

Ministers (13)

- Cde. J. P. Chowritmootoo, J.P., M.P. (Absent)
Minister, Environment and Water Supply, in the
Ministry of Public Welfare
- Cde. U. E. Johnson, M.P.,
Minister of Co-operatives
- Cde. J. N. Maitland-Singh, M.P.,
Minister, Consumer Protection, in the
Ministry of Trade and Consumer Protection
- Cde. S. Prashad, M.P.,
Minister, Crops and Livestock,
in the Ministry of Agriculture
- Cde. Sallahuddin, M.P.,
Minister, Finance, in the Ministry of
Economic Planning and Finance
- Cde. R. E. Williams, M. P.,
Minister, Fisheries, in the Ministry
of Agriculture
- *Cde. C. A. Nascimento, M.P.,
Minister, Mechanical Equipment, in the
Ministry of Works and Transport
- *Cde. F.U.A. Campbell, M.P.,
Minister of Information
- *Cde. F.U.A. Carmicheal, M.P.,
Minister, Forestry, in the Ministry
of Agriculture
- *Cde. Y. V. Harewood-Benn, M.P., (Absent – on leave)
Minister of Public Service
- *Cde. H. Rashid, M.P.,
Minister, Office of the President
- *Cde. R. C. Van Sluytman, M.P.,
Minister, Drainage and Irrigation, in the
Ministry of Agriculture
- *Cde. R.A. Van West-Charles, M. P.,
Minister, Health, in the Ministry of Public Welfare

Ministers of State (3)

- Cde. M. Corrica, M.P.,
Minister of State for Culture, in the
Ministry of Education, Social Development
and Culture
- Cde. R.C. Fredericks, A.A., M.P.,
Minister of State for Youth and Sport,
in the Ministry of National Development
- *Cde. C.E. Wright, M.P.,
Minister of State for Construction, in the
Ministry of Works and Transport

Parliamentary Secretaries (3)

- Cde. A.W. Bend-Kirton-Holder, M.P.,
Parliamentary Secretary, Women's
Affairs and Housing
- Cde. P.A. Rayman, M.P.,
Parliamentary Secretary, Office of the Prime Minister
- *Cde. E. M. Bynoe, M.P.,
Parliamentary Secretary, Office of the Prime Minister

*Non-elected Member

Other Members (23)

Cde. D. A. N. Ainsworth, M.P.
Cde. M. Ally, M.P.
Cde. M. Armogan, M.P.
Cde. B. Beniprashad, M.P.
Cde. J.B. Caldeira, M.P.
Cde. A.A. Chin, M.P.
Cde. E. B. Davidson, M.P.
Cde. H. Doobay, M.P.
Cde. A.B. Felix, M.P.
Cde. E.H.A. Fowler, M.P.
Cde. P. Fredericks, M.P.
Cde. E.F. Gilbert, M.P.
Cde. J. Gill-Mingo, M.P.
Cde. A. McRae, M.P.
Cde. J.M. Munroe, J.P., M.P.
Cde. R.N. Primo, M.P.
Cde. C. G. Sharma, J. P., M. P.
Cde. H.L.B. Singh, M.P. (Absent- on leave)
Cde. S.H Sukhu, M.S., M.P.
Cde. B. Tiwari, M.P.
Cde. C. Vandenburg, M.P.
Cde. H.B. Walcott, J.P., M.P.
Government Chief Whip

Members from the National Congress of Local Democratic Organs (2)

Cde. R. Bishop, M.S., M.P.
Cde. B. Latchminarayan, M.P.

Members from the Regional Democratic Councils (10)

Cde. K.N. Jones, M.P. (Region No. 1 – Barima/Waini)
Cde. K.V. Jairam, M.P. (Region No. 2 – Pomeroon/Supenaam)
Cde. C.A. Singh, M.P. (Region No. 3 – Essequibo Islands/West Demerara)
Cde. W. Bipat, M.P. (Region No. 4 – Demerara/Mahaica)
Cde. H.I. London, M.S., M.P. (Region No. 5 – Mahaica/Berbice)
Cde. I. Chowritmootoo, M.P. (Region No. 6 – East Berbice/Corentyne)
Cde. N.R. Charles, M.P. (Region No. 7 – Cuyuni/Mazaruni)
Cde. D. Abraham, M.P. (Region No. 8 – Potaro/Siparuni)
Cde. A. Dorricks, M.P. (Region No. 9 – Upper Takutu/Upper Essequibo) (Absent)
Cde. D. Hinds, M.P. (Region No. 10 – Upper Demerara/Berbice)

Members of the Minority (12)

(i) People’s Progressive Party (10)

Minority Leader (1)

Cde. Dr. C. Jagan, M.P., (Absent – on leave)
Minority Leader

Deputy Speaker (1)

Cde. Ram Karran, M.P.,
Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly

Other Members (8)

Cde. J. Jagan, M.P.

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud, J.P., M.P.

Minority Chief Whip

Cde. N. Persaud, M.P.

Cde. C.C. Collymore, M.P.

Cde. S. F. Mohamed, M.P.

Cde. I. Basir, M.P.

Cde. C.C. Belgrave, M.P.

Cde. Dalchand, J.P., M.P.

(ii) United Force (2)

Mr. M. F. Singh, J.P., M.P.

(Absent – on leave)

Mr. M. A. Abraham, M.P.

OFFICERS

Clerk of the National Assembly – Cde. F. A. Narain, A.A.

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

PRAYERS

1981-03-04

2:00 – 2:10 p.m.

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

2 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER

Leave to Members

The Speaker: Leave has been granted to Cde. Harewood-Benn up to the end of this week and to Cde. H. L.B. Singh for today's Sitting.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

MOTION

APPROVAL OF ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURE FOR 1981

Assembly resolved itself into Committee of Supply and resumed consideration of the Estimates of Expenditure for 1981.

Assembly in Committee of Supply.

The Chairman: Pages 1 to 4.

HEAD 1 – OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT AND CABINET

Question proposed that the sum of \$2,596,000 for Head 1, Office of the President and Cabinet, stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: The practice is that any member who wants to speak on pages 1 to 4 will stand and indicate what items he wishes to speak on so that I will know how to proceed.

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud: Cde. Chairman, I wish to speak on item (44), page 2. I want to enquire about the function of this particular office of Agricultural Adviser to the President. I note the word "Adviser" bearing in mind that we have Ministers dealing with various sectors of Agriculture. One would expect, looking at an Estimate, that the Ministers who are responsible for the various subject matters under the particular Head, that is, dealing with Agriculture, would be the ones preparing programmes and advising Cabinet and Cabinet would have been acting on the advice of Ministers who would have been involved in the day-to-day function of the agricultural sector.

On this page I see we have another agricultural Adviser, not a Minister – he is an Adviser – and the possibility is you can have delays, red tape, confrontation. I think it is only fitting that we ask for an explanation because the President presides, under the Constitution, over the Cabinet, so will he accept the advice of the Ministers or will he accept that advice of the Adviser in his executive office?

The Prime Minister (Cde. Reid): Cde. Chairman, I am happy that my friend has raised that question because it will help us to recognise and appreciate the changes that are taking place in this country. An Executive President, of course, is completely different from a titular President. The Executive President is not one who will be resting in any office or who will be making journeys outside of the country here, there and everywhere. The Executive President in his functional capacity must be able to move around in this country, make visits from place to place and sometime he would give on-the-spot guidance.

In view of that, he will need to enter industries, enterprises, agricultural undertakings and so on. He will need a certain amount of knowledge so that he does not operate in any darkness. To penetrate some of the darkness he must have people close to him who can brief him properly so that whenever he appears on the scene and has in-depth discussions, he will have a very knowledgeable person who will be able to brief him properly and intelligently. In this case he has an Agricultural Adviser. Agriculture is so extensive and varied that unless he has an adviser he would not be able to have this kind of knowledge. As a matter of fact, the Executive President is to have a great amount of knowledge and if he is to be thus provided and facilitated he will need many more than one person – many, many more, so that whatever the topic is, he will be able to discuss it intelligently and draw out from people answers that are truthful and correct. If you go in the darkness of ignorance, then there will be no improvement in the development of this country of ours and thus we have Agricultural Advisers to the Executive President, who will advise us, outside of the Ministers who will have a lot of work to ensure that people have the political will in the areas to do what has to be done.

The Chairman: I will now put the Head with these corrections:

<u>Page</u>	<u>Column</u>	
1	1981 Estimates	Reduction of amount of \$15,760 shown against item 3 to read \$15,750.
	Subhead No.	Between items 8 and 9, insertion of an item

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8(a) and in the next column insertion of Deputy Director of Protocol and House hold A36. Under column 1981, insertion of amount of \$10 with explanation in the appropriate column reading 8(a) New Office created. Under establishment 1981 Estimates, insertion of the number 1 and making the consequential changes in the totals.

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2:10 – 2:20 p.m.

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

2:10 p.m.

Head 1, Office of the President and Cabinet - \$2,596,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 5.

HEAD 2 – GUYANA DEFENCE FORCE

Question proposed that the sum of \$51,000,000 for Head 2, Guyana Defence Force, stand part of the Estimates.

Cde. Collymore: Sub-head 1 – Total Personal Emoluments, and Sub-head 2, other Expenditure. Cde. Chairman, I wish to reinforce the argument which I made in this National Assembly during the general debate where I said that we have an army which is too large. Indeed, the army is tremendously oversized and I would like to imitate to the Prime Minister that there should be austerity in the armed forces. When we note how much the army cost in 1970, just 11 years away, and we compare it with what it is going to cost this year, we see a tremendous disparity, and I would like on behalf of my party on his side of the Assembly to ask the Prime Minister if he could say what has transpired in Guyana over the intervening years to warrant such a tremendous outlay of State funds to the detriment of other sectors of the Budget. For instance, according to my statistics on the Estimates, I see the State of Guyana, \$7.1 million in 1970 for the army. Now the State of Guyana is going to spend \$109.5 million for the army. This is ridiculous.

The Chairman: I am dealing with \$51 million at the moment. Let us deal with this \$51 million.

Cde. Collymore: Cde. Chairman; we are asking the Prime Minister to say what has transpired to warrant such a huge outlay in funds. We note, also, that when we compare --

The Chairman: Cde. Collymore, I am speaking so that we will get this thing very clear. I am dealing with Head 2, Guyana Defence Force, Sub-head 1, Total Personal Emoluments and Sub-head 2, other Expenditure. Please let us keep it to that.

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Cde. Collymore: Cde. Chairman, I crave your indulgence because I want to prove a point. I was saying that the expenses are too large and I am making comparisons which are quite relevant. I am sorry if I seem to be irrelevant, but I am not in reality.

The Chairman: I don't want to have a lot of argument. I am to decide if it is irrelevant. You may not think so. If I say it is irrelevant then it becomes irrelevant.

Cde. Collymore: I know that.

The Chairman: Well, we are not bringing that into issue now.

Cde. Collymore: Cde. Chairman, last year the army expended \$84.4 million and we note that there has been an increase of \$25.1 million for this year. These things are all interrelated. I will not be speaking about it again. I just want to make a "once for all" intervention now and then I will sit down. I am therefore, on behalf of my party, calling for substantial cuts in the personal Emoluments and in the Other Charges. We are asking the Government members on the opposite side to see if it is not possible to cut the army by 50 percent in personnel and in guns and ammunition. Naturally, I said before that we have peace on our frontiers and on previous occasions I rose in this Honourable Assembly to point out that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is our first line of defence and if we have a properly functioning Ministry of Foreign Affairs we will not have hostilities on our frontiers. So we don't need a bloated military apparatus.

Cde. Chairman, the Ministers on the opposite side know that many of the persons in the army are youths and they are there primarily because they want jobs, not because they want to shoot people or because they want to be trigger-happy gunmen unleashed on the population. We are therefore calling for this substantial austerity to be made in the armed forces.

Cde. Chairman, we also would like to point out that where the personnel of the army are concerned, they are being misused because they are being used to seize ballot boxes and such dirty work. We know for all these years that the army personnel were used to clean up the city streets. We are not saying the city streets must not be cleaned. They must be cleaned, but we note that when the Government makes use of the armed forces, it deprives legitimate municipal workers of jobs and earnings. When you deploy the army to clean city streets, you are not employing workers of the City Council on overtime or even exchanging the employment facilities and opportunities for municipal

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workers which mean that the army has been used to deprive legitimate workers of earnings. We are against this kind of thing. When the youths in the army need jobs, the Government can deploy some of these to other areas to create employment and use them there.

We also wish to warn the Members of the Government that there had been a dress rehearsal in 1973 when the army was deployed during the elections. There was the same comprehensive dress rehearsal in 1978 when the army was again deployed for the referendum and there was a total and absolute dress rehearsal on the 15th December, 1980, when the army was in full control of this country. They are obviously creating a noose for themselves. They are training the army to take power and we predict from this side of the Assembly that if they do not watch themselves carefully, one of those days that regime over there will be overthrown by a coup d' etat.

Cde. Chairman, we wish also to ask the Minister responsible if he is satisfied with the way fatalities occur in the defence forces. We have not been at war but yet many of the soldiers are dying. Almost every week you see in the papers some soldier is killed or set of soldiers are killed. How are they killed? In accidents on the roads through reckless and drunken driving. It has been proved. And they kill other innocent people. I am calling on the Minister to take the necessary measures to see that this kind of driving stops because other motorist at large are complaining about the drivers of military vehicles – reckless – and they are often drunk.

Next you have on the fatalities list, domestic murders. They are involved in love triangles and they are shot. Then you have accidental and deliberate shooting of each other.

The Chairman: I am not allowing these things to go on further. You are entitled to ask questions about employment as far as emoluments are concerned and, secondly, other expenditure.

Cde. Collymore: I am talking about personal emoluments.

The Chairman: You are not talking about personal emoluments. You are talking about triangle deaths. What have they got to do with it?

Cde. Collymore: I am speaking about the fatalities suffered by the armed forces.

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The Chairman: What has that got to do with the emoluments, the fatalities suffered by them? Really tell me what that has to do with the payment of salary?

Cde. Collymore: Cde. Chairman, it seems as though I am not being allowed to continue.

The Chairman: Cde. Prime Minister, please answer, as he is not allowed to continue, if you wish to answer.

The Prime Minister: Thank you, Cde. Chairman, I dearly wish to answer. I am in a very good mood this afternoon and I would like to answer all the questions raised.

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2:20 p.m.

[The Prime Minister continues]

The first observation that the army is too large manifests to all of us how much my good friend is getting out of his depth. It is always said a little knowledge is a dangerous thing and it is surprising to find that the comrade on the other side has come to a conclusion that our small army here is too large for us to cut off 50 percent not only in strength of men but also in their equipment. Cde. Chairman, we on this side would have none of that. We have got the answer to that straight forward question. There will be none of that. [Interruption]

Cde. Ram Karran (The Deputy Speaker): You are preventing the Hon. Member from asking his question. You apply the guillotine and the Hon. Minister gets up and talks nonsense.

The Chairman: You cannot say that and I won't listen to you for the balance of the day. Can't you see the Prime Minister is talking? You cannot say the Prime Minister is talking nonsense.

Cde. Ram Karran: What else is he talking?

The Chairman: That is your opinion.

Cde. Ram Karran: What is your opinion? You have no opinion in this Assembly. If you want to express your opinion, go over there. Don't sit there and express an opinion.

The Chairman: Cde. Prime Minister, please answer.

The Prime Minister: We would have none of that as far as cutting the strength of the army by 50 percent and reducing its equipment by 50 percent because the Government has a responsibility to the people of this country and we are satisfied that with the army we have we are endeavouring to carry out that responsibility, a mandate given to the People's National Congress by the majority of people in this country. If we should go back to the polls tomorrow or next year or five years hence, people of this country would give us an even larger mandate.

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I am in sympathy with my friend Cde. Ram Karran but he can go on clawing at his hair, destroying himself with his emotions and his fretfulness, but that does not take us any place at all. We will have an army and we on this side will decide what size of the army should be and how well that army should be equipped. I agree that the Foreign Affairs Ministry is our first line of defence and it has been working in that direction all through the years, but in the practical and real world in which we live, one does not depend absolutely on just one line of defence. We must have all sorts and all kinds of defences and there is a place, and a proper place, a relevant place for the army that we have in this country.

Cde. Speaker, sometimes when you listen to those who have described their party as a Communist party, you wonder if they survey some of the happenings in some of those socialist countries. The army that we have is a people's army. In many of the socialist countries you will find like armies, where you do not have a set of men of elite behaviour but men who are committed to helping the development of this country in all kinds of ways and whenever there is the occasion for some national task of the moment, then this army will be properly deployed to assist, whether it is cleaning up the city or cleaning up our countryside or farming. Anything, any work in the country, any kind of work, the army, properly deployed, will be requested to carry out and to demonstrate to people that if you are highly disciplined and you release your energies intelligently have got the necessary strength, health and training, then, much work can be accomplished.

I am satisfied and I am very pleased to congratulate the People's Army for the amount of extra military work that the army has been doing in this country all through the years. Let us think of the mercy flights that the army has been engaged in. How many lives the army has saved because of its promptness in carrying out those mercy flights? The army has been engaged in construction of schools, transportation for schools. Agriculture alone has brought to the army in revenue some \$1.4 million. The Air Command itself has earned by extra military work some \$1.7 million. Indeed we are proud of the kind of army we have and when it comes to accidents, and deaths, and murders, alleged murders, and so on, it has to be recognised that when you are in the army, you are very visible. The men are in uniform so that whatever they do in this country is easily known. I do not think that the army's accident rate in this country is above the accident rate of any other group of people engaged in driving and managing vehicles.

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I think, Cde. Chairman, I have dealt with the relevant matters raised by Comrades in the Minority Party.

Head 2, Guyana Defence Force - \$1,000,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 6

HEAD 3 – MINISTRY OF PUBLIC CORPORATIONS

Question proposed that the sum of \$18,160 for Head 3, Ministry of Public Corporations, stand part of the Estimates.

Head 3, Ministry of Public Corporations - \$18,600 – agreed to and ordered to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 7

DIVISION 1 – PRESIDENT

Question proposed that the sum of \$36,000,000 for Division 1 – President, stand part of the Estimates.

Cde. Collymore: Unavoidably, I rise again, Cde. Chairman. I note that the National Service – I am speaking on Sub-heads 1, 2, 3, 4, - is going to get \$30 million and elsewhere I note it is going to get another \$19 million. I would like to ask the Minister responsible if he can say what these enormous sums are going to be expanded on. We note that National Service is an integral part of the Guyana Defence Force; it is part of the military super-apparatus. We note that the National Service is charged with growing certain crops, particularly cotton. I would like to ask the Minister if he can say what proportion of this sum is going to be spent on cotton cultivation.

2:30 p.m.

We note that since National Service has been planting cotton – and there was much hope that it would plant enough cotton to feed the textile mill, the country has been importing cotton from Texas, U.S.A. We would like to have the assurance that these

sums are going to be spent to grow cotton. If it is not classified information, what part will be spent on guns, rockets and tanks.

The Prime Minister: Cde. Chairman, no part of the National Service allocation will be spent on rockets and tanks. National Service is more of a training institution for our young people. We have come through a colonial tutelage where many of our people were despised and never had an opportunity. If we believe in the development of people, then we must have some new institutions to help to correct some of the mistakes of the past and so, happily for us, the President of this nation has given thought to the idea that if we can bring hundreds of our young people to live and dwell together, young people who never had a chance, then it would have given us the opportunity to rehabilitate some of our people and to prevent some from having absolutely nothing useful to do because of lack of training. Not that they are dull, not that they are stupid, not that they are good for nothing, but the mere fact that people did not have the proper environment for development, that development dodges them, for man himself is a product of his environment. The National Service is providing the kind of environment, the kind of climate, that will help people to enjoy and benefit from total development and thus, from year to year, we recruit our young people and I always feel a sense of joy when I see the people of the National Service, when I hear the people of the National Service, and when I think of the accomplishments and achievements of the National Service.

Sometimes, as I think about them, I wonder to my self “But for the National Service, what would have happened to so many of our young people during, probably, the best period of their lives?”

The National Service is there to help to train our people, for if development is really to take place we need trained hands and trained minds. For instance, in our country of today, the same Guyana where some people are looking for work and finding none, we recognise that there are still hundreds of vacancies but because of the type of tutelage we have had in the past we find that we have people looking for work and cannot fill those, sometimes hundreds, sometimes thousands of vacancies.

We of the People’s National Congress cannot sit and allow that to continue indefinitely and so this new institution, National Service, is there as an institution to correct some of the evils of the past and to ensure that we prevent some of those evils from repeating themselves in this age and time. The National Service in 1980 alone recruited some 1500 young people, boys and girls. They have gone into several activities, useful activities. For instance, they have learnt how to mine for gold and

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during 1980 they have been able to produce out of their own labour, releasing their own energies, over 230 ounces of good Guyana gold. [Applause] The target for 1981 is 500 ounces. Following the socialist principle, whatever you do now, you must do better tomorrow, they don't stay with 230 ounces; they have moved on to a target of 500 ounces.

We heard about cotton production. No new crop takes readily. Cotton was grown in this country historically and when our British masters decided – politicians in the United Kingdom decided – that no more cotton was to be grown here, that crop ceased to be and so the skill and art of growing cotton was lost. Through the leadership of the People's National Congress, cotton growing has commenced again, but it takes time for people to learn the skill and art of any new thing.

However, the National Service has been able to produce some 1400 bales of cotton. They have revived the growing of cotton and once again we see cotton being grown in this country. In the years past that cotton would have been exported to Manchester or Liverpool, places that had textile mills. Cotton products would have been exported from those countries to us at exorbitant prices, exploitative prices, but because of the philosophy and the policy of the People's National Congress, it is clear to all that our cotton is not grown for export of raw cotton. Our cotton is manufactured in this country.

Not too far from here there is a textile mill with our own people using their own minds and their own hands producing cloth from cotton grown in Guyana for the first time in the history of this country. [Applause] All through the long years of British tutelage nothing like that ever happened here. You can go now to the textile mill.

So much is our concern for people, particularly growing people, that children today, in many schools, are wearing uniforms made from cloth from Guyana's own cotton and Guyana's own textile mill. These are the facts of our life and living today and it is hard to understand how Guyanese would want to stand up and criticise this destructively. We accept criticism, but in this stage criticism should be constructive especially when we are dealing with our young people so that we will be able to inspire them to do more and more and make this country better and better. Of the 1400 bales, already they have sent to the textile mill 683. They are waiting on the textile mill to ask for more.

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I do not know about the importation of cotton. I will have to find out. Sometimes when we are talking here other things are happening quietly. You can never tell. I am glad for the information. Certainly I will have to check.

If everybody should know everything, it would be a very unhappy world. All of you know that even the person who is raising the question. If everybody were to know everything, some people wouldn't sleep at home. It would be a very unhappy place.

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2:40 p.m.

Cde. Chairman, they grow also black-eye, lentils – very useful high protein. They have grown some 2,000 acres and they have produced some half a million pounds of black-eye. Think of it, young people. We should now be admiring the young people instead of being so critical of them. They have even gone to the length of producing stone – heavy stone – which only strong, matured people used to work on. Our young people are engaged in the production of stone and in the year 1980 they produced some 122,000 tons of stone, and for 1981 they have targeted themselves to produce 175,000 tons. From light cotton to heavy stone, they are producing all the things intervening in our natural resources so that we can convert those natural resources into wealth. Praise to the National Service.

The Chairman: I will now put the Division with the corrections:

<u>Page</u>	<u>Column</u>	
7	Code No.	Against sub-heads 1, 2 and 3, changing of code numbers to read 101, 001, 101, 002 and 101, 003, respectively. Against sub-head 4, insertion of code number 101, 004.
	Other Finance	Against sub-head 4, changing of amount of \$1,500,000 to read \$1,000,000 and total to read \$36,000,000.

Division 1, President - \$36,000,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 19.

HEAD 10 – PUBLIC AND POLICE SERVICE COMMISSIONS

Question proposed that the sum of \$663,900 for Head 10, Public and Police Service Commissions, stand part of the Estimates.

Head 10, Public and Police Service Commissions - \$663,900 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 23 to 25.

HEAD 13 – OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER

Question proposed that the sum of \$1,550,000 for Head 13, Office of the Prime Minister, stand part of the Estimates.

Head 13, Office of the Prime Minister - \$1,550,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 26.

DIVISION V – PRIME MINISTER

Question proposed that the sum of \$2,100,000 for Division V, Prime Minister, stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: I will now put the Division with the corrections:

<u>Page</u>	<u>Column</u>	
26	Code No.	Against sub-head 5, insertion of code number 105, 017.
	Total	Deletion of figures against sub-heads 1, 2 and 3 and insertion of amount of \$400,000 against sub-head 5.
	Other Finance	Deletion of figures against sub-heads 1, 2 and 3 and changing of amount of \$1,300,000 against sub-head 4 to read \$1,700,000. Insertion of amount of \$400,000 against subhead 5 and changing of total to read \$2,100,000.

Division V, Prime Minister - \$2,100,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 29 and 30.

HEAD 15 – PUBLIC SERVICE MINISTRY

Question proposed that the sum of \$2,618,600 for Head 15, Public Service Ministry, stand part of the Estimates.

Head 15 – Public Service Ministry - \$2,618,600 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 31.

DIVISION VII – PUBLIC SERVICE MINISTRY

Question proposed that the sum of \$17,725,000 for Division VII, Public Service Ministry, stand part of the Estimates.

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud: Sub-head 1, Scholarships and Training Courses – Foreign. Cde. Chairman, we have been having a literal scandal in this country and that scandal has now entered the corridors of the courts where we find that the Government has been selecting people for scholarships for training and they have been putting on all kinds of restrictions before people can get scholarships. I recall very vividly in this Assembly the care that was taken and what had to be done, and patriotism, and repeating pledges, and what have you, and one of the criteria for selection was National Service, the institution which was praised only a few moments ago by the Prime Minister. Despite all those criteria fixed, I don't know if they were observed, it is clear that a great number of people who have been chosen for scholarships have absconded, according to publications and reports, from time to time, and indeed the fact that many are being taken to court supports me.

I want to ask, (a), is it that the Government will reduce the number of scholarships because of its past bitter experience and that is reflected in the provision in the Estimates, because in 1980 it was \$1.7 million and that sum stands reduced to \$937,000, substantial reduction.

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Nobody can argue in this Assembly that we have the skills required for development and if we were to ask the normal questions that we have posed from time to time, which we have omitted to ask on this occasion, whether all those technical fields in all the Ministries have been filled and how many vacancies exist, then we will find clear from those enquires, if the answers were forthcoming, about the kind of training that has to take place in this country and, indeed, the requirement of skilled personnel to push the development process in Guyana.

Mr. Chairman, by reducing the Estimates and probably pursuing a programme of discontinuance of training is not the answer. There can be no doubt that there will be a set-back and we must be told in this Assembly in which Ministries and, further, in what areas those people have been trained, those who went on scholarships and have chosen not to come back, and this undoubtedly must reflect on the whole situation in Guyana. Why are those fresh ones who have been sent, who were given an opportunity to be trained, not coming back? Those who are here and are working are running away. Something is radically wrong with this country and I would like to hear from the lips of the Prime Minister what is responsible for what is happening.

The Chairman: Cde. Prime Minister.

2:50 p.m.

The Prime Minister: Cde. Chairman, I am very happy to respond to my good friend. Let me begin with his first observation about restriction, pledges and serving some time in National Service. I do not think he is very serious about that because we need to make some pledge of returning and whatever we can do to ensure that we do that part of work well, before they go, has to be done because of our own experience, and I do not think he would want to agree that when the tax payers spend money on training people that they should be left to do what they like whether they want to return or not and nothing is done. I know they would have criticised if nothing was done so I do not think he is very serious about that.

As far as National Service is concerned, I am sometimes beaten to hear all the quarrel about giving some time in National Service, because this is a common activity in so many parts of the world, that young people should give some National Service and one of the best times sometimes to use that service is during college life, university life, and or just pre-university life. For me, and I think for our side, we see no harm in that and

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even though as young people we sometimes resisted. When we are young, we resist things – I know myself when I was at college some of the things I resisted. Because people can get away with it as a young person, they use it and I believe the young people are trying the same thing.

I remember when I was at Teachers College, we didn't want a certain kind of meal, and we did a kind of sit in on the meal, and the Principal was so confused and worried while we were sneakingly laughing at him all the time. I remember when I went to Tuskegee, we had to march to chapel and we resisted the order so much that we didn't march. But in those countries it is a normal practice for their nationals to go through National Service. Some disciplinary training is so useful. Sometimes a little military training is so useful, not to teach you how to shoot people but to teach you physical coordination, quick thinking, all sorts of advantages you have in the programme and we who are helping the development of this country must not always yield softly to the demands of those who are to be trained.

There are some students who are going through University training now. Do you know they would like at the University to mark their own papers, to grade themselves. If those things are allowed, we would not have people with skills, so National Service is important. In the United States, I think they call it Cadet Corps, and I know that some of my friends who didn't want to be involved had to do it. As a matter of fact, there wasn't anybody to whom they could even complain.

Now to absconding. That is a different matter. Some students do abscond and we are very serious about that. That is why we are hardening the pledges and the constraints but that is tied up with the reduction of the allocation. I don't think that is what you are really interested in from all that you have said. What you are interested in is the number of people trained, the allocation does not matter. Because of this absconding and because of our closer relationship with more and more socialist countries where education is free, and we being in the transition toward the socialist ideal, find it useful to have cooperation with other socialist countries and so more and more of our students are being trained in Socialist countries. We have some constraints in that because of the language but they even learn the language quickly, which is good for us as well, and so more and more students are being trained in Socialist countries.

For instance, a few years ago, we used to get 43 scholarships from the U.K. Last year the U.K. Government reduced the number to three and we have told them that since

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circumstances are so bad with them that we could not accept the three. We did not take any at all, but we sent many students to Cuba, G.D.R., Romania, Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union. Those numbers are increasing all the time, so I want my friend to rest assured that we are not thinking of reducing the numbers, we are thinking of increasing the numbers. As a matter of fact, in a week or two a team of our trainers will leave to visit Socialist countries to make further arrangements for an increase in the number of people that we can train, because training in fact is the foundation of our development and we cannot play that cheap. We cannot cheat training or else the future will catch up with us.

What is of interest is that when they are trained in Socialist countries, we tend to get 100 percent back, and that is a good sign. When they go to some of the other countries- we still send to some of the other counties, because Socialist countries cannot fulfil all our needs. If they could have given us all of our needs and all the skills and the disciplines we need, probably, we would not send elsewhere but we still have to send to other countries and in those countries because of what they believe, because of the environment, the students sometimes set new values. Consequently, notwithstanding what undertaking some of them give here when they get to those countries the temptation is so great that sometimes I myself sympathise with them, how people go after them, how people tend to let them believe they are so bright, so clever, that they are too good even to come back. They do not say that only with words. They back that up with something that is very attractive – higher and higher pay. Indeed, the temptation is very great for them and we have to do all we can to reduce that absconding. Some of them decide in the final analysis they would repay, but for us that is not real compensation because we have lost time. It takes a long time to train a physician, an engineer, six or seven years, and even when they agree to repay, the country is not properly compensated. I hope that with these new areas of development we will do better and better.

I do not agree that there is discrimination. When young people go for interviews and they do not succeed, they have all sorts of complaints and we must reflect on how we used to behave, some of us who have grown older like myself. We are always tempted to believe that we were not properly treated when we were talking to our friends, but in our hearts and minds we were sometimes convinced that we were not worthy to be selected. But after the interview we would not tell people that.

Hence, I don't take that very seriously but, since it is raised, I hope that those of the Ministry who are listening, who have to do the day-to-day work, will take note of that

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because we do not believe in discrimination as far as the execution and management of the business of this country is concerned.

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I have some figures here just for interest: In 1979 we trained a total of 276; in 1980 it went to 321 and for 1981 the figures are not yet fully totalled but there is every indication that we will have many more than 321. [Applause]

The Chairman: I will now put the Division with the corrections:

<u>Page</u>	<u>Column</u>	
31	Code No.	Against sub-head 5, changing of code number to read 122,007 instead of 122,077.

Division VII – Public Service Ministry - \$17,725,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 112 and 124.

HEAD 46 – MINISTRY OF WORKS

Question proposed that the sum of \$18,131,400 for Head 46, Ministry of Works, stand part of the Estimates.

Cde. Ram Karran: I would like to observe – and I think that Your Honour might have noticed it yourself – that the legend written alongside this Head 46 does not seem to make any sense at all. It says here in the Note: “All offices herein transferred from Head 46A.”

The Chairman: What page are you speaking from?

Cde. Ram Karran: I am talking about the legend at the top of folio 113 on the right hand side. It says here “All offices herein transferred from Head 46A” but when you look at 46A, page 125, you see in the Estimates for 1978 to 1980 that the figures are quite different from those in the Estimates for 1981. One or two are the same but there are considerable amendments in the new Estimates for 1981 which to my mind – and I

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am sure you will agree with me – require some explanation as to why the items have varied so considerably.

The Chairman: Cde. Ram Karran, we are dealing with both Heads at the same time.

Cde. Ram Karran: I am only saying that I would like to see because one is transferred from 46A to 46 but if you compare them -- I want to ask why is it that for 1980, sub-head 1 (2), Principal Assistant Secretary the sum of \$24,450 is shown in 1981. The same sub-head in 46A shows some difference and I am saying that in normal practice some explanation would be given for members to be able to follow precisely what is being done. Perhaps, after looking at it, Your Honour, you might wish to ask the appropriate Minister to look at it and see if we can get some information.

The Chairman: Cde. Nascimento.

The Minister, Mechanical Equipment, in the Ministry of Works and Transport (Cde. Nascimento): Cde. Chairman, I am afraid that it is going to be necessary on this occasion for the Minority Party to do a considerable amount of homework. It would appear that they have not done it. That fact is, as has been explained in the Budget Speech, that we have transferred a considerable amount of monetary control to the regions. What in fact has happened is that the Ministry of Works and Transport is one of those Ministries in which there has been a substantial devolution of authority to the regions and therefore it is true that one cannot take Head by Head on this occasion and match them with the 1980 Estimates in so far as current expenditure is concerned.

There has, of course, been a re-organisation of the Ministry of Works and Transport. To give one example to Cde. Ram Karran, the Road Construction Division has been amalgamated, as I said in my substantive Budget Speech, with the Hinterland Road Construction Company. Therefore, you will find that all the sub-heads that came under that are no longer there to be prepared because they now belong to the company and all of the staff that were originally employed under emoluments are no longer to be found there.

You will notice, for instance, that there is a legend with respect to the common services Division which says that those emoluments only apply, I believe, up to the fifth month. The reason for that is that security duties throughout the Ministries are going to

be taken over by the National Guard and therefore it is difficult to make direct comparison there also.

The substantial reason for this difficulty in comparing the two is this devolution of authority and therefore personnel and responsibilities into the region. If the Minority Party are anxious to do a Head by Head comparison, I am afraid they will not be able merely to look at Head 46 and 46A; they will also have to look under the various regional heads and they will have to do a fair amount of mathematics. I am sorry that I cannot offer any more solicitude to Cde. Ram Karran in this respect.

Cde. Ram Karran: May I make the observation that while the Hon. Minister did say in the general debate that these things had taken place, it is removing from Parliament a responsibility which Parliament carries and it is not only that the Members on this side of the Assembly wish to compare, but I think that everyone wishes to compare and the Hon. Minister cannot withdraw, in my view, from the responsibility of the entire community, including members on this side, an opportunity to compare what was spent last year on a certain sub-head and what is to be spent this year. Actually this is not the first time that such a procedure has been adopted, the introduction of a new Ministry or a new arrangement. For instance, when the Post Office was removed from the direct Head and made into a public corporation, a similar exercise had to be done but the Estimates had to be prepared in a way to satisfy the requirements of the Standing Orders of Parliament and the Public Accounts Committee. I am sure that the Hon. Minister should not be allowed to put the blame on the Members on this side and ask them to do research. Parliament must be shown and that is why we have under every Head any variation, any change, if more money is spent. Why is it not done in this case? For instance, if they had done their work, folio 112, Head 46, nothing prevented them from putting into the columns for 1980 whatever was spent under those sub-heads. The other sub-heads where no money is going to be required, a note could be put that they can be found under Head so and so.

I am afraid that unless some explanation is given on all these items, the correct thing to do – I don't know whether Your Honour will decide that the Estimates must be re-arranged in a proper manner.

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The Chairman: Cde. Nascimento.

Cde. Nascimento: Cde. Chairman, I am always very happy to respond to Cde. Ram Karran even when he indulges in ad hominem arguments as I understand he did yesterday. The fact is that the blame is not being apportioned. The fact is that one cannot make direct comparisons because a great number of personnel have been transferred to do different duties in the regions and, therefore, the heads are not directly comparable. It is not that we are withdrawing the opportunity for comparison. It is that there has been a major reorganisation which does not allow direct comparisons. It has been said in the Budget Speech, but if you feel that there should be a legend saying that “owing to reorganisation all officers herein transferred from Head 46A have been transferred to a number of other heads” that would not in fact make sense because they haven’t all been transferred. There has been a total reorganisation.

The Chairman: What Cde. Ram Karran is saying is that each individual items or sub-head should have had some note opposite it to state that it has been transferred elsewhere or what is the exact position. That is what he is querying.

Cde. Nascimento: With due respect, Cde. Chairman, that would not be possible.

The Chairman: I am not saying whether it is possible or not. I am saying that is what he is asking.

Cde. Nascimento: I understand what he is asking, but if he is asking that which it is impossible to answer, then one cannot give an answer. The point I would like to make, however, is that it is not true that the opportunity for either the Assembly or the public to make comparisons has been withdrawn. What I am saying is that because the reorganisation has taken place this year and a substantial amount of authority which was in the centre has now been placed into the regions and there has been a devolution of personnel, it will require more homework on the part of the Minority parties because they would have to look at the Estimates in terms of the regions as well as the centre and I really do not think there is anything I can add.

Head 46, Ministry of Works - \$18,131,400 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

HEAD 46A – MINISTRY OF WORKS

The Chairman: There is nothing to vote on pages 125 to 135. Page 136.

DIVISION XXIV – MINISTRY OF WORKS

Question proposed that the sum of \$35,469,000 for Division XXIV, Ministry of Works, stand part of the Estimates.

Cde. Ram Karran: Sub-head 1 – Demerara Harbour Bridge. Cde. Chairman, I notice that nearly \$3 million is required to provide for the purchase of miscellaneous equipment for the Demerara Bridge, a United Kingdom Government loan. Will the Hon. Minister indicate what is the position with this bridge? We have been spending ever since 1978 the sums shown in the Estimates. Is this for maintenance? Is it for rehabilitation or is it that we are adding something to the bridge? Can we have an idea as to whether this type of expenditure will continue over the years? The Hon. Minister told us during the general debate that the Government in the past has been spending money for equipment without due care and attention and in certain instances we had been over capitalising in equipment. If that is so, I would think that the Minister ought to have indicated in the Estimates what are these items of equipment and what the materials are separately for us to be able to have an idea of this \$7 million.

Sub-head 2 – East Bank Berbice Road. The Minister told us, too, in the general debate that there is a lot of equipment that is going to be rehabilitated. If that is so, then some of the equipment available in the country that needs rehabilitation might well be rehabilitated for the construction of the East Bank Berbice Road which I understand is going to be undertaken during this year.

Sub-head 3 – East Bank Demerara Roads. I had indicated sub-head 3, but there is no money alongside it, because I wanted to know what is the position with the East Demerara roads?

Sub-head 11 – Institution Building. Then I move to sub-head 11 where \$8 million is required for the construction of Highway laboratory, repair of mechanical equipment and the training of technicians. Once again I wish to protest that when these things are jumbled like that, then the Government gets away with murder and accuses the opposite Benches here of not doing their homework. One expects that if we are to examine these

Estimates properly, that the Hon. Minister will say what they are. It is no use giving us an omnibus sentence like that leaving us to imagine what is going to be done. There was a laboratory in the Ministry of Works workshop some time ago. What has happened to that laboratory? What has happened to the equipment there? It was a materials laboratory, I think. Are we building something else? Can we have a picture of what sort of laboratory the Government wants, where are they going to put it and whether they have personnel and the other ancillaries that go with laboratories?

Sub-head 12 – Upper Demerara Forestry Project Road. I think that that is what we have read so much about in the newspapers and which was dealt with in the Assembly. The Hon. Minister is asking for \$5 million for that road, “To conclude construction works on the Forestry project access road, C.D.B. loan.” What I also want to know, sir, with respect to this is whether this is all the expenditure required for the completion of the project. I think this is the Mabura Hill the Hon. Vice President was talking about during his presentation.

Sub-head 26 – Melanie Damishana Mechanical Workshop Complex. Is there a workshop there? I think that we heard there is a workshop at Coldingen. Is it the same workshop we are talking about? If the Government is not certain where this thing is, it could not expect Hon. Members to know. Is it the same workshop or are you building another one? Why I ask this question, sir, is because everywhere you go you find each little organisation expanding in their empire building. We are told here that this central workshop is on the East Demerara. Whether it is Melanie Damishana or Coldingen, you go into the estate and you see a tremendous thing going up: this is a workshop, that is a workshop. It doesn't seem to me, notwithstanding what my friend said, that there is sufficient co-ordination in this country and that is why we seem to be expending money all over the place. I went to Ogle the other day. I saw they have wonderful equipment that is very attractive, new, and next door they are building another one. I asked, “Why are you duplicating all these service?” Well, I am not a technical man, but I am told that this is necessary, that is necessary and when you pass by Non Pareil you see a huge thing going up there. I think it is a good thing but somebody must go down to this thing and find out why do we have all these duplications. I not think it is in the best interest of the country.

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Cde. Basir: I would like to ask your permission to raise a question on sub-head 1. Perhaps it might arouse some information and then I will go on to sub-head 29. I am wondering whether the amount of \$2,949,000 is intended to deal with some special matters in relation to the Bridge. For instance we have had a number of accidents on this very important bridge.

The Chairman: Cde. Basir, Cde. Ram Karran has asked a question which relates to that. If you do not get the answer, then you can ask. But definitely, the legend says: "To buy miscellaneous equipment", and, Cde. Ram Karran quite properly asked what that miscellaneous equipment would be, so please deal with sub-head 29.

Cde. Basir: Cde. Chairman, sub-head 29 dealing with Bartica-Issano Road has a very meager amount of \$300,000. Right now that road is in a deplorable state and out of a fleet of eight trucks we have just two operating. I have noticed a number of allocations for several roads, but I am not seeing anything in particular about the Wauna-Yarakita Road or the Kumaka-Kwabanna road.

The Chairman: Let us deal with the Baritca-Issano road. Cde. Wright.

The Minister of State for Construction, in the Ministry of Works and Transport (Cde. Wright): Yes, Cde. Chairman, in reply to the question, the Guyana Harbour Bridge, the sum that is shown there, that was referred to by Cde. Ram Karran, was not spent last year, and that was because the equipment did not arrive. There were problems with the manufacturers, but it is shown again this year for the purpose of replacing navigational aids, electrical cables, and stand-by generators and for work on the erosion that is going on by the riverbank. That sum is being requested this year for the continuation of those works. Sub-head 2, East Bank Berbice Road, the present schedule for completion, Cde. Chairman, is early January, 1982.

The Chairman: Cde. Ram Karran is asking about materials and equipment. He wants to know what equipment you have to buy and what materials you have.

Cde. Wright: Cde. Chairman, this is a contract. The work has been given to a contractor.

The Chairman: If they were given to a contractor, you should put “further payment on account of the contractor.” This gives the impression that the Government would be buying equipment and materials, so they are asking for the particulars of it.

Cde. Wright: I will repeat, Cde. Chairman, that amount is there to pay the contractor which is Guyconstruct.

The Chairman: The legend is wrong. It is to pay contractor. He has given a different explanation. On sub-head 1, you have heard the answer, Cde. Basir. In respect of that answer, is it satisfactory?

Cde. Basir: I would like to ask a supplementary question. I would like to know whether the Minister can say if he has an intention of sanding this bridge when the weather is very heavy or if it will have a rubber pad where there is a hump or whether he intends to have blinkers when the weather is very bad, because we have had several accidents of which this Assembly is quite aware.

The Chairman: I do not think those questions are relevant to this. Cde. Nascimento, you will have to answer the other questions, I believe.

Cde. Nascimento: In regard to sub-head 11, Institution Building, I should mention that this is a U.S. A.I.D. Project. It is not mentioned so I am correcting that now for the benefit of Cde. Ram Karran. In fact it is a project which has to do with two things really, improving equipment for road construction in terms of laboratory facilities, research facilities, and also assisting in the rehabilitation of the mobile equipment, that is earth-moving equipment, such as caterpillar, bulldozers, draglines, etc. and construction of road equipment. In my substantive speech I did in fact mention 200 pieces of equipment. That figure embraces the equipment that will be repaired under this head of Institution Building. It will be repaired in the Plant Maintenance and Hire Division, by Guytrac and by AINLIM and it amounts, if my memory serves me correctly, to some 35 pieces of extremely expensive earth-moving equipment. Those repairs are scheduled to be finished, most of them this year, and by January/February next year. It also includes the repair of a number of pieces of paying equipment for laying tarmac on the roads. It is really a comprehensive U.S.A.I.D. financed programme. As you can see the specific finance is fairly high for that purpose and I hope that answers Cde. Ram Karran. He did refer specifically to the laboratory. It is a fact that there was a small laboratory for the

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purpose of road construction but my advice is that it is quite small and very old and this would substantially upgrade those facilities and make them far better.

In so far as his question in regard to the next one, which was sub-head 12, Upper Demerara Forestry Project Road, as I said in my substantive speech the sum of \$18.6 million is the sum estimated for the construction of the Mabura Hill Road with a loan from the Caribbean Development Bank, and if he adds up all the columns he would see it comes to \$19.87 million roughly. The additional \$1.27 million is a sum of money that has been put in there to allow for maintenance of the 60 miles of road already completed. The real answer to his question is, yes, that is the total sum of money for the completion of that road, and yes, the road will be completed well within that sum of money. I hope that provides him with the necessary information.

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In so far as sub-head 26 is concerned, I share Cde. Ram Karran's need for enquiry there. He is quite correct: the legend is incorrect. I will explain why this has happened. It is not really the Melanie Damishana Mechanical Workshop Complex; it is the Coldingen Workshop Complex. Melanie Damishana was the original name used for it before we finally decided on the eventual name. It is sited near Melanie Damishana and most of the workers involved in the construction of this complex come from Melanie Damishana. That is part of the Government's policy to provide work not merely in the centre but work for people living in all parts of Guyana and that is one of the reasons that we chose that site for this Complex, in order to provide employment in that area as well as the fact that it is logistically an excellent place to put the Complex.

I hope that in fact answers his question. It is not, in fact, Cde. Ram Karran a plethora of workshops. We have done a great deal to reduce that. Since the establishment of the Plant, Maintenance and Hire Division we have reduced some 110 workshops scattered throughout the country under the various user divisions which have now been amalgamated into the maintenance division of the Plant, Maintenance and Hire Division and they have been reduced from 110 workshops to 15, which I think is quite a creditable performance in terms of rationalisation.

He did refer to Ogle. Well, Ogle is GUYSUCO. I do have knowledge of what is happening there but it has absolutely nothing to do with these Estimates. In fact, I think what Cde. Ram Karran saw at Ogle was the erection of an equipment conservation centre

which is the first Component Recovery Centre which I had mentioned; we will also be doing a study with the help of the E.E.C. and the Plant, Maintenance and Hire Division. GUYSUOCO, as I said, is the head of it where that is concerned and is actually building the Centre. That is not an ordinary maintenance centre; it is, in fact, especially designed for the recovery of components at various stages of their use and can save many millions of dollars in foreign exchange. I think that is what Cde. Ram Karran must have seen when he was at Ogle. I hope that satisfies the Members on the other side of the Assembly.

The Chairman: Sub-head 29.

Cde. Nascimento: I am sorry. In so far as 29, Bartica-Issano Road, is concerned, I think the nature of the question was: What is really happening with this road? The road is not in a good state of repair. That is quite correct, but what we have done to relieve that condition is that Guyana Timbers Ltd., who are substantive users of this road, have now taken over the maintenance programme for a considerable portion of it, in fact, from 30 to 75 miles, so the sum of money you see here for maintaining that road is only from 0 to 30 miles. A substantial part of that road will now be maintained out of the budget of Guyana Timbers Ltd. I think we will see a substantial improvement. I would like to see a substantial improvement there.

In so far as the trucks that run freight and passenger services there, there are in fact seven trucks allocated and three of them are presently non-operational and beyond recovery. One of them is scheduled for replacement in the Budget this year. You will find that in the Capital in the Transport section of the Budget.

Cde. Ram Karran: I wish to suggest that, in view of the virtual breach of financial regulations, some form of amendment be affected to sub-head 1 which the Hon. Member says is for contract. If it is for contract it cannot be shown under details of capital expenditure. I am sure that the Auditor General is going to be placed in a position --

The Chairman: You will have an opportunity to raise that at another time.

Cde. Ram Karran: I am trying to avoid something in the future. I also want to make this observation. My friend said that a portion of the sum of \$5 million for the Upper Demerara Forestry Road is for maintenance. If it is for maintenance, it cannot be shown under this sub-head. Similarly with the Bartica-Issano Road, part of it is for

maintenance. If he means rehabilitation, it is a different thing, but the whole Estimates seem to be cock-eyed with all these errors that are appearing and the misconceptions on the part of the Minister. I can see that the Ministers are young but the public servants ought to have advised them.

The Chairman: Your observations are noted, Cde. Ram Karran.

Cde. Nascimento: I think I can clarify that last observation. I think it would be useful to clarify it in terms of the Upper Demerara Forestry Road. The sum is quite correct. In building a major road the contractor is under a certain obligation, while the entire road is being constructed, to maintain those portions of the road, particularly if it is a very long road, until it is finished. It is perfectly legitimate and the Caribbean Development Bank has accepted its legitimacy to put in a sum of money for maintenance of that portion of the road, if it is a very long road. It is quite correct.

Division XXIV, Ministry of Works - \$35,469,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: There is nothing on page 137. Pages 138 and 139.

HEAD 47 – MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT

Question proposed that the sum of \$915,600 for Head 47, Ministry of Transport, stand part of the Estimates.

Head 47, Ministry of Transport - \$915,600 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 140.

HEAD 48 – TRANSPORT AND HARBOURS

Question proposed that the sum of \$4,300,000 for Head 48, Transport and Harbours, stand part of the Estimates.

Head 48, Transport and Harbours - \$4,300,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 141 and 142.

HEAD 49 – CIVIL AVIATION

Question proposed that the sum of \$3,235,000 for Head 49, Civil Aviation, stand part of the Estimates.

Cde. Dalchand: Cde. Chairman, page 142, sub-head 16, Maintenance and Operation of Aircraft.

The Chairman: What other sub-heads do you wish to speak on?

Cde. Ram Karran: I want to raise a small question under sub-head 17, Maintenance of Timehri International Airport. Under this sub-head I want to raise this question. I notice that at Timehri Airport considerable changes are taking place. A lot of work is being done there and I think it is good. More space is being created for passengers and visitors but what I want to say is that since 1978 we seem to be carrying a heavy maintenance expense. I want to know if the expansion of rehabilitation or whatever is going on is shown here under Maintenance or whether the normal maintenance under this sub-head is just putting in a board here, putting in a nail there, whether it is capital expenditure, because it seems to be high. Why is it so high?

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NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

3:40 p.m.

Cde. Dalchand: Sub-head 16, Maintenance and Operation of Aircraft. Last year, Cde. Chairman, we approved \$400,000 and we actually spent \$398,000. This year we are asking for \$600,000 and the legend says, “To purchase spare engine.” I would like to know what is the cost of the spare engine, if \$200,000 would buy it or \$600,000

Mr. M. A. Abraham: Sub-head 7, Maintenance of Interior Airfields. This would be with respect to the increased cost and upgrading of interior airstrips. I would like to ask what is the position with respect to the Apoteri airstrip in the Rupununi. Has there been any further progress on the extension and repairs of that airstrip. What is being done also with respect to the Karasabai airstrip in the North Rupununi? We know that in the rainy season the airstrip is virtually flooded and the planes cannot land and, consequently, the inhabitants of that area stand to suffer quite a lot.

Sub-head 16, Maintenance and Operation of Aircraft. Can the Hon. Minister say how often are maintenance works affected, especially with respect to an incident that happened last year when one of the emergency exits of our new Agro jet flew open just at the take off at the Timehri International Airport? How often is maintenance carried out? Is it on a day to day basis and is it true that at times when one engine does fail the other engine is hard put to carry the aircraft towards safe landing?

The Chairman: Cde. Nascimento.

Cde. Nascimento: I can begin, Cde. Chairman, with sub-head 7, Maintenance of Interior Airfields. If the questioner were to look under the Capital Estimates he would find that there is a sum of money voted for rehabilitation of airstrips. Apoteri is one of them and my advice is that the Apoteri airstrip in fact will be in first-class condition by the end of this year – by November. As far as Karasabai is concerned, there is no evidence to suggest that that airstrip needs any special capital works done on it. It is subjected to routine maintenance. There may be times of the year that are thoroughly unseasonal where an airstrip like that will be affected, but in the normal course of events that airstrip is, as far as I know, quite properly maintained.

In so far as sub-head 16 is concerned, Cde. Chairman \$600,000 is voted in this year’s provision because in spite of the fact that we lost the Skyvan aircraft, a new Skyvan aircraft is to be purchased. It was covered by insurance and the amount between

the differential in insurance and the new Skyvan is something in the region, I think, of \$700,000. That sum of money has been put there for the maintenance. When this legend was written, “To purchase spare engine”, I suspect it was done before the accident actually occurred. Since the accident has occurred we maintained that sum of money. In fact, I think we actually increased it slightly.

The Chairman: You will have to change the legend.

Cde. Nascimento: Yes, it is incorrect. It is not for a spare engine. It is purely for maintenance of aircraft. “To purchase spare engine” would be incorrect because there would not be need for a spare engine for the new aircraft.

There were two questions under that head. I believe the other one is on the subject of maintenance generally. In so far as the 737 aircraft, the international jet, is concerned, that aircraft is maintained in accordance with international civil aviation standards by the people who leased the aircraft and so far as we know, that aircraft has an excellent record of safety. I was a little surprised to detect what may be a veiled suggestion that the maintenance of aircraft operated by GAC is not up to international standards. As a matter of fact, Cde. Chairman, I think GAC is an airline that can be exceptionally proud of its accident-free record. To the best of my knowledge, it is one of the few airlines in the world that have not lost the life of a single passenger, and that is something I think we can all be proud of in Guyana. There has never been a serious accident on a single passenger-carrying GAC aircraft and I might add to that, that all the accidents which have taken place have not been due to an absence of maintenance. They have been due to these aircraft flying in extremely difficult weather conditions. The very nature of the hinterland, as Mr. Abraham well knows, is one of hazardous flying conditions, dangerous flying conditions.

We had a complaint from the other side of the Assembly in the substantive debate about the scheduling of aircraft. Well, just to give one single example, last week we had nine cancellations of scheduled flights not because the aircraft were not available for schedule, but simply because the weather shut in and it was impossible to fly an aircraft into those areas. It was mainly the Mazaruni area. So far as the maintenance of aircraft is concerned, I think that Guyana Airways has a record that this country can be substantially proud of.

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In so far as sub-head 17, Maintenance of Timehri International Airport, is concerned, that figure is not for the expansion. You will find that in the Capital, if you look. It is for routine maintenance.

Head 49, Civil Aviation - \$3,235,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

HEAD 50 – POST OFFICE

Question proposed that the sum of \$200 for Head 50, Post Office, stand part of the Estimates.

Head 50, Post Office - \$200 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 144.

DIVISION XXV – MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT TRANSPORT

Question proposed that the sum of \$6,570,000 for Division XXV, Ministry of Transport – Transport, stand part of the Estimates.

3:50 p.m.

Cde. Ram Karran: May I ask questions on sub-heads 1, 4, 6, 10, 12, 14,16.

Cde. Dalchand: Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask a few questions on sub-heads 6 and 12, but if Cde. Ram Karran covers them, I will not pursue it.

Mr. M. A. Abraham: Just a question on sub-head 7.

Cde. Ram Karran: May I enquire of the Hon. Minister under sub-head 1, Purchase of Logs and Barges, if he can give us an indication as to how many pontoons and how many tugs are available to the department at the moment and how many new tugs and new pontoons are required under thus sub-head. And then he will have an idea of the total number of items of equipment under this Head. Sub-head 4, Purchase of

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equipment, is it to complete the payment for the two trucks, radio equipment for ships, spares for pallet trucks? This is ridiculous. Year after year we make this observation, that these are different things. My friend last night was trying to compare unlike things. Why list unlike things here with one total? How are we going to know how much he is going to buy trucks for, how much is going to be used for radio equipment for ships? They are all different.

Sub-head 6, Cargo vessels, to provide for the assembly of vessels, that is a strange term “assembly of vessels”, for North West District. Are you going to buy the parts and fit them up in the workshop at Guynec? Perhaps he can explain what that means, or is he going to bring a number of vessels together and assemble them for a war dance? I do not want to pursue sub-head 10 because I think I have got the explanation from the Hon. Minister. Under the last sub-head, sub-head 12, Purchase of Aircraft for \$100,000, would that be enough?

The Chairman: Cde. Ram Karran if you had listened to him, he said the \$600,000 which was for the spare and this additional \$100,000, with the insurance money will go towards the purchase of a new Skyvan. That is what he said.

Cde. Ram Karran: Government book-keeping as I understand it is a little different from Nascimento’s book-keeping, that is, if the Minister is going to take from one pocket and put it in the other. It must be shown here accurately so that the people who are going into it later on will know. This CTPU Survey Studies, sub-head 14, the legend says: “To finance prefeasibility study re the sitting of a Deep Water Harbour. Does the Hon. Minister have any idea where this deep-water harbour is going to be or are they going to search around and then decide where it is going to be? He might have some idea whether it is going to be in the Demerara or the Berbice River.

Finally, they are going to provide a road research programme, sub-head 216. Perhaps he can give us some idea of what is meant by this Road Research Programme. I know at one time we were talking about a magic circle of roads. Perhaps the Hon. Minister is going back to those days but Road Research Programme does not seem to ring a bell does not give an idea of what they mean. Some explanation is worthwhile.

Cde. Dalchand: Cde. Chairman, I would like to make a point on sub-head 7.

The Chairman: I will not permit any question on sub-head 7. There is nothing requested on that.

Cde. Nascimento: We have a large number of questions here, Cde. Chairman. First one, we have six tugs on the inventory and four are operational. [Interruption] The money in the estimates is to pay for the 600 ton pontoon that is being constructed by Guynec, which I mentioned in my substantive speech. If only Cde. Ram Karran has listened to what I said instead of getting quite so upset about other things I said --

The Chairman: Cde. Ram Karran is entitled to ask questions which are not clear even if he had listened to your speech.

Cde. Nascimento: I think the next question was on sub-head 4. It does not appear that the legend includes a number of varying kinds of equipment. One of the trucks is in fact the truck I referred to for the Bartica Issano road; the other routine spare parts for –

The Chairman: Cde. Ram Karran asked what is the cost of the two trucks? One had to say, well, it is \$100,000 or \$75,000 or something.

Cde. Nascimento: The trucks will cost about \$100,000. It is a very specialised truck. It is a ten ton truck especially designed with four wheel drive for those very difficult roads in the interior. I really did not want to burden Cde. Ram Karran with those engineering details. In so far as the ships are concerned, I had mentioned in my substantive speech that money would be devoted to rehabilitating and refurbishing the radios for navigational purposes in a number of our vessels and that is what that money is for. Five radios altogether will be fitted in the ships.

The Chairman: What he is asking for, if he could get a breakdown that would answer the question. So much for radios, so much for pallets, so much for trucks.

Cde. Nascimento: It will be \$100,000 for the trucks, \$80,000 for the radios and roughly \$20,000 for the pallet trucks which are going to improve the loading on the wharves. I hope that now satisfies some of Cde. Ram Karran's anxiety for detail.

So far as sub-head 6 is concerned, Cde. Ram Karran finds the word assembling surprising, uninviting, peculiar. They, in fact, will be assembled. You also want to know how much? Guynec had an enviable record for the skills they have demonstrated in the

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buildings of trucks, in the building of ships. As a matter of fact, I believe that the IDB recently visited this country and remarked on the very high standard of ship-building construction of Guynec. This is a specialised ship. It is not unusual from time to time with vessels of this kind, to get them in knock-down form. We have to begin somewhere, with our tractors for instance, by purchasing them in knock-down form and assembling them. One has to learn to walk before you run sometimes, Cde. Ram Karran.

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4:00 p.m.

In so far as sub-head 12, Purchase of Aircraft is concerned, let us make this clear once and for all. The aircraft was insured, I think for \$3.5 million, and the cost of a new aircraft will be roughly \$4.2 million. So you are looking at differentials and there will be a credit facility. What we are talking about here is down payments.

I think we had one other question at sub-head 14, CTPU Survey Studies. The Deep Water Harbour always was, still is and presumably will be at Lanaballi. If Cde. Ram Karran would like, at any time he likes I will take him and show him where the Deep Water Harbour is. It is a very beautiful spot.

Sub-head 16. You will forgive me. I don't know very much about the Road Research Programme. I am not informed on it and I really cannot advise the Assembly effectively on it.

Division XXV, Ministry of Transport (Transport) - \$6,570,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 145 to 147.

HEAD 51 – PLANT MAINTENANCE AND HIRE DIVISION

Question proposed that the sum of \$5,250,100 for Head 51, Plant Maintenance and Hire Division, stand part of the Estimates.

Cde. Ram Karran: I want to ask a small question on this Head, a controversial one. I can raise the points under individual sub-heads. I want to deal with the increase, \$200,000 at the bottom of the last column. What I want to say is very short. This is a new Head. Wages and salaries have not gone up since 1980. Why should we have an increase of \$200,000 in a short period? What has caused it?

Cde. Nascimento: Cde. Chairman, originally last year, since this is a new Division, a new organisation, there were some posts last year that we were unable to fill. This year we are able to fill them. These are essentially technical posts and we have been both advertising and recruiting and that is the reason for the large differential.

The Chairman: Comrades, I am informed that we have an amendment here. We have to have a day's notice unless you all agree to waive it.

Question

That one day's notice be waived

Proposed, put and agreed to.

The Vice President, Economic Planning and Finance (Cde. Hoyte): I signify Cabinet's recommendation and I move the following amendments:

<u>Page</u>	<u>Column</u>	
147	1981 Estimates	Against item (91), changing of figure to read \$2,346,100 instead of \$1,542,100 and total Personal Emoluments to read \$4,554,000 instead of \$3,750,000.
		Against sub-head 2, changing of figure to read \$3,428,000 instead of \$2,500,00 and Total Other Charges to read \$3,428,000 instead of \$2,500,000.
		Changing of Total Personal Emoluments and Other Charges to read \$7,982,000 instead of \$6,250,000 and Grand Total: Head 51 to read \$6,982,100 instead of \$5,250,100.

Head 51, Plant Maintenance and Hire Division, as amended \$6,982,100 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: We have gone beyond 4 o'clock. We will return and do Division XXVI and immediately after we will go on to Economic Planning and Finance. If we finish that we will go on to the next Head.

Assembly resumed

Sitting suspended at 4:05 p.m.

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4:30 p.m.

On resumption --

Assembly in Committee of Supply

The Chairman: Page 148.

DIVISION XXVI – MINISTRY OF WORKS
PLANT MAINTENANCE AND HIRE DIVISION

Question proposed that the sum of \$8,500,000 for Division XXVI, Ministry of Works, Plant Maintenance and Hire Division, stand part of the Estimates.

Cde. Ram Karran: May I speak on sub-head 1, Rehabilitation of Mobile Mechanical Equipment and sub-head 3, Craft Training Centre. These are not long questions. Here again we notice that the Minister has not done his duty because he seems to have mixed all these things together “Rehabilitation of Buildings, Workshops and mobile equipment.” This enterprise started only in 1980. Is it a continuing thing? Is it in active construction and when will it be completed? What will be the total sum required because “rehabilitation” seems to be not the right word for something that is being constructed and that was started only in 1980. If it was completed in 1980 it could not be rehabilitated so quickly.

May I ask a similar question with respect to sub-head 3, the legend which reads: “To provide for construction works on the vocational training centre.” Where is this?

Cde. Nascimento: Cde. Chairman, there is some confusion, I think, in the mind of Cde. Ram Karran in respect to the headings. Sub-head 1 – rehabilitation refers to mobile, mechanical equipment and to workshops already in existence. It has nothing to do with Coldingden at all. Therefore the term “rehabilitation” is quite correct.

I note that Cde. Ram Karran has a penchant for details and therefore I shall satisfy him, if I can. The breakdown is as follows: \$4½ million of that \$5.5 million will be used for the rehabilitation of mobile equipment, the 200 pieces of mobile equipment which I mentioned in my substantive address. That will be equipment such as Land Rovers, fork-lift trucks, lorries, bitumen pavement, earth-moving equipment, mobile cranes, etc. We

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propose to spend \$4½ million on rehabilitating equipment which is down and non-operational in that respect and I have given details of that earlier.

The rest of it will be spent as follows: About half a million dollars on Head Office repairs, \$300,000 on existing workshops. Those workshops range from Ruimveldt to Kuru Kuru, La Grange to Capoey and Canje. They are all existing workshops that have to be up-graded. “Up-graded” might be a better term in terms of the workshops, rather than “rehabilitation”. I will share a certain amount of agreement with Cde. Ram Karran in terms of the use of language there. Office equipment will account for \$100,000 and \$100,000 is left for emergency repairs on the workshop itself. That is how the \$5.5 million is broken down.

Insofar as subhead 3 is concerned, Craft Training Centre, again I had endeavoured to explain this in my substantive address. This is the second part of the First Phase of Coldingden. The First Phase of Coldingden includes the main workshop which I had mentioned will cost \$19 million when completed and that will be completed and ready for operation in June/July this year. The Craft Training Centre will, I think, turn out some 228 students as I had mentioned. The plan preparation for that begins in April. Construction on the ground is all part of the Coldingden Complex and will begin in August. Most of the frames for the buildings which are being supplied under the aid agreement with the German Democratic Republic are in the country already. That Craft Trading Centre ought to be scheduled for actual completion in 1982. I hope that that provides the necessary details.

Cde. Ram Karran: I wish to thank the Minister for his answer. He made the observation that I have a penchant for details. We are discussing the details of capital expenditure and the Hon. Minister must know what he is presenting to this Assembly.

Division XXVI, Ministry of Works, Plant Maintenance and Hire Division - \$8,500,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

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4:40 – 4:50 p.m.

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

4:40 p.m.

The Chairman: Pages 16 and 17.

HEAD 8 – AUDIT

Question proposed that the sum of \$1,703,500 for Head 8 – Audit – stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Cde. Narbada Persaud.

Cde. Narbada Persaud: Sub-head 1 (9) Auditor; (10) Assistant Auditor II; (12) Assistant Auditor I; (13) Auditor Trainee; Cde. Chairman, with your permission since they all deal with vacancies, I would just like to make the point that year after year I have been raising the question on the number of vacancies that exist in the Audit Department.

The Chairman: I will give you a long time to talk on vacancies generally so that when we come back to the other Heads with vacancies, there will be no necessity to speak there again.

Cde. N. Persaud: Only here, and I do not want much time either. Cde. Chairman, in the Budget Speech presented by the Vice President of Economic Planning and Finance he mentioned a lot about public accountability and public accountability has to do with the Audit Department as we all know, therefore, if, as he emphasised so much in the Budget Speech, that much more work will have to be done, moreso the Audit Department will now have to be decentralised to take in the regional system, it would mean surely, that this department will have to be strengthened. I observe, however, that in relation to the items I called under this sub-head 1, the amount of money approved during 1980 was not spent during 1980 and I conclude because of that, that a number of vacancies have not been filled.

Now, when we look at the total establishment we find that the establishment for 1981 is the same as the establishment for 1980. Bearing in mind that it has been mentioned in the Budget Speech that decentralisation will take place, I would like to ask the Minister – I do not know if it is the Vice President or Cde. Sallahuddin; either of them – to state what is the present position; whether, bearing in mind the estimates given here, consideration was given to the fact that the functions of some of the Officers involved in

the Audit Department would have to be decentralised and they will have to work in offices in the regional structure.

Sub-head 13 – Training of Auditors. Cde. Chairman, again year after year I have been making the point that the amount of money provided for this sub-head is inadequate. Moreso, I have been making this point because of difficulty we find at the Public Accounts Committee as far as trained people are concerned within the whole structure of the Public Service. Now, this deals with the training of auditors and I really cannot agree, if emphasis is going to be placed on public accountability of the funds that we approve here in Parliament, that this amount of money is adequate for the training of auditors.

Cde. Chairman, I would like the Minister or the person involved to inform this Assembly this evening what is intended to be done with this \$4,100. I also want to remind the comrades that the Hon. Prime Minister in his speech this afternoon, when answering questions by Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud, said that – and I quote – “Training is the foundation of our development”. Well, if training is the foundation of our development, said only this afternoon by the Prime Minister, then I think much more emphasis ought to be placed on this question of training of the auditors in whose hands lie the accounts of this country.

Sub-head 16 – Printing and Binding. I have noticed the great increase from the sum of \$25,000 in 1980 to the tune of \$306,600 for 1981. I would like to ask the question why this sum has been so drastically increased. If it is the cost of printing, then I would take the opportunity under this head to suggest to the Minister let him give the New Guyana paper and we are going to print for them far cheaper if cost is involved here.

The Chairman: Cde. Vice President.

Cde. Hoyte: Cde. Chairman, I would like to assure the member that the fact that the governmental system has been regionalised does not necessarily mean that there would be an increase in staff or in expenses. It is a question of a more rational deployment of the human resources which we have. In overview of our system, from the management point of view, has shown that there are, perhaps, too many people administering out of Georgetown instead of being in the regions. The point I make is that I agree with him that we need to strengthen our Audit Department. There is no dispute about that; but I think it is a wrong inference to hold that automatically regionalism

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means an increase in staff. At present there are 53 vacancies out of a total establishment of 202 in the Auditor General's Department and the training to which the Member referred is designed to enable persons to acquire the necessary skills to fill the vacancies. In the meantime, every effort is being made to recruit the people with the necessary training and qualifications into the Auditor General's Department.

Now, I think one needs to understand the Government's training system. The fact that there is a certain amount of money under Head 8 of the Audit Department is not an indication that that is all the money being spent on training. In fact, there are four areas of training for auditors. There is, first of all, international training – on the job training; there is training at the Guyana Technical Institute; there is training at the University of Guyana; and there is training abroad. With respect to items (2), (3) and (4), Cde. Chairman, the cost is shown not under this head but under the head of the Public Service Ministry.

The Hon. Member was of the view that the increase in the provision for printing and binding reflects merely on escalation in cost. In the Budget Speech I pointed to the fact that a very strenuous effort is being made to bring the public accounts up to date and I did say that in the course of this year the accounts from 1972 to 1979 would be with the Auditor General. In fact, the accounts for 1971 have already been completed, printed and bound and, in the course of the year, the accounts for 1972 to 1977, at least, will be completed and bound. So, obviously, in the course of this year there will be much more printing to be done. This provision reflects what is estimated to be the cost of printing the public accounts for all of those years.

Head 8 – Audit - \$1,703,500 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 191 and 193.

HEAD 81 – ECONOMIC PLANNING

Question proposed that the sum of \$2,764,200 for Head 81, Economic Planning stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Cde. Narbada Persaud.

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4:40 – 4:50 p.m.

Cde. N. Persaud: Sub-head 7 – Labour Force Survey. Cde. Chairman, in the course of the debate on the Budget Speech I am sure you would recall that from this side of the Assembly mention was made about the necessity to have the figure of unemployed people in this country. Now, to have that figure I would think, first of all, we would need to know what the labour force of the country is. When I raised this question during last year, I was told that the survey was completed and the report would be out during the year 1980. It might have slipped me, Cde. Chairman, but I do not recall seeing any report and I do check with the Vice President's Ministry very often at the library to enquire what reports are there.

I would like to know, first of all, since this is a very important and sensitive question, the unemployment figure which will come out of the labour force. At least we will be able to get an idea of the unemployed people of this country when we know about the labour force. I would like to know actually what is the present position when it is clearly stated in the legend that no survey is expected in 1981, whether the survey for 1980 has been completed and, if so, when the report would be released to the public.

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NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

4:50 p.m.

At sub-head 20, Consumer Expenditure Survey, again I must refer, Cde. Chairman to the debate by us on this side of the Assembly when the question of cost of living came up. We have been making a lot of points in relation to what the cost of living is and various things that have had an increase in prices. Now, this item deals with Consumer Expenditure Survey. Again in the legend it is stated that no survey is expected to be carried out in 1981. Such surveys, I submit, are very essential, not only for us on this side of the Assembly but also for the Government's own statistics and for the government's own analyses in relation to the expenditure of the population of this country. Therefore, I would like to enquire from the Vice President what is the present position as far as the Consumer Expenditure Survey is concerned, whether it is completed for 1980, whether a report has been provided and, if so how early would that be available to the public.

I move to sub-head 25, Population Census. I note in the legend that it states that the population census has been completed, nevertheless, \$200,000 is being asked for in this estimate for the year 1981. I would like to refer to the Chronicle of May 13, 1980, which said that in two weeks' time the final count would have been ready that would have put us by the end of May. Now we are in March of the following year and I would like to enquire from the Comrade what is the present position as far as the population census is concerned.

Cde. Dalchand: Sub-head 23 – Agricultural Statistics. I just want to draw your attention to a misleading legend: "Overprovided in 1980". In 1980, the sum of \$60,000 was provided; \$52,200 was spent and instead of reducing the sum this year, they are asking for \$99,400. But the legend says "Overprovided in 1980".

The Chairman: Cde. Vice President.

Cde. Hoyte: The Hon. Member, Mr. Dalchand seems to have made a valid point that the legend is wrong. Cde. Chairman, the Hon. Member, Mr. Narbada Persaud raised questions under sub-heads 7, 20 and 25. The Labour Force Surveys, as members will recall was started some years ago and the operational or field work has been completed. The data are being analysed and evaluated and as soon as this work is done, of course the results will be published. But, I would like to caution the questioner, Cde. Chairman, against any erroneous belief that a labour force survey would tell him what is the

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incidence of unemployment in this country. The labour force survey and an employment or unemployment survey, depending on how you look at, are some entirely different things.

On the question of the Consumer Expenditure Survey, Cde. Chairman, the basket as the statisticians term the concept, changes from period to period so that the items which were used say, ten years ago in compiling the indices would not necessarily be the same items which would be used this year. In other words the basket becomes outmoded and therefore valueless as the range of consumer items change and as the range of things which people regard as being in what one may call a luxury sphere move into a sphere which one would perhaps designate as being essential. What we are going to do in the course of the year – and this is at the request of the Trades Union Congress – is to start work on a new basket with a view to compiling a new Consumer Index. That is why the routine work which is normally done will not be done this year. We are going to start all over again.

On the matter of the population census, I hope that the Hon. Member does not hold me responsible for every misstatement which appears in the Chronicle, I am not concerned with what the Chronicle may write. The Chronicle does not run my Ministry. If the Member had said I had issued a statement or the Permanent Secretary or the Chief Statistician had issued such a statement the only three persons authorised to issue statements on this matter had done so, well then I would have felt constrained to give an explanation. I do not know where the Chronicle got its information from. The legend is right to this extent, that the field work has been completed: but I think the Hon. Member would know that that sort of analysis is rarely done in this country because the census exercise is a regional one. That work is being done. We hope, probably in the course of this year to be able to publish the results of that census.

Head 81, Economic Planning - \$2,764,200 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 194.

DIVISION XXX – MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC PLANNING

Question proposed that the sum of \$25,225,000 for Division XXX, Ministry of Economic Planning stand part of the Estimates.

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4:50 – 5:00 p.m.

Cde. N. Persaud: Cde. Chairman, just one particular question in order to have the records straight, maybe once and for all on some of these projects listed on these pages. Sub-head 8, Cotton Textile Mill. We see that last year the sum of \$5 million was approved and the legend says: “To provide funds for the Textile Mill”.

When I queried this amount during last year I got the answer from the then Minister of Economic Development that while the mill was completed, that is, the construction, this money was necessary to equip the mill. We however found at the end of the year that the Estimates moved this figure from \$5 million to \$27,983,000. This year we see again that the sum of \$5½ million is being sought for the textile mill. We are being told that the cotton textile mill is in production. Having produced \$646,000 metres of textile last year, it is hoped that \$1½ million metres of textiles will be produced this year. May I enquire from the Vice President what is the purpose of this \$5½ million, whether it is for additional equipment or what.

5:00 p.m.

Now, on the question of the bicycle plant, we have seen where the sum of \$800,000 was supposed to have been spent last year and the legend says again “To provide funds for Bicycle Project”. We were told on the 16th January this year – and maybe the Minister is right in his reply as far as the Chronicle is concerned; he is not answerable for that – about a firm coming from Brazil is set up a factory where the Caloi bicycles would be assembled. I want to enquire whether the previous plan to construct a complete bicycle factory for us to produce our own bicycles has gone over-board or whether this is a temporary arrangement with the Caloi manufacturer.

On question of the Shoe Factory I know – and it has been admitted in the Budget Speech – that no work was done at the Shoe Factory despite the fact that money was voted for it last year. We have a reason for that. I would like to ask the Minister at this point in time whether work has been started at the Shoe Factory and, if not, how soon, and whether he is in a position to tell us today if work has started, or work is going to start soon, how soon he expects that the Shoe Factory is going to be completed. I don't have to emphasise the point as far as the price for shoes in this country is concerned, but I hope that the factory will be completed very soon and the prices for shoes will be far less than the shoes we are forced to buy now at very high prices.

Sub-head 11, the Leather Tannery. The same old story – Approved Estimates \$200,000; Revised Estimates \$48,000. No explanation in the legend. I am sorry – “To provide funds to complete Tannery Project” and for that purpose I see that the figures I gave just now are wrong. The sum of \$1,200,000 was shown in the Approved Estimates. However, the Revised Estimates have only \$867,000. The sum of \$1 million is now being sought and the legend says “To provide funds to complete the Tannery Project.” I would like to enquire from the Minister whether this sum of \$1 million will complete this project and, if so, whether it is hoped that the factory will be completed before year end.

The last question – sub-head 19, Guyana Glass Works. We have noted in the Approved Estimates the sum of \$8 million. However, the sum of \$13,890,000 was spent on the Glass Factory and the legend says “To provide funds for the completion of the Glass Factory.” I raised this question last year and the answer I got, more or less was that the factory was completed. We however learnt subsequently that the factory was completed one year ago and they are waiting for electricity. However, a sum of \$5 million is being sought here again in 1981 and the legend is telling us “To provide funds for the completion of the Glass Factory.” Therefore, I would like an explanation on this and I would be very grateful if the Vice President is in a position to answer this question.

Cde. Dalchand: Cde. Chairman; I want to ask a small question: Will the Vice President be able to tell this Assembly what will be the cost of this Oil Plant Factory? We spent in 1979/1980 nearly \$7 million. We are about to spend another \$5 million. I would like the Vice President to tell us the cost. Sub-head 20.

The Chairman: Hon. Member, Mr. Abraham.

Mr. M. A. Abraham: Mr. Chairman, this is more in the nature of an observation with respect to sub-head 9. Much as we look forward to completion of the Bicycle Project, we note that in the meantime the Government has been importing the Caloi bicycles from Brazil and some have been sent up to Guyana Stores at Lethem and they have been sold like hot cakes. The feed-back we have been getting is that these Caloi bicycles are giving no amount of problems. The roads in the interior, as you know, sir, are rough and especially in the rainy season the back wheel of the bicycle seizes up and cannot go further. We are wondering if some arrangement could be made whereby we could get a sturdier bicycle up there, not a very huge amount. Let us say, 100 or so, just to accommodate the people in the interior where roads are so rough. The Caloi bicycles might do very well here in the streets of Georgetown but not so in the Rupununi terrain.

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5:00 – 5:10 p.m.

The Chairman: Cde. Vice President.

Cde Hoyte: Cde. Chairman, I take the point of the Hon. Member Mr. Abraham and will certainly raise the matter with the appropriate agency.

I think it was in the course of last year's debate on the Budget that I suggested to Members of the Minority Party that they would do themselves a favour if they would visit some of these projects because, if they were to do that, then they would understand what is happening and many things which appear difficult to them would become easy.

I think that by now everyone knows that the cotton textile mill was commissioned last year during the course of the observances to mark the Tenth Anniversary of the founding of the Republic. Since then much has happened. A project like this is not static. It can expand; it can develop. In the course of last year work was accelerated on structures and improvements, which have nothing to do with the operational capacity of the mill itself. For example, additional work was done in putting in infrastructure like roads and constructing the administration building. We are now in the course of discussions with the Government of the People's Republic of China, to add a new facility to the Sanata Textile Mill to process polyester fabric. In three circumstances, it was accurate to say that the project was completed. The first phase of the project was completed, but now we are moving into another phase where we are going to process not only cotton textiles but polyester.

5:10 p.m.

The Bicycle Plant has proceeded slowly. There is no doubt about that and the Hon. Member himself pointed out that the money voted last year really had not been utilised. There again, much work has been done. One would see that the factory building is virtually completed and I think I did explain to this Assembly that the tools and equipment are already here. We had started this project in co-operation with the Atlas Company which was an Indian company. That project eventually was abandoned – that is, the co-operation with the Indian company – because of a number of logistical and technical problems, and, therefore, we had to look around for a new partner who had the technology.

At no stage was the project designed initially to start with the complete fabrication of bicycles. That is not possible yet at this stage. It was intended to start with

assembly of bicycles, some minimal fabrication of parts and then link backwards as we expand our foundry capacity and our ability to build components. Herein lies the significance of the investment which I referred to and which will be made by Guynec this year in the expansion of its foundry capacity. There is an agreement now with Caloi, a Brazilian firm, and the indications are that they would be able to proceed much more rapidly and indeed complete this project this year. The project is scheduled for completion this year.

Again, Cde. Chairman, on the Shoe Factory and Leather Tannery, there has been delay. Again, the actual structures are completed for the leather tannery, the equipment is all here. There was a problem with the supply of electricity and the company therefore had to import a special transformer. That transformer took some time to be delivered and in fact, I am told, came in only in December, so that it was not possible, therefore, to bring in the specialists from the suppliers to help in the actual erection of the equipment. But again we do hope that in the course of this year we will be able to expedite the work.

But those are the problems of development. My friend knows as well as anybody else that development does not proceed in a straight line, and particularly in small countries like ours there are all kinds of factors which would frustrate your best efforts to meet construction schedules.

Now, on the glass works, I do not think it is accurate for the member to say that the glass works were completed a year ago. I do not think that anybody on this side of the Assembly ever said that. I do not think that even the Chronicle ever published anything like that. The project was completed towards the end of last year, but as I explained in the Budget statement, the factory cannot be commissioned until it can be assured of a reliable supply of electricity and that depends upon the Guyana Electricity Corporation. The glass factory is a 24 hour operation. It is not the kind of operation that can start and stop. It is like Guymine in that respect and, therefore, we await the indication from GEC that it is in a position to supply the power. That is the unfortunate position.

The Chairman: But, Cde. Narbada Persaud is asking what is the provision of \$5 million for.

Cde. Hoyte: The \$5 million, Cde. Chairman, would be used to complete the infrastructure, like the international roads, and to replace the existing fence. It will be

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used to upgrade the fence and to provide the amenities which are necessary for the fine completion of the project and there is included in that, of course, the usual provision for working capital.

There is also the question from Cde. Dalchand on the vegetable oil plant. The cost is estimated to be about \$18.5 million and I think that the Member would know that this is a joint project with the German Democratic Republic.

Cde. N. Persaud: I wonder if you could permit me one supplementary question. We got the assurance from the Vice President that as soon as reliable electricity can be obtained from the GEC the plant will go into operation. May I ask the comrade to say whether there is any truth in the rumour, if I may put it that way that the landing of aircraft at Timehri Airport has something to do with the delay in the plant going into operation?

The Chairman: That was answered since last year.

Cde. Hoyte: Absolutely not. This matter was carefully studied. It was a consideration taken into account before the plant was actually put down.

The Chairman: I will now put the Division with the corrections:

<u>Page</u>	<u>Column</u>	
194	Total	Against sub-head 8, changing of the amount to read \$5,500,000 instead of \$5,000,000.

Division XXX, Ministry of Economic Planning - \$25,225,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimate.

The Chairman: Pages 195 and 196.

HEAD 82 – FINANCE

Question proposed that the sum of \$4,516,200 for Head 82, Finance stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Cde. Narbada Persaud.

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5:10 – 5:20 p.m.

Cde. N. Persaud: Sub-head 1 (23) – Provision for remuneration of officers not adequately provided for in the transfer to the Regional System and Sub-head 15 – Provision for Miscellaneous Other Charges not adequately provided for in the transfer to the Regional System. Cde. Chairman, I would just like to have an explanation of this new provision that is now created here in the Estimates and what it means in relation to “not adequately provided for in the transfer to the Regional System.”

The Chairman: Cde. Vice President.

Cde. Hoyte: Cde. Chairman, Cde. Sallahuddin will deal with it.

The Minister, Finance, in the Ministry of Economic Planning and Finance (Cde. Sallahuddin): Cde. Chairman, with respect to sub-head 1 (23), I will be specific here that this remuneration is for officers – for personal emoluments, whereas sub-head 15 --

The Chairman: Cde. Sallahuddin, the question that Cde. Narbada Persaud asked is that whilst it is true for emoluments, he went on to say “not adequately provided for”; he wanted to know what was not adequately provided for, in respect of whom, and where they were transferred.

5:20 p.m.

Cde. Sallahuddin: Cde. Chairman, the position is that while the regional system is being set up, there might not have been adequate provision under these Heads or sub-heads and this is just a catch in, so to speak, to make up for any shortfall while the regional system falls into place.

With respect to page 196, sub-head 15, there is a similar explanation except that in this instance we are considering Other Charges expenses as against Personal Emoluments.

Head 82, Finance - \$4,516,200 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 197 and 198, Head 83, Accountant General.

HEAD 83 – ACCOUNTANT GENERAL

Question proposed that the sum of \$7,311,500 for Head 83, Accountant General, stand part of the Estimates.

Cde. N. Persaud: Just one question on page 198; sub-head 18, Special Visits and Representation at External Conferences. We see that approval is being sought for \$3 million. We were told that \$1½ million approved in 1980 proved to be inadequate. May I ask whether the Minister is in a position to name just a few of these conferences that he expects to be held during this year to warrant such a large sum of money.

Cde. Sallahuddin: Cde. Chairman, the position remains that we have financial and other relationships with several agencies external to the shores of this country and if we are to continue to maintain adequate contact with those agencies – I am sure the Hon. Member on the other side does not expect that we enumerate those agencies here this afternoon, because they are so very well known – we need to continue attendance at international conferences. Apart from that, one must take cognizance of the fact that travel costs are constantly rising.

Head 83, Accountant General \$7,311,500 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 199 and 200.

HEAD 84 – CUSTOMS AND EXCISE

Question proposed that the sum of \$3,650,000 for Head 84, Customs and Excise, stand part of the Estimates.

Cde. N. Persaud: Page 200, sub-head 7, Maintenance and Operation of Land and Water Transport. Cde. Chairman, I raise this question under the sub-head because of my personal knowledge as far as the operation of land transport is concerned. Now if my information and observation both are correct, the launch which operates from the boat-house has been leaking since last year. I do not know whether this sum is only for maintenance and operation of land transport but if we should go into the area of water transport, I think I will have to make my point clear that the boat was sold during the latter part of last year. It has not been in operation from the early part of last year

because it was leaking therefore I would like to know whether this whole sum of money has been spent on land transport.

Cde. Chairman, I would like you at this stage to permit me to make a plea. I observe that provision is made for the purchase of a boat but, Cde. Chairman, may I inform this Assembly that what has been happening is that private people and private importers have to hire boats to take the Customs Officers from the boat house to mid-stream to examine the boats. Also, when the boats arrive they have to hire cars to take these very officials to the various wharves in Georgetown to examine the boats. Therefore, I would like to enquire – I did observe as I said that provision is being made again this year as provision was made last year for the purchase of a boat – and I would like to get an answer in relation to this maintenance question.

Cde. Dalchand: Cde. Chairman, sub-head 15, Electricity. The legend for this sub-head is saying: “New Sub-head created.” I wish to draw to your attention that estimates were approved for 1978, 1979 and 1980 and this is no new sub-head.

Cde. Sallahuddin: Cde. Chairman, with respect to sub-head 7, Maintenance and Operation of Land and Water Transport at the time when this sub-head was conceived the boat was still the property of the Customs and Excise Department. That is all I wish to say.

With respect to sub-head 15, Cde. Chairman, the electricity charge was totalled under the Ministry of Finance, but in this instance the electricity charge has been separated so that Customs will have its own charge and Inland Revenue will have its own eventually.

Cde. N. Persaud: If I may pose another question. Okay, the boat was still the property of the Government, then is it true that the boat was not functioning? If it is true that the boat was not functioning, was any money spent for maintenance?

The Chairman: I do not follow that. We are talking about this year, we are not talking about last year, so you may have to ask another question.

Cde. N. Persaud: In the circumstances I would like to know whether any part of this \$100,000 being sought here will be going to service the boat or to maintain it.

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The Chairman: The time of the preparation of this document.

Cde. Sallahuddin: Cde. Chairman, I think I made the point clear that at the time of the preparation of the document the boat was there. This does not necessarily mean that the boat is there now.

Head 84, Customs and Excise - \$3,650,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 201 and 202.

HEAD 85 – INLAND REVENUE

Question proposed that the sum of \$5,977,300 for Head 85, Inland Revenue, stand part of the Estimates.

Cde. N. Persaud: Cde. Chairman, I have two questions. One is just for an explanation and that is sub-head 1 (47) Scarce Field Allowance. I see a new item has been created and it is stated 'Scarce Field Allowance' - \$11,370. I want to find out what this really means.

Under sub-head 16, Refunds of Revenue, I recall that last year, having had complaints from persons who sought refunds from the Inland Revenue Department, I raised a question in the Assembly but I was told that this was not existing at that time. May I enquire from the Minister what is the present position, as a matter of fact, how far are they in arrears in relation to the paying of claims for refunds of revenue.

Cde. Sallahuddin: With respect to sub-head 1(47) on page 202, we are aware that there are certain professional accountant qualifications like the A.C.C.A. which are extremely scarce in this country and therefore this Scarce Field Allowance is intended not only to attract but to keep within the employ of the Inland Revenue Department persons so qualified.

With respect to sub-head 16 on page 202, I simply want to point out that the processing of refunds through the Inland Revenue Department is a continuing and

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continual process and therefore it is not the kind of question to which one can give a time stipulation as an answer.

Head 85, Inland Revenue - \$5,977,300 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 203.

HEAD 86 – PENSIONS AND GRATUITIES

Question proposed that the sum of \$5,216,600 for Head 86, Pensions and Gratuities stand part of the Estimates.

Head 86, Pensions and Gratuities - \$5,216,600 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 204 to 218.

HEAD 87 – PUBLIC DEBT

Question proposed that the sum of \$144,000 for Head 87, Public Debt, stand part of the Estimates.

Head 87, Public Debt - \$144,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 219.

HEAD 88 – REVISION OF WAGES, SALARIES AND RELATED PAYMENTS

Question proposed that the sum of \$300 for Head 88, Wages, Salaries and Related Payments, stand part of the Estimates.

Head 88, Wages, Salaries and Related Payments - \$300 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 220.

HEAD 89 – POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK

Question proposed that the sum of \$100 for Head 89, Post Office Savings Bank stand part of the Estimates.

Head 89, Post Office Savings Bank - \$100 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 221 and 222.

DIVISION XXXI – MINISTRY OF FINANCE

Question proposed that the sum of \$74,275,000 for Division XXXI, Ministry of Finance, stand part of the Estimates.

Cde. N. Persaud: Cde. Chairman, in view of the answer I had on the last question, I want to take the opportunity under sub-head 10, Purchase of Vehicles, on page 221 to ask this question as the opportunity presents itself. It has been noted that in 1980 \$70,000 was voted under this sub-head for the purchase of vehicles. I looked at the last Estimates and there is a statement similar to what is stated here in this legend, to wit, “To provide for land rover and boarding launch for Customs and Excise Department; motor vehicle for Inland Revenue Department.” This year we are seeing the sum of \$700,000 and it is stated “To provide one Boarding launch for the Customs and Excise Department and one motor vehicle each for the Customs and Excise Department, Licence Revenue and Accountant General Department.

At this stage, I am particularly interested in relation to this boarding launch and I would like the Minister to say whether any negotiations have started, the boat having been sold – there has not been a boat in use for some time now – for the purchase of this boarding launch. The money was voted, the legend clearly stated it last year; nothing was done last year, whether anything has been done thus far.

The Chairman: Cde. Sallahuddin.

Cde. Sallahuddin: The position is that while negotiations have not begun initial contacts have been established and I must point out that I am speaking with references to 1981.

The Chairman: I will now put the Division with the corrections:

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<u>Page</u>	<u>Column</u>	
221	Total	Against sub-head 8, insertion of amount of \$893,000 and against sub-head 12, reduction of amount of \$5,000,000 to read \$4,107,000.
	Other Finance	Ditto
	Other Finance	Against sub-head 18, changing of amount of \$1,200,000 to read \$1,000,000.
222	Code No.	Against sub-head 25, changing of code number to read 119,057 instead of 119,957. Total Division XXXIII to read Total Division XXXI.

Division XXXI, Ministry of Finance - \$74,275,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 223.

HEAD 90 – MINISTRY OF CO-OPERATIVES

Question proposed that the sum of \$1,050,000 for Head 90, Ministry of Co-operatives, stand part of the Estimates.

Head 90, Ministry of Co-operatives - \$1,050,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 224.

DIVISION XXXII – MINISTRY OF CO-OPERATIVES

Question proposed that the sum of \$400,000 for Division XXXII stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: I will now put the Division with the corrections:

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<u>Page</u>	<u>Column</u>	
224	Code No.	Against sub-head 1 insertion of Code Number 128,001.

Division XXXII, Ministry of Co-operatives - \$400,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 85 and 86.

HEAD 34 – LABOUR

Cde. Hoyte: Cde. Chairman, with your leave, I beg to move the suspension of Standing Orders No. 83 and No. 66 (1) to enable the following amendments to be made to this Head:

<u>Page</u>	<u>Column</u>	
86	1981 Estimates	Against sub-head 9, changing of figure of \$60,000 to read \$447,000.
		Changing of Total Other Charges to read \$1,065,200 instead of \$678,200 and Grand Total: Head 34 to read \$1,769,100.

Question put and agreed to.

Motion carried.

5:40 p.m.

Question proposed that the sum of \$1,769,100 for Head 34, Labour, stand part of the Estimates.

Head 34, Labour - \$1,382,100 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 87.

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5:30 – 5:40 p.m.

HEAD 35 – EMPLOYMENT EXCHANGE

Question proposed that the sum of \$134,900 for Head 35, Employment Exchange, stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Cde. Jagan.

Cde. J. Jagan: Sub-head 1 (1) Manager, Employment Exchange; (2) Assistant Manager, Employment Exchange; (3) Clerical Establishment. I observe that the amount allocated for 1981 - \$68,700 – for item (3) is a considerable amount higher than the Revised Estimates for last year, and also when we look at the actual amount spent for 1979. The employment exchange certainly has no need to expand. In fact, we have probably reached the stage where it should be shut down completely because it is just one more example of party paramountcy. If you have more people employed there all they would be doing, as far as my information goes, is to be scrutinising party cards – PNC cards – and those who make application, from many, many reports I have had, have no opportunity of getting a chance at employment unless they produce their cards. What we have is an example of party patronage and from the point of view of employment. The Employment Exchange is just a waste of time and you can be rid of it at this stage and you would not be any worse off.

The Chairman: Cde. Vice President.

The Vice President, Public Welfare (Cde. Green): Cde. Chairman, we did not have all the posts filled last year and as I noted in my contribution to the Budget Debate, we are streamlining the Exchange operations in this country to give a greater emphasis in dealing with the entire public sector and this is reflected in the Estimates before us.

Head 35, Employment Exchange - \$134,900 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 88.

HEAD 36 – SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Question proposed that the sum of \$9,280,900 for Head 36, Social Assistance, stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Cde. Jagan.

Cde. J. Jagan: Sub-head 7 – Old Age Pensions; Sub-head 8 – Public Assistance. I had mentioned when I spoke in the general debate that it would be useful for us to know the number of persons who are in receipt of old age pensions because from the figures I arrived at, dealing with the amounts provided this year, and last year it seems that we are providing old age pensions to approximately 18,000 persons for this year, because I notice the legend says, “Increase in number of recipients.” So we can say there is an increase of 1,600 people in the age group 65 and above.

I would like to know what is really the percentage of persons in our society 65 years and above and on that we would be able to know if the old age pensions are really being spread properly amongst the age group that is entitled to the receipt of it. Naturally, we know that not every single person 65 and above will be receiving it, but percentage wise I would imagine in a country as poverty stricken as Guyana is, that the majority of old persons would have to be in receipt of the pittance we are now paying them and I am quite convinced that the number must be beyond the 16,000 to 18,000 that we are now giving.

I had mentioned earlier, too, in the debate that although you are now giving an increase of \$15 per month, raising the amount to \$45, it is still totally inadequate and again on behalf of my party I wish to recommend that every effort be made to give an

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amount of pension which relates to the cost of living in this country because this bears no relationship at all.

Also, under Public Assistance we give \$2 million. Last year the actual amount was only \$1.8 million on the Revised Estimates which is pretty small and it is my understanding from the people I interview that it is done in a very stingy way, the way the applications are processed and the decision made as to who will get payment. There is certainly no open handedness in assisting the thousands of distressed families who need help and as we all know, public assistance is not given to any able-bodied person and that is one of the horrors of any society that an able-bodied person, male or female, who cannot find work at the same time cannot get social assistance.

To get social assistance, a person must be disabled or underage or in some way there is some variation on the theme. But it is at this point that public assistance should be given the thousands of families that are destitute because of unemployment. And again I believe, having seen the number of pages of Estimates we have already passed through where millions are glibly and easily passed, that here we have an opportunity to assist those who are in very great need – not only physical need, they are in need of moral support – to know, Mr. Chairman, that the society in which they live takes some consideration of them and is showing some interest.

It is all well and good for us to give these two amounts for public assistance and old age pensions, but we are neglecting a very important section of our population that must be given help and I would strongly urge that the Ministry concerned give actual and real consideration to providing unemployment relief to those thousands of men, women and children who are suffering because of unemployment.

5:50 p.m.

Cde. Dalchand: Sub-head 7, Old Age Pensions. I have another point to make on that, just to say, Cde. Chairman, if we accept what the Government said, that Old Age Pension would be increased by 50 percent, the sum allocated does not give that reflection. Our point is that people who have qualified, their applications for pension are not being processed. If they were put on the register it would be nearly \$9 million.

Cde. Green: At the moment, the Department is engaged in a very massive programme of examining records going out to the rural areas and, with the assistance of

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the new regional structure, hope to deal with all of the problems that exist, as far as the payment of old age pension is concerned. We have already taken effective action to remove the form and difficulties that Old Age Pensions have had in the past, and the thing is being regionalised. When that exercise is completed, we will look at it and, if necessary, the adjustments in terms of the figures will be made.

With respect to the proposals made by the Member Cde. Jagan, I think people seem to get confused with concepts. We are talking here about Public Assistance. When this Government ever considers the question of unemployment relief is an entirely different matter. We have a creditable record of assisting families and individuals who find themselves in circumstances where they need public assistance.

Head 36, Social Assistance - \$9,280,900 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 90.

HEAD 37 – ENVIRONMENT AND WATER SUPPLY

Question proposed that the sum of \$6,675,000 for Head 37, Environment and Water Supply stand part of the Estimates.

Head 37, Environment and Water Supply \$6,675,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 91.

DIVISION XXI:1 – MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND WATER SUPPLY

Question proposed that the sum of \$10,706,000 for Division XXI: 1, Ministry of Environment and Water Supply stand part of the Estimates.

Cde. J. Jagan: Sub-head 4, Georgetown Sewerage and Water Commissioners: Rehabilitation. The amount of \$2.6 million is being allocated to the Georgetown Sewerage and Water Commissioners: Rehabilitation. I want to refer to the disgraceful condition of water and sewerage in our so-called Garden City. There is only one word that can describe the two and that is a disgrace. Large areas of the city, just like the country, cannot get water anymore. Water is not being distributed throughout greater Georgetown. I can speak for myself. Where I live, if we can get water above the ground floor, one hour per day, we are very lucky. We are right down to the stand pipe in the yard. We are all back to the lowest form of water supply. Well, there is one more, you can go to the trench because, already, in Greater Georgetown, there have been times when we have had to go to the trench with our buckets. But for urban areas not to have water supplies into buildings is evidence of the retrogression that is taking place

generally, both in living conditions and environment, and general patterns of life in this country.

Instead of moving forward we are being pushed backward. Certainly, the sight of the horrible sewerage explosion that took place quite recently is an example of the lack of vision of those who are responsible. In urban areas disease travels so rapidly that I wish to warn those responsible that we stand in a dangerous position when our sewerage breaks out into what we saw recently, and where we cannot even provide proper potable water. Instead of dragging our feet on these things and talking about Garden City, I think we have to recognise the sorry state of affairs and try to do something positive about it. I know what the Minister will say. He will tell us his usual thing about the fact of the matter is that the Ministry of Health and the City authorities have been unable to carry us forward into the 1980's with better water and better sewerage and better environmental conditions.

Cde. Green: I am not sure what is the question except to make a general remark. Some people get up in this Assembly and talk about the 1980's as though Guyana is an island by itself. In the great metropolis of Europe there are urban centres where people still do not get water. We are trying in very difficult circumstances to provide our citizens with adequate water supply. This sum of money is to rehabilitate the existing sewerage and water system. The programme has been started and every effort is being made to improve the aquifers and to make maximum use of the aquifer in Greater Georgetown. This programme is a dynamic on-going programme with the constraints that exist in our present society.

The Chairman: I will now put the Division with the corrections:

<u>Page</u>	<u>Column</u>	
91	Code No.	Against sub-heads 1, 2, 3, and 4 insertion of code numbers 137,001; 137,002; 137,003 and 137,004, respectively.
	Division XXI:1	Division XXI:1 Ministry of Environment and Water Supply to read Environment and Water Supply.

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5:50 – 6:00 p.m.

Explanatory

Notes

Ditto

Division

XXI:1

Total Division XXIA to read Total Division

XXI:1

Division XXI:1, Ministry of Environment and Water Supply - \$10,706,000 –
agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

6:00 p.m.

The Chairman: Pages 92 to 94.

HEAD 38 – HEALTH

Question proposed that the sum of \$2,445,900 for Head 38, Health, stand part of the Estimates.

Cde. J. Jagan: I would like to speak on page 93 sub-heads 11 and 15.

The Chairman: What about page 94?

Cde. J. Jagan: Nothing there. Under sub-head 11, Grant to Infant Welfare and Maternity League, I would like to stress that I think a lot more will have to be done in this direction if we are going to improve on the infant mortality rate that exists in our society. Whether it needs more money, more attention or more personnel, that is the Ministry's job to find out, but the fact remains that our infant mortality rate is 54 per 1,000 live births and the mortality rate for gastro-enteritis cases in children is 100 per 1,000 live children. What is even worse, the malnutrition mortality rate is 77 per 1,000.

This is something that we have to take very careful cognizance of because the work in our post-natal clinics is most important and must have further assistance. By that I mean that we should be able to provide free milk and vitamins and whatever else is necessary in the period of childhood that is the most dangerous, the early period, the first year, and the period when malnutrition raises its ugly head.

The Ministry of Health in the last few years has made various denials about the level of malnutrition which exists in this country but the fact remains that malnutrition is a serious disease and I do not think that sufficient attention is being given to it.

Under Sub-head 15, Convalescent Home for Children, we are again for the umpteenth year providing the sum of \$40,000. Now, the Convalescent Home for Children is doing, I think, a pretty good job in taking off some of the load from the Government agencies. It is a service provided by the Red Cross, as I understand it, which raises funds and gets \$40,000 a year from the Government. With the rising cost of living, the need to pay higher sums of money for bedding and equipment and food and personnel I would strongly urge that this sum of \$40,000, which has remained static for a number of years, be raised to at least \$100,000.

The Minister, Health, in the Ministry of Public Welfare (Cde. Van West-Charles): Cde. Chairman, in reply to Mrs. Janet Jagan in relation to our infant mortality rate with reference to gastro-enteritis, I would like to inform Mrs. Janet Jagan that, as a result of the Oral Rehydration Unit which has been established at the new Accident Emergency Unit at the Georgetown Hospital, (1) the admission of patients for gastro-enteritis has dropped approximately 65 percent; [Applause] and (2) I do not know where she got her

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figures from. In respect to malnutrition, in every country you visit malnutrition exists. Why? Because there are varying degrees of malnutrition, varying reasons why a child or a person is malnourished. I happen to be trained in Cuba where malnutrition also exists. There is malnutrition because of taboos and for various other reasons.

In Guyana we - especially the Opposition – have been making the mistake of utilising what is called the Gomez scale. I said I was trained in Cuba and a proper scale for the evaluation of malnutrition is the Waterloo scale where you have a better view of your malnutrition cases.

In terms of deaths from malnutrition, I do not know where Mrs. Jagan get her figures from but in terms of Guyana, a Report from W.H.O. shows that only .7 percent of deaths occurred from malnutrition, grade 3 malnutrition according to the scale they so like to use, the Gomez. I don't know where she got her figures from.

In terms of free vitamins and milk, all medication – once people attend the Government clinics – is given free of charge. May I just point out that this is free of charge whether you be an in-patient or an out-patient and I think the Government should be commended for this. What they should do is join with us in pushing the campaign of the breast in best. [Applause]

In respect to the Convalescent Home, I do not know whether we are on the right track but convalesce means convalesce. However, as a result of intensification of construction of a number of health services throughout the country and intensification of health visiting by health visitors, there is no need for a number of people, after they leave the Georgetown Hospital, to go into a convalescent home. Only a small percentage of people go so there is no reason for an increase in the current expenditure for the Convalescent Home. [Applause]

Cde. J. Jagan: May I speak? I want to make the point – I am not sure that the Minister realises that the Convalescent Home is a home only for children and for children whose period in the hospital is up and they have no place to go. Their families cannot take them. I would suggest that the Minister visit the Convalescent Home. He would get an entirely different picture.

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Head 38, Health - \$2,445,900 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 95 to 97.

HEAD 39 – MEDICAL

Question proposed that the sum of \$8,100,000 for Head 39, Medical stand part of the Estimates.

Cde. J. Jagan: Under this Head, I do not know if you will permit me to speak on sub-head 1 generally.

The Chairman: We are not having a general debate.

Cde. J. Jagan: There are so many vacancies, if you want me to go one by one.

The Chairman: You want to speak generally on vacancies? Is there any other item or sub-head you want to speak on or are you only dealing with vacancies?

Cde. J. Jagan: Only vacancies. I want to draw the attention of this Assembly to the fact that we have a dangerous number of vacancies of important medical officers. I do not think it is for me to tell you how important they are because they must be important if they are listed on the Establishment. I would first of all like to ask the Minister concerned how many vacancies there are for doctors of all types.

6:10 p.m.

I would like to ask him if it is true that we have a shortage of senior surgeons, if it is true that we do not have a paediatrician, that we do not have a permanent ophthalmologist and if he could tell us how the health and medical personnel relate in Guyana. By that I mean what percentage of our medical health personnel are in the field of preventative medicine and what number do we have in the field of curative medicine because I sat in this Assembly since 1976, year after year, hearing the various Ministers of Health speak about the need for preventative medicine and the sad fact is that from what I understand – the Minister doesn't seem to like my statistics – my statistics are that

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only 10 percent of our medical staff are engaged in preventative medicine. But then he does not like my figures so I am quite willing to hear his figures on the subject.

I do know that in relation to the figures required of doctors per head of population, we are far below the amount set for the region in which we live. My understanding is that we have approximately one doctor for every 15,000 inhabitants and as far as dentists are concerned, we are far worse. I believe it is one dentist for about 75,000 inhabitants. I would like to stress the necessity for filling these various posts if we are to give the population of Guyana the maximum medical care they need.

I want to stress in particular the question of the ophthalmologist. There seems to be great confusion at the hospital. No one seems to know if there is one or there isn't. There was one part-time and he seems to have disappeared and there was a private doctor who was brought in part-time and he claims he is not working for the hospital.

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I would like a clear explanation because there are many, many people who need eye treatment, eye examinations, and they are all being forced to go outside to the one or two private practitioners. There is hardly an eye service in this country and this is pretty bad. So I would ask the Minister to answer me on these points and, particularly, the question of how many surgeons we have functioning at Georgetown Hospital and New Amsterdam Hospital.

The Chairman: Cde. Minister.

Cde. Van West-Charles: Cde. Chairman, in relation to the number of vacancies, Mrs. Jagan should realise that the Government of Guyana, the People's National Congress, has bilateral relations and as a result we have personnel from Cuba and other countries working in Guyana who are not paid under our current expenditure.

In relation to the ophthalmologist, there is one at the Georgetown Hospital and when he goes on leave another is asked to act in his place – a private ophthalmologist. There is also one stationed at New Amsterdam. However, in this year we have collaborated with our Cuban counterparts and we should be increasing the number of ophthalmologists to approximately four.

It is not true to say that there are no paediatricians. The Chief Medical Officer is a paediatrician who functions also at the Georgetown Hospital along with Dr. Austin and the Cuban. In terms of preventative medicine I do not understand Mrs. Jagan because once you are a doctor you are involved in preventative medicine.

In relation to surgeons, there are two surgeons at the Georgetown Hospital. However, there are GMOs who can perform a certain percentage of surgical cases. There are also two surgeons at New Amsterdam. May I also inform you that before May this year we shall be having many more surgeons at both hospitals.

Head 39 – Medical - \$8,100,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 98.

HEAD 40 – PATHOLOGICAL

Question proposed that the sum of \$1,000,000 for Head 40, Pathological, stand part of the Estimates.

Head 40, Pathological - \$1,000,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 99.

HEAD 41 – RADIOLOGICAL

Question proposed that the sum of \$800,000 for Head 41, Radiological, stand part of the Estimates.

Head 41, Radiological - \$800,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 100 to 104.

HEAD 42 – HOSPITALS AND DISPENSARIES

Question proposed that the sum of \$33,700,000 for Head 42, Hospitals and Dispensaries, stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Cde. Jagan.

Cde. J. Jagan: Sub-head 1 (71) – Medex. Cde. Chairman, one does not get much out of raising points here. On the last occasion I asked the Minister how many vacancies there were but he dodged the point. I think he did mention the Medex, but the Government seems to be depending mostly on its medex to fill the vacancies that exist. As I said, the Minister could not answer the last question. He dodged it, but my information is that many persons going to the hospital are not seeing doctors. They are seeking medex and there are many examples of the faulty application of what is an admirable process, the introduction of medex.

When the matter was raised here, the People's Progressive Party supported it as a concept which is useful and which is innovative, but one has to be exceptionally cautious in the training of medex and in the supervision of this type of medical personnel because they are not doctors. They cannot work as doctors. They have not the same training as our

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dispensers which were a class all by themselves. The old time dispenser, after a number of years in the rivers and in the various settlements he worked, became quite experienced. They were very exceptional people. The medex are young, newly trained persons under a system which I say hasn't crystallised fully and so we are having a medex without proper supervision meddling in matters that are not his reserves and making grave errors.

I have had a number of reports from doctors who have told me that they (Medex) have extended themselves in directions where they are not capable of performing and that can be the danger. The whole system of the use of medex, if it is done properly, can be a great advantage to countries like ours, but when we try to have the medex go beyond what he is trained for, we are going to have problems. That is why I would like to issue this warning that he is not a doctor. He is an assistant. He is one who will carry out, presumably, what the dispenser used to do but I do not think his training matches that. But at the Public Hospital there have been many cases where because of the severe shortage of doctors of a number yet unknown, medex have been put in their places and I don't think you should do that. I only issue a word of caution in that direction.

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Cde. Basir: Mr. Chairman, I would like to speak on sub-head 18 which refers to Conveying Sick Persons from Interior to Hospital. I do not know if Suddie or Essequibo can be referred to as Interior. I want to make this point as a bit of advice to the Hon. Minister that there are many occasions when an ambulance is not available and sometimes it does necessitate the medical officer there sending for a helicopter. In this case, I would like that the medical officer be authorised, perhaps to hire a relevant vehicle to take sick persons when other vehicles are not available.

The Chairman: Cde. Minister.

Cde. Van West-Charles: Cde. Chairman, in reply to Mrs. Jagan, there are no medex functioning at the Georgetown Hospital. When Cde. Gilbert spoke in this Assembly and he mentioned about a greying party --

The Chairman: Let us pass that over. Just answer the question.

Cde. Van West-Charles: Mrs. Jagan has a bias to youth when she spoke refers to the medex. A medex is a higher-trained person than a dispenser. I do not know where she got her information from. As a matter of fact, we are now up-dating on the dispensers by sending them to the medex programme. Medex are supervised by way of the doctor in the area, or by way of a radio to the medex headquarters and to the Georgetown Hospital, and they are involved also in preventative medicine. In reply to Cde. Basir, an ambulance is ready to be sent to the Essequibo Coast.

Head 42, Hospitals and Dispensaries - \$33,700,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 105.

HEAD 43 – ANALYST

Question proposed that the sum of \$500,000 for Head 43, Analyst stand part of the Estimates.

Head 43, Analyst - \$500,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

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The Chairman: Pages 106 and 107.

HEAD 44 – PALMS

Question proposed that the sum of \$1,200,000 for Head 44, Palms stand part of the Estimates.

Head 44, Palms - \$1,200,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 108.

DIVISION XXII – MINISTRY OF HEALTH

Question proposed that the sum of \$18,742,000 for Division XXII, stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: I will put the Division with the corrections:

<u>Page</u>	<u>Column</u>	
108	Code No.	Against sub-head 24, completion of code number to read 116,036.

Division XXII, Ministry of Health - \$18,742,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 109 and 110.

HEAD 45 – HOUSING

Question proposed that the sum of \$2,520,700 for Head 45, Housing stand part of the Estimates.

Head 45, Housing - \$2,520,700 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 111.

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6:20 – 6:30 p.m.

DIVISION XXIII – MINISTRY OF HOUSING

Question proposed that the sum of \$6,485,000 for Division XXIII, Ministry of Housing, stand part of the Estimates.

Cde. N. Persaud: Just one question on this page, sub-head 2, Purchase of Land, \$40,000. This is supposed to be in the squatting area. The housing question is one known to all of us in this Assembly since that problem has been aired over and over again. This problem has been recognised by the Vice President and also by the President, both of whom have made mention of this in their speeches. I would like to enquire first of all which squatting area is meant in this explanation in the legend.

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I would like to draw the attention of the Vice President to the fact that in the purchase of this land, if I understand this question correctly as stated here in the legend – They must go back to the speeches made, a speech by Cde. President and also by Cde. Vice President, in relation to the serious housing problem; I do not know if they hope to buy this land and deny the squatters who are already on the land. I would like to ask them to reconsider this matter.

Cde. Green: In terms of the latter remark, we have a housing policy which has been adumbrated in this Honourable Assembly on many occasions. We appreciate and understand that squatting took place in this country during a period of political turmoil and social change. Squatting will not be tolerated by the Ministry by persons many of whom are merely speculators. Where there are genuine problems, the Ministry has – the authority has – and here again we have a good record, moved in and assisted those persons in their rehabilitation, to be properly housed. On the East Bank, West Demerara, Corentyne, West Coast Berbice, in all those areas we dealt with people who were genuine squatters, but, as I said, we are not producing new entrepreneurs.

To answer the question specifically, this is a sum of money allocated to be used by the authority as necessary. There are some places where persons have squatted that are owned by private persons and this is a sum on the assumption that when the re-development work is completed and we fix a price we may have to compensate a few persons.

Division XXIII, Ministry of Housing - \$6,485,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 12.

HEAD 6 – MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS

PARTY AND STATE RELATIONS

Question proposed that the sum of \$117,500 for Head 6, Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, Party and State Relations, stand part of the Estimates.

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Head 6, Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, Party and State Relations agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 13 and 14.

HEAD 7 – PARLIAMENT OFFICE

Question proposed that the sum of \$286,700 for Head 7, Parliament Office, stand part of the Estimates.

Cde. N. Persaud: Cde. Chairman, one question on page 13, sub-head 1 (5). It deals with the remuneration for the Hansard Editor. I want to congratulate the comrades who have so ably seen this question of reclassifying this post to the salary scale of A31, but in so doing I also want to draw attention to those concerned in relation to what may be considered as an anomaly and that deals with the Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly. I do not want the impression to be given that I am at all against the reclassifying of the post of Hansard Editor. I think the question of reclassifying can also be looked into as far as the Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly is concerned.

Cde. Basir: rose --

The Chairman: Cde. Basir, you have to be more vigilant.

Cde. Basir: Cde. Chairman, from the inception of my speaking in Parliament this device has not worked. This is why I suffer some problems. I want to raise a question on item (12), Clerical Establishment, page 13. I notice that you had eight persons on the clerical establishment, or something like that. What I would like to ask: In view of the enlarged Parliament whether the staff is capable of handling all these matters.

The Chairman: I could tell you no. Cde. Vice President.

The Vice President, Parliamentary Affairs and Party/State Relations (Cde. Ramsaroop): Cde. Chairman, the answer is no and the establishment will have to be boned down.

Head 7, Parliament Office - \$286,700 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

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The Chairman: Comrades, after the suspension and return at 8 o'clock, we will do Education and if that is finished, we will do Regional Development.

Assembly resumed

Sitting suspended at 6:30 p.m.

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NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

8:00 p.m.

On resumption --

The Chairman: Page 149.

HEAD 52 – MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Question proposed that the sum of \$1,769,400 for Head 52, Ministry of Higher Education, stand part of the Estimates.

Cde. Mohamed: Cde. Chairman, as we all notice, this is a new Head and though there are no explanatory notes accompanying the various items I think I have a fairly reasonable understanding of what most of them deal with. However, in spite of that, I wish to refer to sub-head 15, Ideological Education, and in view of the absence of a legend I would wish to ask the Hon. Minister of Higher Education if he can elaborate on this sub-head a little further for us. I would assume that Ideological Education here would mean the promotion of scientific socialism. --

The Chairman: Cde. Mohamed, you do not know what it is about. You are asking the Minister what it is. When he tells you, then you can discuss it.

Cde. Mohamed: I was about to make that point when you intervened. I was about to ask the Hon. Minister if he can say whether that assumption is along the right lines or not and furthermore, I would like to enquire from the Hon. Minister whether sub-head 15 will include the promotion of any programme within the University of Guyana pertaining to ideological education and whether we will see an expansion of ideological education and particularly scientific socialism within the working class of this country.

The Minister of Higher Education (Cde. Chandisingh): Cde. Chairman, I am very happy to see the trend of thought coming from the member, my good friend Cde. Feroze Mohamed. As he indicated, this is a new Ministry and so I would just like to indicate to him and to this Assembly that in relation to ideological education specifically, this new Ministry of Higher Education conceives as its mission, among other things, of course, to provide citizens with the ideological orientation that will enable them to contribute to the achievement of our socialist objective with particular reference to co-operativism as the technique for building socialism in Guyana.

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He asked a question specifically about scientific socialism. May I say that it is well known – I hope it is well known; it ought to be well known by now – that our Party bases its ideological conception on the general principles of Marxism but, at the same time, we believe that his philosophy, this ideology, must be applied concretely to the specific conditions of our country and it is in this sense that we have on numerous occasions referred to the principle of co-operativism as the ways and means by which we hope to achieve our socialist objectives.

In this sense I would like to think that we in Guyana are scientific in our approach to socialist development. If we merely copied either from a text-book and/or from some model which exists and which may be very satisfactory from the point of view of this or that particular country whose objectives are also socialism, I think we would land ourselves in a great difficulty. And so I think that, at this stage, that explanation is sufficient. I would like to suggest that the Member Feroze Mohamed would do well, if he has not yet done so, to read the first policy statement which was put out by the Party on the question of co-operativism and I think that careful study of that document will reveal the answer to his question.

A question was also posed specifically as to whether it is intended under Ideological Education to provide programmes in the U.G. on ideological education. The U.G. itself, of course, has its own programmes but I would like to think that this Ministry, which has within its portfolio Ideological Education as one of the broad matters together with co-operative education, adult education, workers education, apart from higher education, will seek to involve, as widely as possible, the entire nation in the process of ideological orientation since we believe that in order to construct a socialist society in Guyana it is necessary to secure not only learning in terms of education and skills or acquiring of education and skills, but it is also necessary to provide the ideological orientation which, among other means, we hope will ensure commitment to the objectives of our society.

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Similarly, the answer to his question as to whether ideological education will be expanded is, I think, very obvious in that the Ministry of Higher Education will seek to greatly extend and deepen ideological work in, as far as possible, all facets of our society, involving training of trainers and so on. So that is the answer in brief.

The Chairman: I will put the Head with the corrections:

<u>Page</u>	<u>Column</u>	
149	Establishment 1981	Against item (9), changing of figure to read 13. Against item (10) changing of figure 1 to read 2. Changing of total to read 35.
	Head 52	Against item (9) changing of 1 Confidential Secretary to read 3 Confidential Secretary and 1 Typist/Clerk II/I to read 5 Typist/Clerk II/I. Between the offices Confidential Secretary and Typist/Clerk II/I insertion of 3 Accounts Clerk II A9.

Head 52 – Ministry of Higher Education - \$1,769,400 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 150.

DIVISION XXVII – MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Question proposed that the sum of \$3,500,000 for Division XXVII, Ministry of Higher Education, stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Cde. Mohamed.

Cde. Mohamed: Sub-head 2 – Kuru Kuru College. Quite briefly here, Cde. Chairman, may I enquire from the Minister of Higher Education in view of the fact that the \$400,000 required appears to me quite hefty, if he could elaborate a little on what these additional training facilities would be as is explained here in the legend.

The Chairman: Cde. Chandisingh.

Cde. Chandisingh: Cde. Chairman, the legend refers to the provision of additional training facilities. I think, however, that what is implied there in its broadest sense is that certain works and certain purchases have to be made which will enable the college to carry out its task and among the things to be done under this sub-head would be, for example, the resurfacing of the campus roads, renovation of stores bond,

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providing certain equipment for the Materials Production Centre which plays a very important role, the acquisition of more books for the library, improvements to the catering and house keeping section, also transportation which is very important in that area, also protection of buildings, furniture, equipment and that type of expenditure.

Cde. Ram Karran: I wonder if I can ask the Hon. Minister whether it is intended to change the amount in the Critchlow Labour College grant. I understand the Vice President to say that it was increased.

The Chairman: No, it is \$100,000.

I will now put the Division with the corrections:

<u>Page</u>	<u>Column</u>	
150	Code No.	Against sub-heads 1 and 2, changing of code numbers to read 138,001 and 138,002 respectively. Against sub-head 3, insertion of code number 138,003. Deletion of figures shown in columns 1980 Revised Estimates, 1980 Approved Estimates and 1979 Actual.

Division XXVII – Ministry of Higher Education - \$3,500,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 20.

HEAD 11 – TEACHING SERVICE COMMISSION

Question proposed that the sum of \$276,900 for Head 11, Teaching Service Commission, stand part of the Estimates.

Head 11 – Teaching Service Commission - \$276,900 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 151 and 152.

HEAD 53 – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
AND CULTURE

Question proposed that the sum of \$24,400,000 for Head 53, Ministry of Education, Social Development and Culture, stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Cde. Mohamed.

Cde. Mohamed: Sub-head 22 – Education for the Blind; Sub-head 47 – University Course for Teachers of the Deaf. Cde. Chairman, with your permission I would like to take these two sub-heads together. The point is common that I want to make and that is, under both sub-heads I notice that the money approved in the 1980 Estimates does not appear in the revised section, giving me the impression that even the paltry sums voted for education for the blind and the course for teachers of the deaf were not utilised and, therefore, the programmes were not pursued last year. I notice again that the same paltry sums are being offered for both subjects. I would have thought that in this Year of the Disabled that, perhaps, the Minister may have considered the possibility of increasing the amounts voted. Be that as it may, may I enquire from the Minister whether in this particular year we are likely to see the realisation of the programmes that fall within the framework of those two sub-heads?

Sub-head 23 – Adult Education Classes. Here again, the amount seems to be a static vote for adult education classes. This is an important aspect of educational work in the country and on our side we are always prepared to support the highest amounts of money that can be allocated towards this important function, but we note that there is no increase in the money asked for.

I would like to enquire here whether that would mean that in this year we will see no increase or expansion of adult education classes throughout the country. This, in my opinion, is an important thing and there are many areas of the country where such classes are not conducted and we would like to see, of course, an expansion of this programme. We would, furthermore, enquire whether even though there is a static vote, there will be any expansion here.

I wish to ask, also, in view of the amount of money we vote yearly for adult education classes, whether the Minister can explain what are the mechanisms, if any, utilised to ensure that those classes which are going on are conducted in accordance with what should be done. I ask this because my information indicates that in some areas

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some abuse exists. Assuming that my information is right, perhaps if there was some monitoring of these classes then the abuse that has come to my attention may not exist. The abuse to which I refer, Cde. Chairman, is that I have been informed that whilst these adult education classes are primarily for those who have left school and are mainly for people within particular communities, what is happening, in particular in one area, is that because I understand there is a \$200 grant for the Head of Centre, that money is collected but those attending the particular class are not really school leavers or people belonging to the community but indeed and in fact are people who are presently in schools. That may work advantageous to those who are presently in schools who will get an opportunity for extra lessons, but I do not think it is in keeping with the intention of this class. I think that some monitoring ought to be done in this respect.

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Sub-head 25, Sports Training. Here I note that the Approved Estimate 1980 indicated \$3,000 but the Revised Estimated 1980 indicated nothing and I would like to enquire whether that sum of \$3,000 was not used towards the Sports Training that we see here. If that money was not used, then why not? While I recognise that this is not the only area where sport expenses are reflected, I would have thought that one would have utilised all possibilities in promoting sport wherever those possibilities exist. We have heard quite a lot of talk about sport and I would like to know what prevents the use of this money, whether there was no use for it whatsoever. Perhaps the Ministry can give some explanation also as to what this sub-head really deals with considering the fact that in another Ministry a lot of money will be used in terms of sport, but we have no objection, wherever sport can be pursued we will encourage promotion.

Sub-head 29, Grant towards operation of St. Ignatius Hostel. I have been informed that in the latter part of 1980 the St. Ignatius Hostel faced certain problems, one of which was that it had to contend with a shortage of food. I understand that when the Supervisor approached the Ministry she was told, “Why are the students not growing food? The Ministry cannot provide everything.” As a result, students who are living at this hostel had to rely to a large extent on the little farine that was coming in from their parents.

If this is true, I do not think that the Ministry took a healthy position on this question. Furthermore, I understand that a number of students left that school as a result of this problem. I should like to enquire from the Minister whether my information is correct and, if it is correct, why did such a problem exist in one of the more depressed areas in our country, in an Amerindian area in the Rupununi, where one has to make some special effort to provide adequate facilities and food arrangements for students attending school there.

Sub-head 30, Grant to University of Guyana. Here again I note that there has been no increase. This is rather surprising in view of the fact that many problems still persist at the University of Guyana and many of those problems hinge upon finances. Only recently we saw a report presented by a particular Committee, and Interim Report, that emphasised the growing need of finances for the University of Guyana in order that some of the problems plaguing the University should be resolved. I would have thought that some more money could have been diverted here.

We have spoken quite a lot about the role, the function and the importance of the University to this nation and to the development of this country and it is surprising therefore that the Government did not see the wisdom in increasing the amount allocated to the University of Guyana.

May I use this opportunity also to mention that, as a member of the Council, I have been made aware that one of the other problems affecting the University is the problem of enrolment of students. Often many programmes are not fully utilised because the University does not have the optimum amount of student participating in the different courses. It was drawn to the attention of the Council that underlying that problem is the fact that many teachers who would have attended these courses are not released from the Ministry and therefore the question of release of teachers has grown into a burning problem for many teachers who would like to pursue a professional education.

It would appear to us that there is no defined policy of the Ministry in terms of releasing teachers who would like to pursue education. At least, I do not know of a policy and I would like to enquire from the Minister whether there is a policy and on what grounds are teachers released to go to the University. I understand that in the latter part of last year some were released but still there are many question marks because many are asking: How can some go and others not go and things like that. Perhaps the Minister will use the opportunity to explain what is the policy and how are releases being made, particularly of teachers who would like to go to the University of Guyana, whether there is a policy pertaining to that and if there is not a policy, as some teachers are likely to point out, whether there is not room for favouritism and some discrimination in the selection of teachers wanting to enroll in these programmes.

Then I turn my attention to sub-head 35, Mass Games, Expenses of. I wish to enquire from the Minister whether this sum appearing here reflects the amount of money to be exact \$17,000 – that was used earlier this year to import costumes from the United States for the Mass Games spectacle which we recently saw and whether it also included the \$13,600 estimated to import paint from Trinidad. My information is that not only were we spending locally for the Mass Games Secretariat and for the Mass Games performances but a huge part was used up in foreign currency to import costumes and paint. Perhaps my information is wrong but this is where the Minister comes in to clarify that.

A second point I wish to raise here is that I do not think that the Ministry or the Minister is taking a realistic and objective view with respect to utilising students for the Mass Games performances. We have had some embarrassing results at examinations, particularly at the CXC.

The Chairman: I am not allowing that. We are dealing with the expense of the Mass Games. You were perfectly right all the time asking if it included this, if it included that. You are now going to another aspect.

Cde. Mohamed: May I ask whether the Minister will consider looking at the utilisation of students who are called upon to perform at these Mass Games activities in view of certain problems.

The Chairman: We are dealing with expenses. Expenses are expenses.

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Cde. Mohamed: Sub-head 43 – Expenses for Conducting Technical Examinations. Now, if I turn to sub-head 43 the legend reads that this is a new sub-head. Surely, we will all agree that this is a new sub-head because this idea was very recent. I understand that a committee was recently set up to elaborate and work out matters relevant to the transition from the City and Guilds examination to the local examination. I would like to ask the Minister how far has this committee gone with its work and whether this committee has completed its work and whether, if it has completed its work, the Minister is satisfied that the work is good and the local examination compares favourably to the City and Guilds, and in answering that question, to assure --

The Chairman: But, Cde. Mohamed, I stopped you just now about the Mass Games. You will have to find some other relevant head. What we are dealing with here is merely the expenses incurred in conducting technical examinations.

Cde. Ram Karran: Cde. Chairman, to a point of order –

The Chairman: Cde. Ram Karran, just sit down.

Cde. Ram Karran: I want to speak on a point of order.

The Chairman: Just sit down. Cde. Mohamed, if you can find some other head where you can ask these relevant questions about conducting City and Guilds examinations and so on, surely, but when you are dealing with expenses, “expenses” means expenditure.

Cde. Ram Karran: Cde. Chairman.

The Chairman: Yes, let me hear what is your point of order?

Cde. Ram Karran: It would seem to me from this afternoon when I was here that the Speaker seeks every opportunity to interrupt.

The Chairman: Cde. Feroze Mohamed, please proceed.

Cde. Ram Karran: This action cannot continue in this Assembly. If Your Honour wishes to stop discussion, then do it. You seem to have time on your hands and you do not want to use it. I cannot see what is wrong with the Hon. Member asking questions.

The Chairman: I have seen. Cde. Mohamed.

Cde. Mohamed: Well, Mr. Chairman, if you insist that that position be taken, it seems to me I cannot continue on this head any more and I will invite the Minister to respond.

The Chairman: Cde. Minister, do you wish to answer it? Cde. Chandisingh.

Cde. Chandisingh: Cde. Chairman, I would try to answer specifically to those two matters which were raised which fall within the portfolio now of the Ministry of Higher Education, namely, Adult Education Classes and the University of Guyana. With respect to adult education classes, I am very happy to note that the member, Cde. Mohamed, has said that he would like to see an expansion of the work of adult education.

My information is that the Adult Education Association has been playing a very important and useful role in the total education system of Guyana. As you know, Cde. Chairman, the amount of money that is allocated here does not necessarily or truly reflect the total cost. If one were to cost the classes, the teaching services are conducted through the Adult Education Association, and since it is a voluntary body and that association has been able with the guidance of Cde. Newton Profit to secure the services of many persons – many resources persons – to conduct adult education classes in many fields and areas, they do not receive payment as such but may receive what are called honoraria. Thus, from the point of view of the allocation of funds, that is not to be interpreted to mean that the adult education classes will not be expanded.

But I would like to say something else in this connection and that is, that the whole point of having a Ministry of Higher Education, and particularly having adult education fall within the portfolio of that Ministry, is to seek to ensure that there is some more monitoring of what goes on in adult education and as a matter of fact, this corresponds with what the member on the other side has said that he would like to see done. As a matter of fact, even though the Estimates have not yet been passed and though the necessary staff for the Ministry is not yet available, with the limited resources we have had up to now, we have already begun the process of seeking to engage in

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discussion both the representatives of the Adult Education Association and the Extra-Mural Department of the University of Guyana in order to seek to have a greater rationalization of adult education activities in Guyana, and to improve the work that is being done and at the same time to extend. The remarks made by the member opposite are noted and, naturally, will be followed up.

With respect to the grant to the University of Guyana, the comrade said that he would have liked to have seen an increase in that grant. I suppose, Cde. Chairman, that we would all like to see increases right across the board, so to speak, not only for the University of Guyana, but we have to appreciate the nature of the economic situation we face now and take into consideration all of these factors.

However, that notwithstanding, may I draw to the comrade's attention and to the attention of this Assembly that only last year the Government provided an increase from \$9.5 million on the recurrent Estimates to the current amount provided - \$13.7 million – something like 50 percent increase. I have been in discussion with the administration of the University of Guyana and with various other representatives and it appears to me that they appreciate this increase and have indicated that many of their problems in relation to finance are now thereby eased.

If one looks at various reports, one will see quite clearly that they stipulate without making any bones about it that although the university still is faced with problems, the increases which were granted last year were of considerable assistance. For example, if I may just allude to one area that comes to mind at the moment, the question of the library – books. Well, from an allocation that the University has made from this grant for purchasing books to the value of \$500,000, that was increased last year to \$800,000 for the purchase of books and my information is that the grant will this year be increased even further approaching almost \$1 million.

Taking into account, also, the fact that funds are provided for expansion of buildings – the Health Sciences building – for the completion of the library this year and so on, I think, Cde. Chairman, that financially this Government has done a great deal to help the University overcome its financial problems. But I do not wish to stand here and be complacent about matters. We do know there are still some problems but some of these problems do not have to do necessarily with finance and I think the member opposite, Cde. Feroze Mohamed, knows that some of these problems – for example,

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water and sewerage systems and so on – do not necessarily have to do with finance, because the finance is provided, but with other problems and difficulties.

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Those are the points that I would wish to reply to and I think my colleague Cde. Minister of Education, Social Development and Culture may wish to reply to the other matters raised.

The Minister of Education (Cde. Thomas): Cde. Chairman, permit me to respond to the other questions asked under this Head. First of all, I wish to point out that education is not merely about reading and writing. Reading and writing have to do more with literacy. What we are trying to do in education is to provide relevant programmes which result from our understanding of the concept of education which has to do with the development of the human being into a well-rounded person whom we expect to participate in our developmental programmes and our whole thrust.

Cde. Feroze Mohamed did ask under sub-head 25, Sports Training, what was the \$3,000 to be used for. That sum is normally used for the sponsoring of clinics for teachers who are involved in our physical education programmes and for the purchase of some equipment which is used in those programmes.

Under sub-head 29, Grant Towards Operation of St. Ignatius Hostel, he asked whether it was true or not that there was a shortage of food of St. Ignatius Hostel and as a result no school was held. We do not know of that problem. As a matter of fact, it is the first time I am hearing about it but what I wish to say is that for us schools are not literacy houses where people go to learn to read and write. They must develop to be production centres teaching skills relevant to production and drawing students nearer to the world of work which they must be part of when they leave those institutions.

Under sub-head 30, Grant to University of Guyana, he asked about the releases for teachers to attend U.G. It is clear that the Ministry must have a set of parameters by which to determine which students can attend U.G. By this I mean teachers who are actively teaching. We have those parameters and one can understand his problem if, for instance, he comes across a teacher who was denied a release to go to U.G. because he wanted to undertake a programme, say, in Public Administration. For us, if we are to release a teacher to undergo further training, then it must result in a development of his skills so that when he returns to the institution from which he came he will be able to impart those skills more efficiently.

Under sub-head 35, Mass Games, Expense of, a question was asked as to whether \$176,000 of this sum was used for the importation of paint and costumes from Trinidad and the United States of America. This sum is now being asked for and none of it is spent. In so far as the technical examinations go, I cannot understand the query because he is asking that we try to compare favourably our local examinations with those of the City and Guilds. No educator, no one who has a clue about what education and examinations are about would ask such a question. The answer to that simply No, because our examinations must be based on what we conceive a good education to be. Obviously our concept of a good education must be different from the British concept of a good education. In our circumstances for instance, in developing educational programmes, we have to look at those sciences which are associated with anthropology, with our history, our geography, our culture. They must hinge around given objectives which are set and which are clearly defined.

Under those circumstances, therefore, we have to devise methods aimed at assessing and analyzing the work of our students in school with a view towards having them channelled into areas of production with a hope that we can improve our productive lot.

That, I think answers the questions he asked.

The Chairman: There are two questions on sub-heads 22 and 47, Education for the Blind and University Course for Teachers of the Deaf.

Cde. Thomas: We are aware that this year is really the International Year of the Disabled. A lot of work has been done in so far as Hearing Impaired or the Deaf are concerned. We have already organised programme for training teachers who will come

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into contact with the hearing impaired and even though the sum appears to be a small one we are getting a tremendous amount of support from voluntary organisations and we feel that this sum will be able to go a far away in helping the disabled, particularly those who are hearing impaired.

Head 53, Ministry of Education, Social Development and Culture - \$24,400,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 154 and 155.

HEAD 54 – CULTURE

Question proposed that the sum of \$1,700,000 for Head 54, Culture, stand part of the Estimates.

Cde. Mohamed: Sub-head 11, Maintenance of National Cultural Centre and Regional Cultural Centres. I wish to underline that for maintenance purposes we have been spending a tremendous amount from year to year both for the National Cultural Centre and for the Regional Cultural Centre. I would agree that maintenance work at these centres is necessary. However, in view of that fact that it would be wise to aim at having these centres paying for themselves – and here I want to emphasise particularly the National Cultural Centre – I would wish to ask the Minister whether he is satisfied that proper accounts are given with respect to performances that are held from time to time at the National Cultural Centre.

I do not think that a proper system exists and I would enquire why such a system does not exist.

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The Chairman: Cde. Mohamed, you see when I stop you, Cde. Ram Karran stands up and says I am preventing you. You are asking a question as to whether proper accounts are kept or not. If you get the answer “No” or “Yes”, then you will proceed to ask the other questions. You are basing the premise that improper accounts are kept.

Cde. Mohamed: I am just adding some meat to the bones.

The Chairman: Well, don't worry to add meat to the bones. Let us get the bones and then when you get them you can put on the meat.

Cde. Mohamed: Cde. Chairman, I was asking the Minister of Education about the accounting system pertaining to the shows held at the National Cultural Centre, whether he is satisfied about the accounting system; if he is not satisfied, whether he would look into this question in order to be satisfied in the future.

The Chairman: Cde. Minister.

Cde. Thomas: Cde. Chairman, I understand the member's query because as you are aware every cultural installation in this country today came about as a result of this party's term of office. We have been responsible not only for the Cultural Centre but all other cultural installations which are evident in our society today. Possibly, that is the reason which led him to express some doubts as to whether the finances are properly managed. I am satisfied that they are properly managed and wish to point out that use is being made of the Cultural Centre to a much greater degree over the last months.

I wish to further point out that use of the Cultural Centre by itself is not seen by Government as a means of earning income. We feel that we need to support culture and cultural activities and as a result, we anticipate just making sufficient to keep the centre going and not necessarily making any surplus that would result in a profit that could well turn against our intention to really develop and expose our artistes to the nation.

Head 54 – Culture - \$1,700,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 156.

HEAD 55 – IN-SERVICE TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMME

Question proposed that the sum of \$390,000 for Head 55, In-service Teacher Training Programme, stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Cde. Mohamed.

Cde. Mohamed: Sub-head 5 – Furniture, Equipment and Materials; Sub-head 6 – Books and Educational Supplies. I notice here, Cde. Chairman, that there has been no increase to either sub-head. I find this rather strange because in recent days we have learnt that the Ministry or the Government has intentions of setting up an In-Service Teacher Training Programme for Essequibo. If I am to go by these votes here and the allocations here, recognising that no increase is shown, then it gives me the impression that plans for the opening of the In-Service Teacher Training Programme in Essequibo will not be realised in this year.

Will the Minister explain whether I am right here and perhaps elaborate on how soon will this programme begin in the Essequibo area where we think such a programme is direly needed. Furthermore, we think that Essequibo has the necessary facilities for implementing such a programme.

The Chairman: Cde. Minister.

Cde. Thomas: Cde. Chairman, I am happy to hear the member say that Essequibo has facilities for implementing a programme for teacher training. In fact we have been doing some teacher training in Essequibo among our nursery teachers. As you know, when we took over the nursery schools in 1976, there were no teachers trained for nursery schools and beginning last year we had started a rigorous training programme aimed at ensuring that there is a sufficiency of trained nursery school teachers in the shortest possible time. I imagine he is speaking about the training of teachers for primary schools or secondary schools.

The Chairman: Cde. Minister, I allowed him to ask these questions and look where we have gone. All he is asking here – the particulars stated here are, “Furniture, Equipment and Materials - \$6,500.” What is it being expended for? So he goes on to ask about Essequibo and now you see where we are going. Completely different matters. All that we are asked for here is, furniture, equipment, materials and the point that he has

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made is, is it a sufficient sum, or the same sum allocated last year is allocated here? Is it a sufficient sum? That is all he could ask.

Cde. Thomas: I am sorry about that, Cde. Chairman. I promise that I won't be led up again. The sum is quite a sufficient sum.

Head 55, In-Service Teacher Training Programme - \$390,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 157 and 158.

HEAD 56 – PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Question proposed that the sum of \$50,000,000 for Head 56, Primary and Secondary Schools, stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Hon. Member Mr. Abraham.

Mr. M. A. Abraham: Sir, just a few brief questions on sub-heads 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9 and 12 and sub-head 19 on page 158.

The Chairman: Let me hear what questions you are asking, Cde. Mohamed.

Cde. Mohamed: Cde. Chairman, that will depend on whether the member gets the answers.

The Chairman: What questions are you asking? If you ask the same question you have got the answer already, then you may not proceed with it.

Cde. Mohamed: I wish to deal with sub-heads 6, 8, 12, 13, 14 also 1.

The Chairman: You cannot deal with sub-head 1. Sub-head 1 has nothing, just a lot of items under it.

Cde. Mohamed: Items (1) and (3), I'm sorry.

The Chairman: Yes, Hon. Member Mr. Abraham.

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Mr. M. A. Abraham: Sir, with respect to sub-head 2, Transport and Travelling, I am thinking about transportation facilities for the pupils and teachers of the St. Ignatius School in the Rupununi. From the indications, I would imagine that the rainy season is over and the question arises as to transportation of school children from their homes in Lethem to school. This raises the question of the school bus. Some time ago- I think it was early last month – the Chronicle said that the school bus was running but on investigation we found that the school bus is still laid up. Will the Hon. Minister say how early the school bus will be recommissioned?

Sub-head 3, Libraries. There is a great need for libraries in the schools in the Rupununi, in fact, in the hinterland. Is it expected that some of this money, the \$30,000 which is to be voted, would go to the establishing of libraries in schools? If so, in which schools will the library system begin?

Sub-head 4, Maintenance of Vehicles. Our Education Officer for the Rupununi, up to the present, still has to rely on the services rendered by other Government agencies. Will the Hon. Minister say how early the Education Officer will be self-sufficient, at least in respect of transport? He must have his own vehicle to do his tours and visit the various schools.

Sub-head 5, Uniforms. We are aware that in the schools in Georgetown – not all but some of them – the pupils are being supplied with uniforms. Excellent. We support the idea 100 percent. How early will the programme be brought into the Rupununi?

Sub-head 6, Courses for Teachers. I note that the sum of \$200,000 is being spent this year for Courses for Teachers. What I would like to say is this: in some of our schools in the Rupununi we have very fine teachers, excellent teachers, but they just find it impossible to pass the required teacher examinations, the third year and fourth year examinations and so on. We would like to know whether the Ministry of Education is thinking of introducing training courses for teachers in the interior, not on the Essequibo Coast but at a centre like Aishalton for Lethem.

Then we come to sub-head 9, Hinterland Development Programme. The sum of \$150,000 is to be voted. What aspect of development is the Ministry talking about here?

Sub-head 12, Supplies to Schools. Am I to understand that there is going to be an increase in school grants?

Lastly, sub-head 19, Supplies and Equipment for School Farms and Agricultural Plots. The question is: Are these plots and farms proving to be self-sufficient in the sense that they are contributing to the national purse? If they are, would the Hon. Minister say roughly what has been the contribution of these farms in terms of revenue over the past year?

Cde. Mohamed: Sub-head 1.

The Chairman: Before you proceed, I think, Hon. Member Mr. Abraham, that is a classic way to ask questions. I wish others could follow your pattern.

Cde. Mohamed: Sub-head 1, items (1), Head Teacher, (2) Deputy Head Teacher and (3) Senior Teacher. I wish to ask here a general question. Vacancies persist at the Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher and Senior Teacher levels in our education system. These vacancies have existed for a number of years. This matter was raised before in this Assembly several times and still we have not seen measures to resolve these pressing problems within the education system. They are problems which in many ways affect the whole learning process and the efficiency of the running of schools.

We have heard of several reasons and I do know of several reasons why these problems have not been resolved but it seems to me that we will have to solve those reasons also so that we will be able to solve the problems and fill the many vacancies existing in schools, particularly at these levels. I wonder if the Minister can explain what efforts are being made to resolve quickly this problem involving several of our schools, literally scores, both primary and secondary schools, and whether the Ministry can offer some assistance to teachers of Service Commissions under whose portfolio, I understand, appointments come but reality would say something else.

If I move quickly to sub-head 6, Courses of Teachers. May I say that I welcome this increase but I think the increase is inadequate in terms of the pressing need with respect not only to the continuing education of teachers but in view of the fact that a number of teachers need to be trained at specialised courses so that they can fulfil their role and function effectively in preparing students for particularly the CXC examinations. I would like to enquire from the Minister whether such courses – I hope I have the correct

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head – are being conducted and intensified in view of the problems pertaining to examination results.

Sub-head 8, Recruitment of Educators on Contract from Overseas. At another level in a conversation with the Minister he agreed and admitted that the Ministry is in the process of recruiting science teachers from Sri Lanka. I would like to enquire whether arrangement have been finalised for the recruitment of these science teachers and how many will be recruited. Furthermore, I would like to ask the Minister of Education if he can say what are the terms of the contracts, particularly with respect to salaries.

You will recall, Cde. Chairman, that such an experiment was conducted before by a previous Minister of Education and you may recall also some of the criticisms levelled against that experiment and it was predicted that that experiment would flop. Time has vindicated those who had so indicated and ever since then we were calling for a scientific objective approach to the preparation of our teachers and educators so that they can effectively service the education system. But, again, after that failure – the experiment has proved abortive – we come back and we are going to import teachers to man, particularly, our science section.

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I would like to enquire, with respect to the salaries of those who will be coming, whether they will be better or they will equate with similarly qualified science teachers working in Guyana. I would like to also enquire whether this contract would entail foreign currency and what amount of the salary to be paid to the Sri Lankan teachers will be going out of the country in terms of foreign currency as in the case of the British educators before. This has always been a sore problem with our own teachers who feel that foreigners are getting a better deal, and as a result of that factor I think we have suffered. The extent of that suffering we are witnessing here again and I would like the Minister to clarify some of these things so that we will be able to know what is going on with respect to recruitment of educators on contract from overseas.

The final point on that score I would say is that considering the serious problems affecting the education system at this level, the Ministry of Education should begin, purposely, a programme to ease off this situation gradually, to eradicate it so that we will have our own science teachers to train our own students and prepare them so that they can pass, and pass at a good percentage, at the science subjects at examinations.

Sub-head 12, Supplies to Schools. Cde. Chairman, I notice here there has been a decline in the allocation. I find this rather disturbing, particularly when today schools are complaining about lack of essential supplies. We have a number of schools in this country. Many of them get a small amount yearly of \$1,000 to take care of their stationery needs, for example, plus other things and in view of the vexing problem, I would like to enquire from the Minister whether he is satisfied that this reduction in terms of supplies to schools is reasonable and whether he is satisfied that the amount voted is going to solve this burning problem in very many, if not all of our schools in this country.

I would like as an aside to just inform the Minister that failure to offer enough grants so that schools could be kept properly supplied increases the burdens upon parents of thousands of school children who are required to make a lot of contributions towards buying these things. We are not opposed to a contribution here and there, but it seems to me that the greatest part of the burden of the expenses is collected from the children who will have to indulge in a lot of exercises to raise that money.

Whilst not opposed to it, still I think the Government ought to, in the vote here, have a more sympathetic look at this question and help many of these schools who themselves are not able, even if they press parents, to raise the funds in terms of supplies.

Sub-head 18, Purchase of Exercise Books for Distribution to School Children. Here I have no quarrel with the purchase of exercise books. What I would like, however, to draw the Minister's attention to is this, that there is still the problem of irregular and inadequate supplies of exercise books to schools. Very often schools do not get adequate quantities and their supplies on time. I notice that a distribution unit has been set up. I would like to enquire whether the distribution of exercise books will fall under the terms of reference of that unit, if not, I would so advise. It may be a step in solving or easing this problem.

The Chairman: Cde. Minister.

Cde. Thomas: If you will permit me, Cde. Chairman. I wish to reply to the questions raised by Mr. Abraham in the first instance. He asked how early will the school bus be commissioned. Unfortunately, I am not in a position to answer that question since it has to do with the regional administration to a great extent. He asked about the possibility of setting up libraries for hinterland schools and asked whether part of the money asked for would go towards the establishment of those libraries. The

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answer to that is “yes” and St. Ignatius is one of the schools which will be benefit from this provision.

On the question of the transportation for the Education Officer, as you know transportation in these areas is a real problem for many Government Officers. The regional administration has some transportation and the Education Officer from time to time calls on the resources of the regional administration. I think what is needed though is for us to work out a schedule with the regional administration which will enable the Education Officer to visit the schools more regularly until we can get, of course, on top of the whole question of transportation.

I do not think that the Hon. Member knows that we have already started to distribute uniforms to students attending classes in the Rupununi. Some at St. Ignatius have already received their uniforms.

The Hinterland Development Programme is a programme attached to St. Rose’s High School and is an agricultural programme for students who want to do a sixth form programme but also to do a more supplied sixth form programme, and it is basically an agricultural programme which leads them up to the Diploma of Agricultural level.

Supplies to school farms and contributions: I am not in a position to say how much we did get from these school farms during 1980, but what I do know is that these school farms have been producing and in many cases communities have benefited from the involvement of the schools in agriculture and the pursuits in those areas.

Then Cde. Feroze Mohamed asked about vacancies in primary and secondary schools. The situation is not as chaotic as he made out. In fact, over the last year we have filled most of those vacancies and the Teaching Service Commission is determined to correct the situation during the course of this year. Some of money asked for in so far as courses for teachers are concerned will go, of course, towards training our teachers to cope with the increased demand of the C.X.C. examination.

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He asked about the recruitment of science teachers from Sri Lanka. It is true that we proposed to recruit science teachers. As a matter of fact, we never ceased recruiting science teachers. In this case we are presently having discussions with a number of

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agencies and officials who, we think, will have some ideas as to how best we can get around not merely the recruitment of teachers for science but solving the question of inadequacy of science teachers, which not only affects this country but affects every developing country at this point in time. As late as this morning I had a meeting with the National Science Research Council, Dr. Munroe and Professor Niles, and they had some very worthwhile proposals to make.

I cannot respond to his question about contractual arrangements and all that because we have not firmed up our request as yet. We have not approached Sri Lanka up to this point in time.

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Then the question of distribution of exercise books is being taken care of as of this year by the Local Democratic Organs and the Regional Democratic Council and we are sure that the system of distribution will be enhanced because of their involvement in this exercise.

Head 56, Primary and Secondary Schools - \$50,000,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 159.

HEAD 57 – NURSERY SCHOOLS

Question proposed that the sum of \$9,202,100 for Head 57, Nursery Schools, stand part of the Estimates.

Cde. Mohamed: There are just two sub-heads I should like to speak on, sub-head 3 and 4. With respect to sub-head 3, Dietary, I should like to enquire whether all the nursery schools in the country receive free milk. If not, why not? In asking that question may I remind the Cde. Minister that this objective of feeding all the children in nursery schools was long ago promised in this Assembly and we welcomed it because we thought that was a step in the right direction. In fact, Cde. Chairman, you will recall that we went a bit further and said that we would hope that the resources would quickly permit the Government not only to give milk to children at school but perhaps it might want to take a leaf out of the P.P.P.'s actions when in Government when our school feeding programme involved milk, biscuits and vitamin tablets at the primary level.

We would like to enquire if, at the nursery school level, the objective of feeding all has been realised and also to enquire whether it is in the Government's plan to begin and expand this feeding programme, especially in view of the fact that one report in 1978 relating to the children who suffer from a degree of malnutrition indicated that out of every 10 children between the years of 1 to 5 –

The Chairman: Cde. Mohamed, please confine yourself to asking questions.

Cde. Mohamed: Sub-head 4, Courses for Nursery School Teachers. Disturbingly enough I notice that the allocation has been reduced. You may recall, sir, that during last year's debate I mentioned that we have only about 4 percent of nursery school teachers trained. This is an estimated figure. We urged the Government – and I recall that it was

agreed – that much more must be done for the training of school teachers, if not, instead of teachers of nursery school children, we will have baby sitters. When one looks at the number of teachers trained last year, I do not think the sum here should be reduced. In fact, one would have thought that it would have been increased, but we noticed that there is a reduction. I should like to enquire whether we have solved this problem of the training of nursery school teachers, because this is an important matter. We have always emphasised the importance of the training of children at that impressionable age. We need properly trained people to do this type of work.

I may briefly add that I have had cause to look at some of the methods utilised by teachers at some of these nursery schools and I must say – and educationists agree – that the method is all wrong. It is not what you do with nursery school teachers, but they are doing it because of the absence of proper training and I would say that this reduction is unfortunate.

I should like to enquire from the Minister what is the percentage of trained nursery school teachers and whether this reduction is going to mean – as it seems to me – that the training programmes for nursery school teachers are going to suffer.

Cde. Thomas: Cde. Chairman, the Comrade asked about the possibility of feeding all nursery school students. As you know, the school population among nursery school students is 31,000 and they are spread across the country in 374 schools. What we have done so far is to identify communities which need that type of support in the first instance and as you will realise from the amounts asked for, we proposed doing more schools this year and eventually we will try to see that every child of nursery school age gets a proper diet.

A question was asked about courses for nursery school teachers. As you can see from the provisions at the end of 1980 we spent \$20,200. We think that this sum of \$35,000 will be sufficient because, as the member himself pointed out, there was only a small percentage of people trained at the nursery level. We cannot denude the nursery department of all its teachers to put on programmes so we feel with the number we have in mind, who require training urgently, this sum will be adequate for that programme and hence we do not think it makes any sense asking for much more money than we really need. This will satisfy our immediate needs.

Head 57, Nursery Schools - \$9,202,100 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

1981-03-04

9:30 –9:40 p.m.

9:30 p.m.

The Chairman: Page 160.

HEAD 58 – PRACTICAL INSTRUCTION CENTRES

Questions proposed that the sum of \$2,234,500 for Head 58, Practical Instruction Centres, stand part of the Estimates.

Head 58, Practical Instruction Centres - \$2,234,500 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 161 and 162.

HEAD 59 – CYRIL POTTER COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Question proposed that the sum of \$1,100,000 for Head 59, Cyril Potter College of Education, stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Cde. Mohamed.

Cde. Mohamed: Sub-head 5 – Dietary. I notice here that a reduction of a small sum has taken place. I wonder if the Minister is aware that there are still complaints about the quality of food and, also, the adequacy of food for those who live and depend to a larger extent on the diet. If he is not aware, then can I take this opportunity to inform him that I have received complaints from a number of students who are not satisfied with the quantity of food there and, perhaps the Minister may want, if he is unaware, to investigate this question and if he has found out that on investigation I am correct, he may want to at least ensure that this money is not reduced but at least it remains as it was last year.

The Chairman: Cde. Minister.

Cde. Thomas: Cde. Chairman, I did say earlier in answer to a similar question that schools and institutions of learning must be production centres. The teachers at Cyril Potter have undertaken some agricultural activity and I am quite sure that with the yields from that activity, this sum will be adequate.

1981-03-04

9:30 – 9:40 p.m.

Head 59, Cyril Potter College of Education - \$1,100,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 163.

HEAD 60 – TECHNICAL INSTITUTE GEORGETOWN

Question proposed that the sum of \$1,161,600 for Head 60 – Technical Institute, Georgetown – stand part of the Estimates.

Head 60, Technical Institute, Georgetown - \$1,161,600 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 164.

HEAD 61 – CARNEGIE SCHOOL OF HOME ECONOMICS

Question proposed that the sum of \$191,400 for Head 61, Carnegie School of Home Economics, stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Cde. Mohamed.

Cde. Mohamed: Sub-head 11 – Evening Classes – Rural Areas. I rise to enquire here, Cde. Chairman, based on an answer provided previously in this Assembly in terms of the very question and I found some concurrence with the then Minister, I asked about the extension of evening classes in the rural areas which I thought would have been useful and beneficial and we would be reaching out to a number of young women who are in need of this kind of training and to move away to a large extent from the restriction to the urban areas though that is enough, and I would say expand it even. At that time I understood from the answer that there were classes going on at La Bonne Intention, Lusignan and Rosignol. I notice in terms of the allocation that there has not been an increase on last year. I would like to now ask the Minister where in the rural areas are these classes conducted apart from La Bonne Intention, Lusignan and Rosignol, if there has been an addition to those, and whether the \$2,000 here reflects the fact that there is no intention of expanding such classes in the rural areas for this year.

The Chairman: Cde. Minister.

1981-03-04

9:30 – 9:40 p.m.

Cde. Thomas: Cde. Chairman, we do intend to expand our programme in the rural communities and when we come to the multilateral schools, for instance, you will see that provision is made under a special head for non-formal programmes and those programmes will supplement the work of the Carnegie School of Home Economics.

Head 61 – Carnegie School of Home Economics - \$191,400 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 164.

HEAD 62 – QUEEN'S COLLEGE

Question proposed that the sum of \$576,300 for Head 62, Queen's College, stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Cde. Mohamed.

Cde. Mohamed: Sub-head 8 – Educational Supplies, Equipment and Apparatus and sub-head 12 – Maintenance of Laboratory Equipment. Sir, here I want to raise some problems which are general problems within a number of educational institutions in the country and having raised it here, I do not intend to raise it again because they recur endlessly under other Heads. The first one I will touch upon comes under sub-head 8 together with sub-head 12, and what I would like to enquire from the Minister is this: what efforts are being made to solve these problems which exist in so many of our educational institutions and whether the recent attempt to investigate shortages is going to be the basis for the importation of some of these items of equipment so short in supply from the German Democratic Republic. In other words, do they have plans to import some of these items of equipment from the German Democratic Republic in attempting to resolve the problems in terms of equipment and apparatus and laboratory equipment.

The Chairman: Cde. Minister, you see he is asking a very specific question, whether you propose importing from the German Democratic Republic. He didn't say generally.

Cde. Thomas: Well, the answer is no, not at this stage.

Head 62, Queen's College - \$576,300 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

1981-03-04

9:30 – 9:40 p.m.

The Chairman: Page 166.

HEAD 63 – BISHOPS’ HIGH SCHOOL

Question proposed that the sum of \$453,900 for Head 63, Bishops’ High School, stand part of the Estimates.

Head 63, Bishops’ High School - \$453,900 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

9:40 p.m.

The Chairman: Page 167.

HEAD 64 – ANNA REGINA SECONDARY SCHOOL

Question proposed that the sum of \$200 for Head 64, Anna Regina Secondary School, stand part of the Estimates.

Head 64, Anna Regina Secondary School - \$200 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 168.

HEAD 65 – BERBICE HIGH SCHOOL

Question proposed that the sum of \$248,000 for Head 65, Berbice High School, stand part of the Estimates.

Head 65, Berbice High School - \$248,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 169.

HEAD 66 – NEW AMSTERDAM TECHNICAL INSTITUTE

Question proposed that the sum of \$725,000 for Head 66, New Amsterdam Technical Institute, stand part of the Estimates.

1981-03-04

9:40 – 9:50 p.m.

Head 66, New Amsterdam Technical Institute - \$725,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Cde. Ram Karran: May I ask a simple question on something that seems to run all the way through these Estimates, the Heads that we have passed. The legend against item (1) on the right hand side of the page reads “Revision of salaries in 1980, changes in holders of offices and filling of vacancies.” It is an omnibus legend which is not borne out if you go through the items that come under item (1). Is it intended merely to give an indication or is it factual? It is not factual, to my mind, because many of the sums shown in the 1980 Estimates are the same as those shown in the 1981 Estimates although there have been some changes. I have always been protesting about these omnibus declarations in the Estimates. They are not factual.

The Chairman: This question was asked before if you were here. Cde. Thomas.

Cde. Thomas: I don’t understand the question, Cde. Chairman.

The Chairman: The question is that you have an omnibus explanatory note “Revision of Salaries in 1980, changes in holders of offices and filling of vacancies”, whether you really intend to increase salaries because it would not appear so if you compare the 1980 Budget allocation with this year’s. Am I right, Cde. Ram Karran?

Cde. Ram Karran: Yes.

Cde. Thomas: In many of the cases officers were acting in those positions during last year and they have been confirmed.

Head 66, New Amsterdam Technical Institute - \$725,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 170.

HEAD 67 – LILIAN DEWAR COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Question proposed that the sum of \$355,800 for Head 67, Lilian Dewar College of Education, stand part of the Estimates.

Head 67, Lilian Dewar College of Education - \$355,800 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 171.

HEAD 68 – CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT UNIT

Question proposed that the \$933,500 for Head 68, Curriculum Development Unit, stand part of the Estimates.

Cde. Mohamed: Cde. Chairman, sub-head 2, Transport and Travelling. I had previously desisted from asking a question on that sub-head even though I have been advised that persons working in this unit have always expressed the need for a vehicle. I notice here you have Transport and Travelling but I do not think, from my information, that a vehicle exists here and I am convinced that a vehicle is necessary here.

The Chairman: Mr. Mohamed, kindly asked if there is a vehicle. If the answer is No you will go on. If the answer is yes, that will save a lot of unnecessary comments. You want to find out if there is a vehicle there or not.

Cde. Mohamed: I am advocating that a vehicle be provided for this Development Unit. I am certain that no vehicle is there.

The Chairman: Certainly you can ask.

Cde. Mohamed: Can I then ask the Minister whether there is a vehicle attached to this Unit or not and, secondly, sub-head 8, Courses, Workshops, Pilot Projects, may I enquire from the Minister whether he can give an explanation what courses, what workshops and pilot projects are to be conducted by the Curriculum Development Unit, for which we are providing \$125,000.

Cde. Thomas: A vehicle from the central pool is assigned from time to time to work for the Lilian Dewar College of Education. The sum asked for is for what the sub-head says. It has to do with courses for teachers who are involved in developing new texts, it has to do with workshops for those teachers and pilot projects for testing the work of the Curriculum Development Unit.

1981-03-04

9:40 – 9:50 p.m.

Head 68, Curriculum Development Unit - \$933,500 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 172.

HEAD 69 – GUYANA INDUSTRIAL TRAINING CENTRE

Question proposed that the sum of \$285,300 for Head 69, Guyana Industrial Training Centre, stand part of the Estimates.

Head 69, Guyana Industrial Training Centre - \$285,300 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 173 and 174.

HEAD 70 – PROBATION AND WELFARE SERVICE

Question proposed that the sum of \$500,000 for Head 70, Probation and Welfare Service, stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: I will now put the Head with the correction:

<u>Page</u>	<u>Column</u>	
174	Code No.	Against sub-head 3 changing of code number 023,004 to read 023,0004.

Head 70, Probation and Welfare Service - \$500,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 175.

HEAD 71 – BYGEVAL/MAHAICA SECONDARY SCHOOL – MULTILATERAL

Question proposed that the sum of \$503,300 for Head 71, Bygeval/Mahaica Secondary School – Multilateral, stand part of the Estimates.

Head 71, Bygeval/Mahaica Secondary School – Multilateral - \$503,300 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 176 and 177.

1981-03-04

9:40 – 9:50 p.m.

HEAD 72 – ANNA REGINA SECONDARY SCHOOL – MULTILATERAL

Question proposed that the sum of \$750,000 for Head 72, Anna Regina Secondary School – Multilateral, stand part of the Estimates.

Cde. Basir: Cde. Chairman, under sub-head 9, Maintenance of Buildings I would like to ask the Hon. Minister if he intends with the \$4,000 allocated not only to have the school painted but to have the water supply and the toilet facilities well established. They have not been functioning for the past six months.

Cde. Thomas: This sum is not intended for that. There is a sum voted for it and it comes under Regional Allocations.

Head 72, Anna Regina Secondary School – Multilateral - \$750,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 178.

HEAD 73 – BLADEN HALL SECONDARY SCHOOL – MULTILATERAL

Question proposed that the sum of \$580,000 for Head 73, Bladen Hall Secondary School – Multilateral, stand part of the Estimates.

Head 73, Bladen Hall Secondary Hall – Multilateral - \$580,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

9:50 p.m.

The Chairman: Page 179.

HEAD 74 – NEW AMSTERDAM SECONDARY SCHOOL –
MULTILATERAL

Question proposed that the sum of \$558,700 for Head 74 – New Amsterdam Secondary School – Multilateral – stand part of the Estimates.

Head 74 – New Amsterdam Secondary School – Multilateral - \$558,700 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 180.

HEAD 75 – CHRISTIANBURG/WISMAR
SECONDARY SCHOOL – MULTILATERAL

Question proposed that the sum of \$505,000 for Head 75, Christianburg/Wismar Secondary School – Multilateral, stand part of the Estimates.

Head 75 – Christianburg/Wismar Secondary School – Multilateral - \$505,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 181.

HEAD 76 – RUIMVELDT SECONDARY SCHOOL –
MULTILATERAL

Question proposed that the sum of \$570,900 for Head 76, Ruimveldt Secondary School – Multilateral, stand part of the Estimates.

Head 76 – Ruimveldt Secondary School – Multilateral - \$570,900 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 182.

HEAD 77 – PORT KAITUMA COMMUNITY
HIGH SCHOOL (RESIDENTIAL)

Question proposed that the sum of \$600,000 for Head 77, Port Kaituma Community High School (Residential), stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Cde. Ram Karran.

Cde. Ram Karran: Sub-head 4 – Dietary. May I ask if it is intended to reduce the dietary? I notice that in the Revised Estimates for 1980 the sum of \$78,200 appears. If they spent \$78,200 for 1980 it would seem to me that the numbers have decreased or something has happened because this year they propose to spend \$67,500 and they have in the legend, as usual misleading, “Increased costs”. I wonder if the Hon. Minister can explain that.

1981-03-04

9:50 – 9:55 p.m.

The Chairman: Well, the increased costs, I do not know how you will explain that but, you see, if you were here all the time you would understand all these dietary reductions and what they were due to; that they are carrying out their own activities of farming and so on, so the thing is supplemented and the amount is reduced. But the Minister will answer.

Cde. Thomas: Thank you for reminding the member that I answered a similar question twice. It is unfortunate that the explanatory note has “Increased costs” which is not so really, and this school particularly is becoming more and more self-sufficient which has led us to reduce the amount voted for dietary.

Cde. Ram Karran: But you know, sir, that in Government accounting the cost must be shown. The revenue will be shown in another way. If the time comes when the school is able to run by itself and it produces what food it wants, it will be misleading to say that the dietary has cost nothing.

Head 77, Port Kaituma Community High School (Residential) - \$600,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 183.

HEAD 78 – BOOKS DISTRIBUTION UNIT

Question proposed that the sum of \$104,600 for Head 78, Books Distribution Unit, stand part of the Estimates.

Head 78, Books Distribution Unit - \$104,600 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 184 and 185.

DIVISION XXVIII – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND CULTURE

Question proposed that the sum of \$9,900,000 for Division XXVIII, Ministry of Education, Social Development and Culture, stand part of the Estimates.

Division XXVIII, Ministry of Education, Social Development and Culture - \$9,900,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

DIVISION XXVIII – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
AND CULTURE – IDA PROJECTS – SECOND EDUCATION PROJECT

Question proposed that the sum of \$12,115,000 for Division XXIII:I – Ministry of Education, Social Development and Culture – IDA Projects – Second Education Project – stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Cde. Mohamed.

Cde. Mohamed: Sub-head 1 – Civil Works. Sir, I would like to enquire whether work has been started on the new Secondary Teachers’ Training College. The legend says that it will be used for the construction of the Teachers’ Training College, something which is urgently needed in view of the state of disrepair of our present building used for the Lilian Dewar College and I would like to enquire from the Minister how soon this project will be completed.

The Chairman: Cde. Minister.

Cde. Thomas: Work on this project began late last year and we are hoping that it will be completed by the end of this year.

The Chairman: I will now put the Division with the corrections:

<u>Page</u>	<u>Column</u>	
185	Division XXVIII:1	Total Division XXIII:1 to read Total Division XXVIII:1
	Total	Amount of \$7,170,000 against sub-head 1 to read \$7,140,000.
	Other Finance	Amount of \$3,298,000 to read \$3,268,000.
		Total to read \$3,844,000 instead of \$3,874,000.

Division XXIII:1 – Ministry of Education, Social Development and Culture – IDA Projects – Second Education Project - \$12,115,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Assembly resumed.

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9:50 – 9:55 p.m.

The Speaker: Comrades, I wish to indicate that it seems likely that tomorrow we will do Regional Development, National Development, Trade and Consumer Protection, Energy and Mines, Justice and Foreign Affairs and we will probably start on Agriculture. All those Ministers responsible for these subject matters are asked to note.

Comrades this may be a convenient time to take the Adjournment. It is five minutes to ten.

ADJOURNMENT

Resolved, “That this Assembly do now adjourn until Thursday, 5th March, 1981 at 2 p.m.” [Cde. Clarke.]

Adjourned accordingly at 9.55 p.m.