are receiving supplies from the marketing organisation but they are not paying their accounts. These rumours would cause one to worry in the light of the statement made by the Minister of Agriculture and Natural Resources (Mr. Jordan) at the beginning of this year that the situation was improving and the worst was past.

In November we are asked for \$200,000. I will not cover the ground which my colleagues and other members of the Opposition covered, because the Government does not bother. It is spending money before it is voted and it applies for a supplementary vote when it should apply for a provision to cover an excess of expenditure. If we have a Government that does not give its citizens an example of integrity by obeying the law, how can one expect people to do what is right?

4.45 p.m.

Mr. Chairman, this \$200,000 must cause a lot of questioning in the light of the statement of the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Natural Resources (Mr. Jordan) at the beginning of the year and the Hon. Prime Minister speaking on another head said that he has not got to apologise and did not have to tell the House if this money was spent before it was voted. There are laws! Be honest about it! Come for an excess vote and not for a supplementary vote! All that the Government is doing is making itself an example for the choke and rob to steal and then apologise after. If an excess is to be applied for, explain and apply for it but do not bring a supplementary vote on the 25th of November when there are 37 days left to the year and then tell the people that you do not carry out the laws as you made them. Let us know when there is an excess to consider and when there is a supplementary to consider! This must be regarded as a scandal. No signs of investigation have been announced in spite of this situation.

The Chairman: Before the next Hon. Member speaks on this I could like to say that we must try to be unrepentive. Now, I think that my Hon. Friend (Mr. Sutton) has been a little repetitive in his contribution and I hope that Hon. Member will not follow in his footsteps if we are to get through with the matter.

Mr. Lall: We are not against Government asking for subsidies to help the people, but when this is done we must treat everyone alike. About four or five weeks ago, I had the occasion to draw the attention of the Hon. Prime Minister to an incident which took place in New Amsterdam where a man by the name of Mr. Blair who is the Marketing Supervisor went to Moleson Creek and advised the farmers to bring eddoes to the Marketing Centre in New Amsterdam. The first week the farmers brought down 50 bags; the second week they brought down 48 bags. The lady who is in charge of the Marketing Centre in New Amsterdam refused to purchase the eddoes although the eddoes were of a standard size and she said she wanted all the eddoes to be bag. Two of the farmers had to bring two bags of eddoes to Georgetown. After I telephoned the Hon. Prime Minister he telephoned the Marketing Centre because the Hon. Minister for Agriculture (Mr. Jordan) went abroad and is still abroad. When these farmers were sent to Eusi Kwayana he kept them there for two days. These farmers had to bring eddoes from Moleson Creek to New Amsterdam. We are saying that if subsidy is voted here then everyone must be treated equally.

I want to criticise the Government for this because not only those two farmers but eight more had to spend the night in New Amsterdam and then, after two days - - [*Interruptions*] - - the attention of the Government to this discrimination and I do hope that this will be corrected in future.

Mr. Jack rose --

Mr. Ram Karran: I merely want to make an observation to ask the Hon. Minister if he can give us an idea of the amount of money lost in the Marketing Corporation, some of which

embodied in this money maybe in connection with the purchases of casareep. *[Interruption]* Casareep is one of the things which many people have been caught with. I am told that the Chairman of the Corporation got his friends to bring a good drum of casareep and, having seen that, ordered blindly forty drums of casareep.

The Chairman: Since you asked a question, let the Hon. Minister answer.

Mr. Ram Karran: I would like to know if that is embodied or if we will get another supplementary paper before the end of the year; also one for molasses. The Chairman, Mr. Sydney King – I cannot call his present name – has put the Corporation to a considerable loss by which he bought molasses instead of casareep and the Hon. Minister ought to tell the House how much was involved in that.

The P. P. P. is not opposed to the report, it is not opposed to subsidies to farmers and I wish to point out that Government is treating one set of farmers differently to the rice farmers; subsidies are never granted to rice farmers but they are being robbed – robbed in inverted commas – because what the Government calls subsidies or profits from the Rice Marketing Board are not taken out. However, we know that the sum \$7,000 is used as a rice report. If this were so, there would be no one to quarrel about it, but a lot of it is used up in maladministration such as the case of the casareep.

The Chairman: You mean molasses.

Mr. Ram Karran: Yes, molasses. I do not know if they make bush rum at the Marketing Corporation but there was another case where the farmers went and offered to sell cucumbers and after they had encouraged the farmers to produce a lot of cucumbers, the price was reduced and the bottom knocked out as a result of which farmers have suffered excessive losses. We want to make sure that whatever is spent is not due to mal-administration, and not due to inconsistency on the part of the Government's organisations with respect to these sums of money.

The Minister without Portfolio (Mr. Jack): May I deal with the last question first. Mr. Chairman, I doubt whether the last question was asked in seriousness – [Mr. Ram Karran: "Yes."] – since we are not aware of any loss. The Hon. Member must know that if he wishes to get an answer at all, he would have to supply date, time, amount, purchasers and so forth. If, and when he tells me what is the purchase that he is referring to I can look into it.

Mr. Chairman, the Guyana Marketing Corporation is engaged, among other things, in two things. One is to keep the price of farm produce down, and the other is buying produce from the farmers at reasonable prices so as to support them; and in endeavouring to do this, the necessary losses have occasioned.

Reference was made to copra. I think that Hon. Members must know that due to the burning down of the oil mill, there was on the market a large quantity of copra which farmers had to dispose of and the Government felt that it was its duty to save farmers from catastrophe by buying copra which normally would have been bought by the oil mill. In doing this, the loss was occasioned. I am sure that Hon. Members would not have preferred us to have allowed farmers to suffer due to an incident over which they had no control. In these circumstances I cannot accept criticisms which have been leveled this afternoon.

The Chairman: Page 16.

Mr. R. D. Persaud: Item 104.

The Chairman: Proceed Hon. Member.

Mr. R. D Persaud: As far as I am aware, it appears to me that the road in the Botanic Gardens is completed. Is it that the Government is now seeking to pay for the completion of the road? Or is it that the Government wants to improve the national shrine? [Interruption] I should like the Hon. Minister to tell us where this previous amount of \$76,000 was spent. Why is it that

the Government is seeking an additional sum of \$24,000? Is it to pay for services already rendered? Or is it that the Government has intentions of putting some other road in the Gardens?

The Chairman: The Hon. Member Mr. Ram Karran.

Mr. Ram Karran: I wish to refer to what I said before about the desecration of the Botanic Gardens. A week ago I went into the Gardens and I saw cows grazing all over the place. I wonder at the Government is doing about this. [**Dr. Reid:** “Those are sacred animals.”] One used to get some pleasure going into the Gardens. It has been elevated quite arbitrarily by the Government by placing the national shrine in it and earlier today I spoke of the attitude of the Government – it makes decisions by itself – there was no consultation with the Opposition as to where will be our national shrine and who will be our heroes.

The Chairman: But we are talking about re-surfacing of roads.

Mr. Ram Karran: I should like to know, because as my Hon. Friend pointed out, the road in the Botanic Gardens has already been re-surfaced and completed. I want to know for what purpose this sum of \$24,000 is going to be used. Is it for making up lands on which cows and horses owned by the Prime Minister - - [**Dr. Reid:** “It might be your cows and horses coming from Bel Air.”]The Botanic Gardens has been made into private property and the Prime Minister even allows his cows, horses and pigs to travel all over the place. It is a disgrace.

[Interruption]

But in all seriousness, sir, I think that anyone who lives in this country and who recognises what the Botanic Gardens was and what it is now reduced to, would regard it as a disgrace, and the arbitrary decision of the Government to make it a national shrine in not going to develop in the minds of the people what the Gardens meant to them.

The Chairman: The Hon. Minister.

Mr. Jack: Mr. Chairman, the answer to the question is contained in the legend. That is all.

The Chairman: Page 17.

Dr. Reid: With respect to item 110, there is a slight error. I would wish with your permission to correct it. In the notes (i) should read: "To provide for the creation on the unfixed establishment."

The Chairman: I think that all Hon. Members have that correction.

Mr. Ram. Karran: Items 118 and 119.

Mr. Lall: Item 118.

The Chairman: Any other Hon. Member? The Hon. Member Mr. Ram Karran.

Mr. Ram Karran: We notice here that there are two sums. Raw Sugar Exports – Redistribution of Import Duty paid by Canada and the legend states: "To enable payment of that amount to be made to the Guyana Sugar Producers Association. I remember at one time the Hon. Minister of Finance got on the radio and threatened fire and brimstone about workers who were on strike for the once – for – all bonus. I should like to know when this money was paid and whether the Government was really responsible for the delay in the payment of the once – for – all bonus.

5.05 p.m.

Mr. Ram Karran: I might also wish him to explain the next item, 119, "Man and his World". What is it all about? Has it anything to do with Uncle Sam?

Redistribution of Import Duty paid by Canada

Mr. Lall: Sir, the sum of \$932,940 which will be paid to the Sugar Producers Association by the Government is fantastic since some assurance should be given that part of this money would be given to the workers as once – for – all bonus or profit – sharing. The Government has asked for the co – operation of the workers to produce 360,000 tons of sugar, which target, no doubt, will be reached, but what share will the workers be getting from the money that has accrued from the sales of the sugar?

There is something else which we have to deal with. If 360,000 tons of sugar are produced then 180,000 tons will be shipped to the Commonwealth Markets under the negotiated price of \$228 per ton.

The Chairman: Let us stick to the Canadian market.

Mr. Lall: This will yield over \$42 million. Guyana can ship to the United States of America an amount of 100,000. Let us say that we ship to the United States of America 90,000 tons at \$291 per ton – the price we receive from the United States ranges from \$291 to \$296 per ton. We will therefore get over \$26 million. Local sales, 25,000 tons, will raise over \$3 million.

Then, let us say that the remainder of 57,000 tons will be shipped to Canada at the world market price of \$154 per ton. That will yield another \$8.8 million.

The overall money which will accrue from sugar alone will be over \$80 million. The more sugar you make the more molasses you obtain. Molasses is estimated to give around \$5 million. Let them take the rum, both local and export. Let us not talk about that. We want the Government to make sure that the sugar workers, who are the real producers of the profit, share in such profit. I do not want to challenge the Hon. Minister of Finance (Dr. Reid). Last year

when I asked for \$8½ million he sent troops, but that did not deter me. I do not want that to recur. We want the Government to see to it that the workers share in the profit.

The Chairman: Does the Hon. Minister wish to reply?

Mr. Bissember: I appreciate the enthusiasm shown by my Hon. Friend Mr. Harry Lall, but whatever is written here is the answer to it and I am not going further than this.

I would like at this stage to get some clarification from you, sir. I understand the Standing Orders to say that when we are dealing with Estimates we do not have a general debate but we elicit information on items. It seems to me that there is a general debate on this Supplementary.

I am not in a position to answer anything more than I see here.

Mr. Ram Karran: One of the Standing Orders is that if notices and Questions are submitted to Parliament they should, in due course, find themselves on the Order Paper.

The Chairman: I take the point you are making. I hope that you will not raise this matter now. You are wasting time. Page 19.

Mr. Feilden Singh: Item 26.

Mr. Balchand Persaud: Item 123.

The Chairman: Proceed Mr. Balchand Persaud.

Mr. Balchand Persaud: Mr. Chairman, in the Berbice River the ferry service leaves New Amsterdam every Thursday and comes out from the River on Fridays. I wish to draw to the attention of the Hon. Minister that this service is without any postal facilities.

The Chairman: Notice of a Question has been listed on the Notice Paper.

Mr. Balchand Persaud: This is a question of time.

The Chairman: Do you expect to get the answer to the Question?

Mr. Balchand Persaud: Otherwise the Question still stands.

The Chairman: I know that the Question still stands.

Mr. Balchand Persaud: A steamer service leaves New Amsterdam every Monday night and returns on the next day. The service which leaves New Amsterdam on Monday nights only reaches to a point called Ituni and returns. The steamer Service which leaves New Amsterdam on Thursday nights goes into the river to Kwakwani. The people living between Ituni and Kwakwani village are without a postal service. There are schools all along the way and most of the teachers receive their salaries by cheque or by postal order. As a result serious problems are raised to have the postal orders converted into hard cash. On some occasions teachers have to paddle canoes 15 or 16 miles to reach Kwakwani to have their cheques cashed. This takes up a lot of their time. The Government is losing manpower as they leave the schools to go to Kwakwani to have cheques cashed and then return.

I think the Government should give serious consideration to providing a postal service leaving New Amsterdam on Thursdays and returning on Fridays for people in the Berbice River district.

On the question of persons having to pay 25 cents for the use of a deck chair on the steamers: this is a very harsh method used by the Government to raise money from workers and farmers in that area. Persons have to travel all night. Many people can barely scrape money - -

The Chairman: Does that fall under the Head of Post Office?

Mr. Balchand Persaud: I will raise it under another Head.

5.15 p.m.

Conveyance of Mails

Mr. M. F. Singh: Item 126: Again this is a very enormous sum of money. The sum of \$150,000 is being requested as supplementary provision for this vote, Conveyance of Mails, for which the Estimates have provided \$380,000. Is this not again a case of money which it is not expected would be expended between now and the end of the year but some of which has, in fact, already been expended and should really come to the House by way of a statement of excess? Further, in respect of the initial amount of \$380,000, a specific breakdown was given in the Estimates. I am reading from page 82 of the Estimates, Head 33, subhead 12.

The Chairman: You do not have to read it; it is there. The Minister has the Estimates.

Mr. M. F. Singh: Internal - \$30,000; External - \$50,000; Air Mail - \$300,000. I think this House is entitled to know also how this \$150,000 is made up. If we can get a breakdown of this also we will be consistent with what is contained in the Estimates. Lastly, is there any way in which this amount will be recouped by way of sale of stamps, or is it a straight expenditure?

The Minister of Communication (Mr. Kasim): The point made by the Hon. Member Mr. Balchand Persaud is taken and I promise to give it consideration.

With respect to item 126, the amount provided is to meet increased expenditure because of increased volume of mail. As you are aware, from this year B. O. A. C. had more planes travelling. A plane came in practically every day and there was an increased volume of mail. This amount is to meet that cost and also the cost from the previous year.

The Chairman: Page 20.

Page 20

Mr. Ram Karran: I wish to speak on item 132.

**MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS –
TRANSPORT AND HARBOURS**

Net Deficit on Transport Services

Mr. Ram Karran: The legend states that the Government is increasing the deficit on the transport services:

“To meet new items of expenditure, viz. M. V. Ambrosia, M. V. Pakera,...”

I thought that only the Hon. Member Mr. Saffee is qualified to speak on an item like pakera. I do not know how this name was arrived at but it does not mean what it says on the paper.

The legend states:

“To meet new items of expenditure, viz. M. V. Ambrosia, M. V. Pakera, R. H. Carr, National Insurance, etc. “

The amount required with respect to national insurance has been shown separately under all the other Heads and it is not good book – keeping for the items to be lumped together. It is true that we only vote a deficit for the Transport and Harbours Department but, in keeping with the practice throughout these supplementary estimates, national insurance should have been shown separately.

I wonder if the Hon. Minister can tell us what it is proposed to do with the M. V. Ambrosia, the M. V. Pakera, and the R. H. Carr – the R. H. Carr particularly because it is a white elephant which has been given to the Transport and Harbours Department by Sprostons after they got Government to build for them a road free of charge. This white elephant was handed over to the Transport and Harbours Department and the Hon. Minister of Communications had been shouting hoarse about this great gift.

Why is there such a tremendous problem when we attempt to cross the Rosignol ferry? Cars have to be there one hour, sometimes longer, before they are due to cross, and in many cases they cannot cross because the boat is filled. What is Government's policy with respect to providing additional facilities to enable more passengers and cars to cross the Berbice and Demerara Rivers ferries? With respect to the Demerara ferry, if you want to catch the 3.30 p.m. boat you have to go an hour before and, on several occasions, a large number of cars and passengers are left behind. The same thing applies to the 4.35 p.m. boat. The Government seems to be wasting a lot of money on other items - \$480,000 for the Defence Force and \$500,000 for the Police Force in travelling alone. The public, the taxpayers, have to foot the bill for these huge sums so that these people can go gallivanting all over the place keeping wake in Mabaruma when the Hon. Prime Minister was telling us - -

The Chairman: There is no need for that.

Mr. Ram Karran: It is a fact. It is money they were spending. The Hon. Prime Minister was telling us that there must be national mourning but the soldiers and policemen were keeping wake in Mabaruma, much to the annoyance of the population there. What is the Government's plan – not with respect to the railway; I hope the Minister will initiate a separate debate on that subject; he is shaking his head - with respect to the steamer services, particularly the white elephant, the R. H. Carr.

Mr. Balchand Persaud: I am sorry that I did not mention that I wish to speak on this same time. I wish to make a few points.

The Chairman: The points were not made by the Hon. Member Mr. Ram Karran?

Mr. Balchand Persaud: No.

The Chairman: Proceed.

Mr. Balchand Persaud: The Government is asking for a lot of money to take care of the deficit. Surely, it should have been in a better position, after having years of experience, to see how best it could bridge the gap in terms of income and expenditure. I feel that the Government's policy in relation to public transport is very backward.

The Chairman: The legend states:

“To meet new items of expenditure, vis. M. V. Ambrosia, M. V. Pakera, ...”

These are new items.

Mr. Balchand Persaud: I wish to comment on the way these services are run. The question of the steamer - -

The Chairman: This was done by the Hon. Member Mr. Ram Karran.

Mrs. DaSilva *rose* - -

The Chairman: Do you have a point to make on this item?

Mrs. DaSilva: I am very sorry; I wanted to speak on item 127. I do not know if you will permit me to do so.

The Chairman: We have passes that a long time ago, we cannot go back. Does the Hon. Minister of Communications wish to reply?

Mr. Kasim: With respect to the R. H. Carr, we had introduced this boat to be used as the Berbice ferry, but there was no shed and the workers were affected when the rain fell, so they asked us to some further repairs. This boat is now in dock. It had to stay for a while because the "Sir Crawford" was in dock and when the "Sir Crawford" came out we decided to put the R. H. Carr. As soon as the R. H. Carr is finished, we will put it back in Berbice for ferry services.

With regard to the other expenses here, I should like to say that the department had to provide expenditure to look after the new railway at Matthew's Ridge. This was not budgeted for. [**Mr. Ram Karran:** "Is it here?"] It is bulk.

As regards the M. V. Ambrosia, we are doing everything to see if it can be employed.

The Chairman: Page 21.

Page 21

Mr. M. F. Singh: I should like to speak on item 133.

The Chairman: Proceed.

Personal Emoluments

25.11.69

National Assembly

5.15 – 5.25 p.m.

Mr. M. F. Singh: Speaking on item 133, I note that the legend states that the amount is required:

“To provide for:-

- a) The creation on the fixed establishment with effect from 1st October, 1969, inclusive, of -”

And they list a total of ten posts – seven posts plus three posts.

5.25 p.m.

Ten posts, seven of Assistance Air Traffic Control Officer Grade I and three on Grade II, and apprentices.

It would appear from this that these posts are in addition to those which in fact exist in the Estimates at the present moment but one is confused when one looks at the Estimates and sees that there are sixteen Grade II and apprentice posts. Is it that the number of these posts is reduced and these are in addition to the sixteen Grade II? Why is it? There are three posts of Air Traffic Control Officer Grade II and apprentices also. The posts of apprentice appear in both. Is it that these are ten additional posts or is there some deletion of adjustment in the Estimates?

Mr. Kasim: These are additional posts and are also for the training of Air Control Officers.

The Chairman: Page 22.

Mr. Ram Karran: I wonder whether I can speak on the item 137.

Mr. Balchand Persaud: Item 139.

Mr. Ram Karran: In the first place, there is some inconsistency on the part of the Government. On page 21 we have this airport described as Timehri and I remember when we passed an Order or Bill, the Hon. Minister made some declaration that Atkinson Field was going to be baptized, "Timehri". Is this item to meet increased costs when it was Atkinson Field or is it for the new Timehri Airport? If it is for the new Timehri Airport, one would have thought that a new airport which is more efficient and has more space and all that, would carry reduced maintenance costs. One will remember when we had the terminal on the other side of the airfield, three extra miles had to be travelled to an old dilapidated building and the cost of maintaining that structure and the old facilities put in were very costly with the new building, however, I am surprised to see that the cost of maintenance is going up.

Recently, I went to the building for the first time and I went into the V. I. P. section to await the Parliamentary visitors. I was struck by the low standard of work produced by the American contractors. I have nothing against Americans. Some members of the P. N. C. were also there. Mrs. DaSilva was alarmed. The air conditioners were not working so we had to open the door to get some breeze. Aside from that the work was of a cheap quality. International contractors should have produced more than what we saw there. Perhaps the Hon. Minister can tell us why it is although we have a new building, the cost is more. I can understand about the lawn which was planted with grass, which was taken up and replanted again but still is not growing. If it cost \$40 a root for grass, it could not take this amount. Can the Minister please explain?

Mr. Kasim: The cleaning of the airport building is done by contract with the Byson company and this we have to meet. This is the amount paid to clean the building. As for the name, "Atkinson Airport", if we were to put Timehri Airport, it would mean we would have to put a new sub – head.

Mr. Balchand Persaud: I wish to speak on the Head itself and if you wish, I can indicate the other items on which I wish to speak.

The Chairman: Make your general comments very brief.

Mr. Balchand Persaud: This Ministry, since we had the presentation of the Budget this year, is one of the Ministries which are using most of the national income of the country. Here again we see large amounts of money at this late stage of the year being requested to be spent on infrastructural work.

The Chairman: We are talking of Establishment.

Mr. Ram Karran: I wish to draw the attention of the House and indeed the whole country's attention to the gross discrimination by the Government particularly in the Establishment of the Ministry of Works and Hydraulics. I challenge the Hon. Minister of Works and Hydraulics to deny that rabid persecution goes on against people there. I do not want to call names yet but I think the Hon. Minister ought to be ashamed to know that a man with twenty – three years' service in the central workshop, a very knowledgeable man, was chased out of the workshop and sent to repair bulldozers in the field in order to put their puppet in his place. They have put him in the wilds of Mahaicony where the P. N. C. farmers are catching tigers without guns. This overseer was beaten up by tugs and no disciplinary action was taken against them. This man has been hospitalised and now he is saying, "I do not mean to go back there. I hope I will be allowed to resign with my full benefits or that somewhere be found where I can work in peace."

5.35 p.m.

"I cannot work to drive tractors in the fields because for the twenty odd years I have been working, I was the Foreman." I do not want to call names but I hope that the Hon. Minister of Works and Hydraulics who manipulates the staff would not allow the officers, in their work, to carry out this vendetta against people whom he does not believe will carry out his selfish wishes. [Mr. Green: "What are you talking about?"] I am speaking about personal emoluments, Foreman.

The Hon. Minister apparently does not listen, he is thinking of his own importance and what viciousness he can pursue in destroying people who are not supporters of the P. N. C. The Collins Report mentions the personnel in the Public Service and it is in the interest of everyone that there should be impartiality at that level in the Public Service generally. I wish to appeal – it may fall on deaf ears because arrogance and ignorance go together and so far as this Ministry is concerned everyone can repeat that – to the Government to take into consideration what will take place there. A man with twenty – three years service --

The Chairman: Do not repeat that.

Mr. Ram Karran: Well, a man I likely to take matters in his own hands if the Government continues with vicious policies.

Mr. Green: I do not wish to reply, Mr. Chairman.

The Chairman: Page 24.

Mr. Balchand Persaud: I wish to speak on item 143.

Mr. M. F. Singh*rose* --

The Chairman: Mr. Singh wishes to speak on item 140.

Mr. Ram Karran: I wish to speak on item 144.

Transport and Travelling

Mr. M. F. Singh: With respect to transport and travelling, an enormous sum is being asked for in respect of the period 25th November and 31st December. Has this money – a part of

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National Assembly

5.35 – 5.45 p.m.

it or the whole of it - been spent as yet or is it that it is required to cover expenses intended to be incurred for the rest of the year. It is very unlikely that the huge sum of \$88,000 is for the period 25th November to the end of the year; one would want to know if there has been a breach of the Constitution in that there should be a statement of excess in respect of this vote.

(New) – Remuneration of Project Co – ordinators

I would like to ask the Hon. Minister what are these six Project Co – ordinators. Are they civil servants? Could he give us a more detailed idea of what they do or is it merely co – ordinating? How are they recruited? What is the salary scale on which they will be paid? Who will determine what salary they will be paid?

Mr. Ram Karran*rose* --

Mr. Balchand Persaud*rose* --

The Chairman: Mr. Balchand Persaud.

**Maintenance and Operation of Electrical Plants and Radio
Equipment**

Mr. Balchand Persaud: The Hon. Minister is asking for \$13,000 to meet expenditure – the legend states:

“To meet expenditure in respect of the operation of new plants and radio equipment installed this year.”

I wish to ask where these equipment and plants were installed.

The Chairman: You have asked your question; you have await your answer.

Mr. Balchand Persaud: I wish to make another point. The Hon. Minister himself seems to be living in Cadillac style – he even has radio equipment in his car and every single week, two or three times a week, he takes his car to this particular department for servicing; his radio equipment always goes wrong. The air – conditioner in his car is serviced at the Electricity Corporation every week and this is something which the Hon. Minister alone seems to have, namely the best facilities and then he says that the P. P. P. has a colonial mentality. In this country where everyone is accustomed to climatic conditions he has air – conditioning. The Hon. Minister should set an example. He says that the Government is asking the people to make sacrifices but what are the Hon. Ministers doing? As far as the Hon. Minister is connected, I feel that he is spending too much on his personal glory and wasting taxpayers' money.

The Chairman: The Hon. Member Mr. Ram Karran.

(New) – Rumuneration of Project Co-ordinators

Mr. Ram Karran: I wish to ask, in addition to the questions by my Hon. Friend Mr. Feilden Singh, what are the qualifications for the post of Project Co – ordinator? Secondly, if these Project Co – ordinators go and harass workers to join the P. N. C., to subscribe to the P. N. C. and to threaten them with alternative action, should they - -

Mr. Bissember: That is a serious question. I discussed with Hon. Member Mr. Ram Karran earlier the matter of time and if that is the attitude of the Opposition, I shall have to move a certain Motion at a certain stage.

Mr. Ram Karran: Whatever he moves, the Hon. Minister for Parliamentary Affairs has not discussed with me anything in respect of time. He is lying.

The Chairman: I --

Mr. Bissember: I ask the Hon. Member to withdraw his remark.

Mr. Ram Karran: The Hon. Minister has not spoken to me about time between two o'clock and now. The term "lying" is unparliamentarily and I withdraw the term. *[Interruptions]*

The Chairman: Hon. Members, let us proceed.

Mr. Green: I find it difficult to reply to my Hon. Friend Mr. Persaud. I do not understand his reference to personal assets. With respect to item 140, the increased cost of travelling must occur in a Ministry like the Ministry of Works and Hydraulics in view of unanticipated expenditure. In respect of item 143 the places include Mahdia, the Timehri/Mackenzie area. It may be of interest for Hon. Members to know that we have increased our radio network; for the first time we have a 24 – hour service and this is responsible for the additional expenditure. From all over the country people can contact Head Office anytime during the day. With respect to item 144, Project Co – ordinators, I suspect that this would have worried my Hon. Friends. These will be persons appointed as a result of Cabinet's decision and who will assist the Minister and his Parliamentary Secretary and the Permanent Secretary in the day – to – day running of the Ministry.

5. 45 p.m.

The qualifications are "interested Guyanese" and I want to emphasise the words, "interested Guyanese" who are prepared to work hard; these persons have to report back to either the Minister or the Permanent Secretary so that we can be in a position to save the waste, dishonesty and rascality which took place during the time of Hon. Members who sit on the other side of the House.

The Chairman: Page 25, page 26.

Mr. Teekah: Mr. Chairman, page 25. Do you mind - -

The Chairman: Page 26.

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Mr. Teekah: Items 155, 158, 159 and 160.

Mr. Ram Karran: I think that the Hon. Member is going to be the only speaker on this head. I wonder if you will allow him to - -

The Chairman: I will consider this. *[After a pause.]*

Mr. Teekah: Mr. Chairman, we are contributing to UNESCO and I see here that the sum of \$839 is now being sought as further contribution. [**Mr. Green:** “Do you know what is UNESCO?”]

[**Mr. Ram Karran:** “He knows more than you.”] ...held a conference in Vienna because UNESCO feels that Lenin has made the greatest contribution to the upliftment of humanity. I should like to know whether the Government would not consider celebrating Lenin Centenary in Guyana as a follow – up of the UNESCO resolution.

Item 158 deals with courses for teachers. The legend states that the amount of \$40,000 is “To meet additional expenditure for an increased intake of students to the special training programme for teachers for multi – lateral schools.” First, I should like to know from the Hon. Minister how many centres are there at present. I am aware that there is only one. Second, the number of students that these centres cater for. I observe that the Ministry of Education is putting a lot of emphasis on the multi – lateral schools. Is the Ministry aware that the multi –lateral schools in the United States are being scrapped?

I wish to emphasise that we ought to proceed very rapidly with these courses for teachers because there is chaos in the Ministry of Education. I would have thought that since the last Minister of Education was so competent and had to be removed, the present Minister, her successor, would proceed with the education system in this country in a more imaginative manner. But unfortunately, we observe that on the West Coast of Demerara, at Stewartville Government School, a retired Headmaster is now acting Headmaster of this secondary school. Also, at Lenora, another retired Headmaster, Mr. Budhoo, is acting so interim teacher and is receiving the maximum salary of \$296 per month. What is the Government doing to prevent these things?

Under this subhead "Courses for teachers", we observe that the legend speaks of multi – lateral schools only. With respect to these multi – lateral schools, is the Government still going to employ CUSOs and VSOs who are here without any teaching experience whatsoever and who possess their first degree only and are using teaching in Guyana as a means of gaining material for their second degree; and whose accent cannot even be comprehended by students. How vigorously is the Government proceeding with these courses in the multi – lateral schools?

Item 159 "Removal expenses of teachers." The legend states: "To provide for the posting of an increased number of trained teachers to hinterland areas". Now this only relates to removal expenses. Isn't the Government going to assist by offering some incentive to these teachers? How could the Government wish to attract teachers to these areas if no hostel facilities are available and, if so, very little.

Item 160 "Travelling expenses for teachers". Last year, the Guyana Teachers Association made a request to the Ministry of Education stating that it would like to have teachers brought down from the hinterland or interior areas three times per year. The Ministry, at the moment, only bridge down Headmasters and teachers once yearly but the fact is that they want to encourage teachers to these areas. The association which speaks for the teachers proposed that the teachers be brought down twice per year.

This proposal was rejected last year. Is the Minister now going to do something is so far as acceding to this request is concerned.

While talking about teachers in the interior, I want to touch on their refresher courses. If the Government is going to do something intelligent about education then it must be able to provide for teachers in the interior the same facilities that are provided for teachers in schools on the coastland, who, as I know, are given refresher courses after every term. There are such courses regularly in Georgetown and in New Amsterdam.

The Chairman: We are dealing with travelling now. Item 160 deals with Travelling Expenses of Teachers in the Interior but you are talking about refresher courses. I do not think there is any way that you can get out of this one.

Mr. Teekah: I was just explaining about teachers in the interior because this item refers to travelling expenses.

The Chairman: You could have dealt with that before, but you did not. You want me to allow you to deal with refresher courses under this subhead. I would like you to agree with me.

Mr. Teekah: Let me finish, sir, and then you will understand.

The Chairman: You must agree with me. You will first agree with me that you are speaking under the wrong subhead. If you want to deal with courses you should have dealt with them under item 158, Courses for Teachers. Now we are dealing with Travelling Expenses. You cannot deal with Courses for Teachers.

Mr. Teekah: I want to explain. This item is Travelling Expenses of Teachers in the Interior. The Government is asking for more money, namely, \$12,000.

The Chairman: To cover travelling expenses.

Mr. Teekah: This is to draw teachers to the interior by paying their travelling expenses.

The Chairman: You have dealt with that already.

Mr. Teekah: What I would like to explain is that this is all tied up with the philosophy of trying to get people into the interior.

The Chairman: I do not think I can allow you to deal with Courses under this item. Let us deal with the item.

Mr. Teekah: May I, therefore, ask this question: How regularly does the Government intend to bring down Headmasters and other teachers each year from the interior?

The Chairman: Does the Minister wish to reply?

Mr. Jack: With regard to item 155, I am not prepared to discuss that. With regard to item 158, there is one centre and there are 83 students. That answers the whole question. I listened to the questions under items 159 and 160 but I was unable to discern what were the questions attempted to be asked. Therefore, I take my seat.

Mr. Teekah: The Minister says he does not understand. Let me put it this way: How regularly is the Government prepared to bring teachers down from the interior? After each term or once a year? The Guyana Teachers Association asked that Headmasters be brought down twice per year. The Government is only bringing them down once a year. Is the Government prepared to accede to the request of the G. T. A.?

Mr. Jack: We bring teachers down twice per year. I do not know if that satisfies the question.

The Chairman: Page 27.

Mr. Teekah: Item 164.

Mr. Ram Karran: Item 165.

The Chairman: Proceed with item 164.

Mr. Teekah: Item 164 deals with the Technical Institute. Since the opening of the University buildings at Turkeyen there has been a Technical Studies Department at the University.

The Chairman: We are dealing with the Technical Institute here. Please keep within the ambit of the question.

Mr. Teekah: You should listen to the question a little and then you will understand. There is something called the preamble. We are talking about the creation of certain other posts at the Technical Institute. What I would like to know is how the Technical Institute and the Technical Studies Department of the University of Guyana get along. What co-ordinates exists? How do they supplement or complement each other? I understand that the Technical Studies Department at the U. G. is supposed to offer higher training.

I also see that we are going to create some new posts at the Technical Institute. Is the Technical Institute going to be a sort of feeder to the Technical Studies Department of the U. G.?

Mr. Jack: The U. G runs two courses, one for a higher diploma and the other a general course. The general course is in the experimental stage and it is intended that the course will subsequently be transferred to the Technical Institute.

The Chairman: Item 165, Mr. Ram Karran.

Mr. Ram Karran: This is merely a correction. When last I saw the Hon. Minister of Education she was in no way distorted. She had her maidenly physique; there was no question of pregnancy, no question of labour. I should like to know what “labour” has to do with the Ministry of Education. The amount is to be increased from \$8,000 to \$10,000. Having regard to the fact that all the schools are being built by self – help, I do not think the Government is spending any money on the construction of schools. What is \$10,000 for?

Mr. Jack: Mr. Chairman, this is work done at the Technical Institute. This is for the completion of the extension of four classrooms, two workshops and three laboratories.

Mr. Ram Karran: That is capital expenditure. You must not show it under recurrent. This is not good book – keeping.

Mr. Jack: Under this subhead, payment has been made also to part – time lectures.

The Chairman: Page 28.

Mr. Teekah: Subheads 169 and 172.

The Chairman: Proceed.

Bishops’ High School

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5.55 – 6.05 p.m.

Mr. Teekah: I observe that item 169 deals with Transport and Travelling and relates to the Bishops' High School. There was a sum of \$250 voted and now another \$100 is requested. I should like to know from the Minister what travelling is done by teachers of the Bishops' High School. Are these allowances given to other Government secondary schools?

6.05 p.m.

**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION –
ANNA REGINA SECONDARY SCHOOL**

Personal Emoluments

With respect to item 172, it will be observed that many new posts are being created here, for example, one post of Lecturer, Industrial Arts; one post of Mistress, Commercial Subjects; one post of Mistress, Home Economics. But this very school, the Anna Regina Secondary School, is one of the schools which the Government has in mind to change over to a multilateral school. Is it that the Anna Regina Secondary School has been changed over to a multilateral school as from 1st October, 1969? These are some of the subjects that are going to be dealt with, or are going to be done, in the multilateral schools and one would have thought that when this building is renovated and the other facilities are put in, these subjects will be introduced. Does it mean now that there is no need to expand the physical facilities because these subjects are going to be done in the present building, in the present compound, in the present structure, at Anna Regina?

Mr. Jack: Item 169 deals with travelling by the staff for things like collecting salaries backwards and forwards.

With respect to item 172, the Anna Regina Secondary School has been expanded. It is not yet a multilateral school but we are moving in that direction. There is the necessity for this

amount because we are adding subjects and expanding the school. When it becomes a multilateral school it will be further expanded.

Mr. Teekah: By what time the Ministry has in mind to complete the change – over from secondary school to multilateral school, having in mind the Anna Regina Secondary School?

Mr. Jack: September 1973.

The Chairman: Page 29.

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Mr. Chandisingh: I should like to speak on item 175 and 177.

The Chairman: Proceed.

MINISTRY OF HEALTH

Transport and Travelling

Mr. Chandisingh: Item 175: I notice that this charge for Transport and Travelling in this Ministry has been going up and up, and this is the tendency. When we were debating the 1969 Estimates earlier this year, I made a similar observation and I think that the answer in part given at that time was that it was necessary to have more travelling in order to supervise and bring about more efficiency, etc. in the service. I should like, before the Hon. Minister answers my question, to recall that during the last year of the P. P. P. Government I think the sum with respect to this item was around \$1,400 only, even though one can say that, at that time, the health facilities and the health services were better than they are now.

I appreciate that I supposed to be asking a question here, but to help the Hon. Minister to answer, may I point out that the health services are certainly deteriorating. For example, one of the main problems is the high cost of securing medical attention, particularly in the sense that this Government allows private practice to Government Medical Officers at a very high cost to the poor people to be able to secure adequate medical attention. There are health centres without resident midwives; no drugs in many cases; shortage of pillows and all sorts of other things which a hospital should have. I understand that even now, at the Georgetown Hospital, persons are not being admitted into the Psychiatric Clinics and all these things add up to what I have said about the deteriorating services.

It is not for me – or not desirable either – to launch into a long speech at this time on these shortcomings but, in view of what I have said, I would wish the Hon. Minister to say why is it that this charge has been constantly increasing even though we cannot see any tangible results out of these travelling charges from the Ministry of Health.

MINISTRY OF HEALTH – MEDICAL

Personal Emoluments

If I may ask a question on item 177, the note at (a) states that one post of Supernumerary Obstetrician on the Estimates and I should like to know why it is necessary to have another post, making two posts in all, of Supernumerary Obstetrician. Would the Hon. Minister be good enough to explain this and to say where these Supernumerary Obstetricians are now stationed, or will be stationed? Furthermore, I should like to ask whether there are persons functioning in both these supernumerary posts, that is including the post of Supernumerary Surgeon (Ear, Nose and Throat), since it is stated here that they are to be retroactive, in one case from the 1st September, 1969, and in the other case from 1st November, 1969.

The next point deals with the Principal Nursing Officer. I notice that there is to be a new post of Principal Nursing Officer. I wonder what are the functions of this new post and the qualifications of the holder of such a post, bearing in mind that we already have a Nursing Supervisor, an Inspector of Midwives, and also Matrons attached to the various hospitals. Will the Minister say why it is necessary to have this new post? Is it not a proliferation of more posts, or officialdom, or is there some cogent reason why this post needs to be provided?

The Minister of Health (Dr. Talbot): I will base my comments on the premise that we are improving and, certainly, anyone who expressed an opinion that the service is deteriorating must be considered a person who is unaware of what is happening. The first question which deals with Transport and Travelling was answered by the Hon. Member because indeed we are having increased provision as we meet delegations which come in all the time, as we determine new areas where service must be given we increase the service in these areas, and this means that more officers are travelling – dispensers, doctors, public health inspectors, nurses, etc. we will always have need to increase travelling vote. This is a sign of progress.

Secondly, a question was asked which has to do with the reason for the post of Supernumerary Obstetrician. It is the Government's policy to ensure that Guyanese doctors, especially in fields which we are in need of – and we are certainly in need of Obstetricians in this country – are employed. Recently, a Guyanese Obstetrician has returned and we were able to increase our staff and give additional service not only in the Georgetown Hospital but also in the New Amsterdam and Suddie Hospitals.

The post of Principal Nursing Officer is long overdue.

6.15 p.m.

It is long overdue because it is not possible to co – ordinate and integrate the nursing service without an officer on a high administrative level who is responsible not only for public

health nursing but for hospital nursing, for, training all educational aspects of nursing. The Matron at the Georgetown Hospital has had to deal with education and staffing in all the public hospitals. This has not been an ideal situation, therefore, it is an improvement to have a Principal Nursing Officer. It is absolutely necessary.

The Chairman: Page 30.

Mr. Chandisingh: Items 178 and 18. My observation on item 178 is of the same order as the previous item we discussed. What is responsible for the increased cost of travelling? It is all well and good for the Hon. Minister to make very sweeping, general but yet vague statements about improved medical facilities because of increased travelling. But I wonder whether it is not begging the question by proving that there are improved medical facilities by showing increased cost of travelling. I doubt this is an acceptable method of proving a point when anyone who knows what is going on is aware of the fact that today there is much more by way of complaint by ordinary people all over the place. I hear it in New Amsterdam where I am now – the high cost of getting medical treatment.

It is true one or two new services or centres have been opened up, like a hospital at West Coast Berbice, but while one or two of these things have been opened up, there are many which have been in existence before but have not been functioning or not functioning as they should. It is because of this that people are finding it difficult to get cheap medical attention in this country. These are similar comments to those I made before.

With regard to item 181, the legend states, “To meet allowances for an increased number of trainees”, but it is a question of how many are now being trained, how many are there now so to speak, and how many new persons are in the process of being trained or will be trained in the future. There is a perpetual lack of inspection particularly by sanitary inspectors in the rural areas. This is a widespread observation by many persons who are concerned with this question

and I would like to direct the Hon. Minister's attention to this because it is a shortcoming which needs to be corrected at this stage.

The sum of \$900 is to be spent on an expanded B. C. G. Programme to cover hinterland districts. I would like to ask what are the new districts that have been brought into the programme and whether the Minister considers that this is enough for the current need for extending the B. C. G. Programme.

I would further like to take the opportunity to ask what is the position with respect to the doctor at Mabaruma. I submit this has something to do in particular with the prevention and treatment of T. B. in the North West District since it is understood there is no resident doctor at Mabaruma or at least there has not been one for some time. There was a doctor who was sent to Matthew's Ridge and perhaps he visits periodically, but we would suggest it is not good enough for the area, particularly now that the X – ray unit has been installed at Mabaruma, and there should be a resident doctor at that centre to do the work connected with the T. B. Programme.

Dr. Talbot: In answer to the question concerning item 181, we have now started a programme of training of public health inspectors and health visitors and have twenty – six in training. In answer to item 184, the amount which is shown here applies and the amount in travelling will of course come under the vote for transport and travelling. This is one of the reasons we need a large sum for travelling because there is need for a team of officers travelling to places like Lethem and the other areas in the Rupununi and North West District. The Ministry of Health needs a large transport and travelling vote. I consider this adequate for the next month for the service.

As to the question which concerns the coverage of Mabaruma, I have heard this complaint before. I am satisfied that the doctor is in attendance there, at clinics, and in clinics of the riverain areas, and that the type of illness which is prevalent in the hospital at the moment

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6.15 – 6.25 p.m.

does not require 24 hours per day medical coverage. We have an adequate supportive staff and I am quite satisfied this is enough at the moment.

Mr. Chandisingh: This is just a supplementary question. If there were more doctors available, would the Minister not consider that the hospital needed a permanent resident doctor?

Dr. Talbot: There are many areas in this country where we would consider need for permanent resident officers of all sorts. We are working within a certain framework and the question directed to me had to be answered in terms of the structure in which we are operating at the moment.

6.25 p.m.

Ministry of Health – X-Ray – Personal Emoluments

Mr. Chandisingh: It is seen here in the legend that two new posts of Radiographer Trainee are to be added with effect from 1st January, 1969. I observed from the estimates that there are now three posts of Radiographer Trainee. It does not seem to make sense. Perhaps the Hon. Minister can explain, why at the end of the year is a request being made for two more posts of Radiographer Trainee beginning from 1st January, 1969. In other words, have these two Trainees actually been in these posts? Is that the reason why it is necessary to back – date this? What is the position?

Dr. Talbot: The position is that we have been involved in a training course for Radiographers. There are five Radiographers now being trained.

Mr. Chandisingh: Was it an error or an oversight?

Ministry of Health – Hospitals and Dispensaries – Personal**Emoluments**

Mr. Chandisingh: I observe that there are to be three posts of Staff Nurse on the unfixed established, that is, three new posts. My question is that moment there seems as to be 508 posts of Staff Nurse on this scale and I am wondering why it is necessary to have three new posts of Staff Nurse. Is it that all 508 posts are already filled? Is that the reason for creating three new posts? Why only three? I am a bit puzzled.

Sanitary, Fuel and Light

Mr. Chandisingh: There is an increase of \$50,000 and it says here “To meet 1968 accounts, and increased expenditure on electricity as a result of the expansion of medical facilities in the districts.”

What I should like to know is what part of this \$50,000 is due to 1968 unpaid accounts and what amount is due to expansion of medical facilities in the districts, and which districts?

The Chairman: We shall go on to the next page.

Ministry of Health – Analyst – Personal**Emoluments**

Mr. Chandisingh: I would like to ask if the Hon. Minister considers that more staff is needed for this department in order to produce the necessary Food and Drugs legislation which we expect to be produced and brought before Parliament? Would the Hon. Minister say what is the position now on this question of the Food and Drugs legislation?

Transport and Travelling

Mr. Chandisingh: The legend says that \$410 is to meet travelling allowances recently approved retroactivity for a technical officer. I wonder if the Hon. Minister will explain this since it is not clear to me whether all technical officers are eligible for travelling allowances and if not, what is the specific reason why this particular technical officer is approved to have travelling allowances. Has he been performing some special duty for the department?

Dr. Talbot: Mr. Chairman, in connection with item 193, the posts which are listed there are posts which were created for the Fort Wellington Hospital. The question on item 195 concerned additional expenditure and I must say that the increased expenditure in the electricity has come about because of the new mortuary at the New Amsterdam Hospital and the increased activity in the X – Ray Department as we now have five Specialists attached to the New Amsterdam Hospital. In addition, more electricity is being used since the opening of the Fort Wellington Hospital and the new X – Ray machine has been installed at Mabaruma. More electricity is used when an X – Ray is in operation and therefore the major part of this amount is to be applied to the increased use of electricity.

The question raised about additional staff to prepare the Food and Drugs legislation seems irrelevant at this time. The Scientific Officer referred to is assigned to the Government Analyst Department to do analyses on (). We are being especially vigilant with respect to the imported products.

In connection with item 201, the technical officer is an officer who is required to visit supermarkets and stores which sell these products so that they could be analysed to determine whether they contain substances harmful for human consumption. Obviously, a travelling allowance had to be paid to the officer and since the officer had to begin work before approval for the expenditure came through, it was necessary to make this retroactive.

The Chairman: Page 34.

MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND RECONSTRUCTION

Miscellaneous Expenses – Government Housing Estates

Mr. Chandisingh: It is stated that \$5,000 added to the \$4,000 already provided is to provide for extensive works in certain areas. I would like to ask what are the works and what are the areas in the same breath, so to speak. I would like to ask why, if the Government is spending money to rehabilitate – presumably houses – why are the other arms of the Government breaking down people's houses in Black Bush Polder? Is this not incurring unnecessary expenditure which could be better used for adding to votes such as these to repair people's houses and to put shape rather than breaking them down?

The Chairman: before the Hon. Minister replies, may I just say that I have been told by the Hon. Leader of the House that arrangements have been made for us to proceed beyond 6.30 p.m. in an attempt to complete the Paper. The Hon. Minister will now reply.

6.35 p.m.

The Minister of Housing and Reconstruction (Mr. Ramsaroop): Mr. Chairman, I must say that the Hon. Member's question is both ... and impertinent. The expenditure incurred here is to provide improvement capital works for the Government buildings in New Amsterdam.

There are also improvement works to be carried out on the housing estates in Georgetown and Ruimveldt and subsistence allowance concomitant to these works have to be paid from open votes.

Mr. Chandisingh: Is all of this going to be done for \$9,000?

Mr. Ramsaroop: Yes. Unfortunately, the last two Governments before the 1964 Government left these houses in a sad state of disrepairs.

MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Mr. Lall: Item 217.

The Chairman: Proceed.

Mr. Lall: The amount of \$2,500 was already voted for manpower research and the additional sum now sought is \$1,500. Now, sir, there is only one month remaining in the year, could the Hon. Minister explain why this large amount? Is it unauthorised expenditure?

The Chairman: Are there any other questions on page 35?

Mr. Lall: Item 219. I see here an amount of \$1,000 is being sought as a grant to the Guyana Labour Union. I should like to ask the Hon. Minister if such grants will be given to other registered trade unions.

Items 225: Old Age Pensions, \$35,000. I should like to ask the Hon. Minister what his Ministry is doing as regards getting its officers to expedite scrutiny of people who apply for old age pension.

The Chairman: Page 36.

Mr. Balchand Persaud: I should like to speak on item 226.

Mr. Lall: Item 226, Public Assistance, \$27,000. I know of a case of a woman who lost her husband, and she has five children. It is about five months now since she applied for social

assistance. This woman is suffering from a bad heart. I am asking the Hon. Minister to see that his officers expedite such applications.

The Chairman: I wonder whether we can take the Hon. Member, Mr. Balchand Persaud. I think he has a question he has a question on Item 226 also.

Mr. Balchand Persaud: Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. I notice here the amount of \$27,000 is being sought to meet increased expenditure for assistance in the light of an increased number of deserving applicants in newly declared districts of the Upper Mazaruni and Rupununi areas. I should like to know why only these areas. Quite recently I spent a number of days in the Berbice area. I was told by the residents in that area that they have applied for public assistance for a number of years now – and these applicants have qualified in every respect – and although they have complaints nothing has been done so far. The majority of these people can barely earn a livelihood. There are quite a number of needy cases and this Government does not have the machinery to cope with the situation.

The Amerindians on the different Missions have complained that they have made applications and they have not been favoured with a reply. Also, in the Orealla Mission, persons have made applications to the District Commissioner and the applications have been channeled to the respective officer and so far nothing has been done. If these things continue, the people of this country will lose confidence in the Government and one wonders where the money goes. The whole country seems to be moving towards a state of starvation and poverty.

The Minister of Labour and Social Security (Mr. Carrington): Mr. Chairman, with respect to the question on item 225 which was asked by the Hon. Member Mr. Lall, I wish to state that some time ago Dr. Francis made recommendations with regard to out man power needs. This requires follow – up so that we would be in a position to know of our unemployment position. This sum is therefore put to enable us to proceed with the recommendations of Dr. Francis.

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6.35 – 6.45 p.m.

As regards the question of the grant to the Guyana Labour Union, I wish to inform the House that the Government has just set up a Waterfront Commission; and to carry out the work of the Commission, it is necessary for both management and employees to be informed of what is required at the discussions, how the scheme will work. To give persons taking part on these discussions an insight as to how they should approach the matter we suggested both employers and workers should visit countries abroad. They have visited the Caribbean and certain European countries. The trade union was assisted by the International Transport Federation also the German Government gave some assistance. It is in this light we felt that it is necessary for the Government to assist the trade union. I want to give the Hon. Member the assurance that any trade union which falls in this position, once the Government is satisfied that there is need, assistance will be given. There is no precedent created.

6.45 p.m.

On the question of increases in old age pensions: I think we will always need supplementary provision for old age pensions since you cannot determine the number of persons who will require old age pensions. From time to time every year you will surely see this item coming up here before this House.

The same thing applies to Public Assistance. As the last Member clearly indicated there is a need for an increase in this provision if we are to carry out these services throughout the country. We have decided to carry this service to the Upper Mazaruni area since the people there have been without this assistance for many years. With regard to the Berbice area, we will look into this and will appreciate the names of any persons who are in need so that we can look into the matter, contact them and give them any assistance required.

The Chairman: Page 37. Page 38. Page 40. We now go to Supplementary Provision in respect of Capital Estimates. Page 1.

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6.45 – 6.50 p.m.

Mr. M. F. Singh: Items 2 and 5.

The Chairman: Proceed with item 2.

PRIME MINISTER

Purchase of Equipment

Mr. M. F. Singh: The legend says that this is –

“To enable orders to be placed for equipment to the value of \$880,000 to be delivered in 1970. The purchase of the equipment will be financed from loan funds from the United Kingdom Government.”

I think this House is entitled to know what kind of equipment is meant. This is a lot of money, nearly \$1 million. What kind of equipment is this? Gold – digging equipment, office furniture? We should at least be given some idea what this equipment is.

Co – operative Development

I go on to item 5. Again a considerable amount of money, nearly \$200,000, is being asked for in respect of a short period – from now to the end of December –

“To honour guarantees given by Government in respect of six co – operative societies, and to increase activities in the hinterland.”

We are being asked to approve of this expenditure. The Government must tell us what these guarantees are that were given by the Government with respect to six co – operative societies and what are the increased activities in the hinterland. The legend goes on to state:

“This expenditure will be off – set by savings on sub – head 16 – Resettlement.”

Are these activities connected with Resettlement and is that why there will be a saving in Resettlement? Will the money voted for Resettlement be used in respect of this vote? Will the Hon. Minister tell us a little more about this question of Resettlement and whether this money is intended to be used on Resettlement? Does the Government also realise it has an obligation to help the Amerindians and to raise their standards also? Is it resettling people and forgetting the indigenous population? The Government is forgetting these people and concentrating its attention only on new people.

6.50 p.m.

Dr. Reid: I should like to reply to this. With respect to item 2, Purchase of Equipment, the legend states:

“To enable orders to be placed for equipment to the value of \$880,000 to be delivered in 1970.”

This equipment is specially for development works. There will be included several vehicle, bulldozers, and things of that sort.

Mr. Ram Karran: I wish to draw the Hon. Minister’s attention to the fact that in the original Estimates the legend with respect to this subhead states:

“U. S. A. I. D. Loan.”

But, in the supplementary here we see:

“The purchase of the equipment will be financed from loan funds from the United Kingdom Government.”

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6.50 – 7.00 p.m.

[**Dr. Reid:** “What has that got to do with it?”]The Minister says it does not matter. May I be permitted to speak on the next item?

The Chairman: I think the Hon. Minister of Economic Development has to deal with item 5 at the end of the page. You did not book any other.

Mr. Ram Karran: I was a little late; I was outside.

The Chairman: We are already late.

Mr. Ram Karran: We agreed to go up to 7 o'clock and I came in to deal with it. It would not take a long time.

Mr. Jack: This amount of \$196,000 is to honour guarantees given by Government. Apart from this, it is a fact that the resettlement into the Interior is being promoted by means of co – operatives. It is for this reason that there will be a savings on the subhead since some of the money has been used to settle co – operatives.

With regard to the question of help to the Amerindians, I should like to assure this House that consideration is given to helping the Amerindians and that active steps have been taken. For instance at Aishalton, Amerindians will be producing 20,000 lbs. of peanuts this year as against something like 10,000 lbs. produced last year – an increase of 100 per cent. We are fully aware of the need for giving assistance to Amerindians and Members would be pleased to know that we sent four tractors into Amerindian districts with persons who will assist the Amerindians and train them to become tractor operators so that they can use the tractors for their own benefit.

The Chairman: Page 2. [*Pause*] Page 3. [*Pause*] Page 4.

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6.50 – 7.00 p.m.

Mr. Teekah: I should like to speak on item 18.

The Chairman: Proceed.

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

University of Guyana

Mr. Teekah: This Government proceeds with its work in very strange ways in that needs of the utmost importance are of little importance are well at the top.

The Chairman: We are dealing with the University of Guyana.

Mr. Teekah: First of all, under the subhead University of Guyana, we find that a sum of \$1,075,645 is being asked for:

“To provide for the completion of the University buildings at Turkeyen.”

Now this, of course, is far too inadequate because there is a great necessity for more buildings at the University. Many things are required at the University and, certainly, this amount of \$1,075,645 is too small. First of all, what about the hostel for students? Students really need a hostel. A fund has been launched to assist in the building of this hostel, but what is the position concerning other buildings to facilitate research, for example? There is no research work being done at the University.

What about the Faculty of Education here? The Government has said that it will build a new Teachers' Training College. Why not expand the buildings at Turkeyen a little more and expand the Faculty of Education to incorporate the Teachers' Training College so that they will

be on the same ..., rather than have two separate buildings for the Teachers' Training College?

What about the post – graduate studies? What about expanding them? Are we still contributing approximately \$1/2 million every year to the U. W. I. to assist seventy – five students in post – graduate studies when the same thing could be done here if the facilities were expanded at Turkeyen? This Government is putting a paltry amount here for the University of Guyana and it spends \$1/2 million on the U. W. I. to assist Guyanese students in post – graduate studies there. You can offer the same thing here, all you need to do is to take the same money and put it on the U. G. I wish the Minister who is going to reply would give some thought to this because there is no sense in just saying, “This is not right”, or “That is wrong”, because not the P. P. P. will benefit but all Guyanese will benefit and it will be a sterling contribution to higher education in this country.

Mr. Jack: We are in the first phase of the building of the University. I could not agree more with my friend that there is more to be done at the University of Guyana. All of us know this and at another time, another place, I will be prepared to indulge in a lengthy discussion on the point. It is really not germane to the subject before us.

The Chairman: Page 5.

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Mr. Ram Karran: I should like to speak on item 23.

The Chairman: Go ahead.

MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND RECONSTRUCTION

Housing Fund

Mr. Ram Karran: I should like to ask the Hon. Minister if he can tell us how many houses, flats and apartments are to be built and where they are to be built. They are already being built because we are told that \$100,000 has been advanced. It is not shown here how much will be spent on the demolition of houses at Black Bush Polder and Cane Grove.

[The Hon. Minister offered no reply.]

The Chairman: Hon. Members, it seems that we have concluded consideration of this Financial Paper. I shall now put the question.

Question put, and agreed to.

Assembly resumed.

Dr. Reid: I beg to report that the Committee of Supply has considered and approved of the proposals set out in Financial Paper No. 7 of 1969, and I now move that this Assembly do agree with the Committee in its Resolution.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion carried.

25.11.69

National Assembly

6.50 – 7.00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT AND PENDING BUSINESS

Mr. Bissember: I now move that the House do now adjourn to Thursday, 27th November, 1969, at 2 o'clock in the afternoon when it is hoped that items 2 and 3 on today's Order Paper will be considered.

Adjourned accordingly at 7 p.m.
