

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

[VOLUME 7]

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

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**51<sup>st</sup> Sitting**

**2 p.m.**

**Monday, 16<sup>th</sup> December, 1974**

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**MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**Speaker**

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

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

**Prime Minister (1)**

The Hon. L.F.S. Burnham, O.E.,  
Prime Minister

**(Absent)**

**Deputy Prime Minister (1)**

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

**Senior Ministers (8)**

The Hon. H.D. Hoyte, S.C.,  
Minister of Economic Development

\*The Hon. S.S. Ramphal, S.C.,  
Minister of Foreign Affairs and Justice (Absent)

\*The Hon. H. Green,  
Minister of Co-operatives and  
National Mobilisation (Absent)

The Hon. H. O. Jack,  
Minister of Energy and Natural Resources (Absent)

The Hon. F. E. Hope,  
Minister of Finance

The Hon. S. S. Naraine, A.A.,  
Minister of Works and Housing

The Hon. G. A. King,  
Minister of Trade and Consumer Protection (Absent – on leave)

The Hon. G. B. Kennard, C.C.H.,  
Minister of Agriculture

**Ministers (5)**

The Hon. W. G. Carrington,  
Minister of Labour

The Hon. Miss S. M. Field-Ridley,  
Minister of Information and Culture

The Hon. B. Ramsaroop,  
Minister of Parliamentary Affairs  
and Leader of the House

The Hon. Miss C.L. Baird,  
Minister of Education and Social Development (Absent)

Dr. the Hon. O.M.R. Harper,  
Minister of Health

**Members of State (10)**

The Hon. M. Kasim, A.A.,  
Minister of State for Agriculture

**\*Non-elected Ministers**

The Hon. O.E. Clarke,  
Minister of State – Regional (East Berbice/Corentyne) **(Absent)**

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

The Hon. C.A. Nascimento,  
Minister of State, Office of the Prime Minister

The Hon. M. Zaheeruddeen, J.P.,  
Minister of State – Regional (Essequibo Coast/West Demerara) **(Absent)**

The Hon. K. B. Bancroft,  
Minister of State – Regional (Mazaruni/Potaro) **(Absent)**

The Hon. C.V. Mingo,  
Minister of State for Home Affairs **(Absent)**

The Hon. W. Haynes,  
Minister of State for Consumer Protection **(Absent)**

The Hon. A. Salim,  
Minister of State – Regional (East Demerara/West Coast Berbice) **(Absent)**

The Hon. F.U.A. Carmichael,  
Minister of State – Regional (North West)

### **Parliamentary Secretaries (7)**

Mr. J.R. Thomas,  
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Works and Housing

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

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

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

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

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

Mr. R.H.O. Corbin,  
Parliamentary Secretary, Office of the Prime Minister **(Absent)**

**Deputy Speaker (1)**

Mr. R.C. Van Sluytman, Deputy Speaker

**Other Members (17)**

Mr. J.N. Aaron  
Mrs. L.M. Branco  
Mr. M. Corrica  
Mr. E.H.A. Fowler  
Miss J. Gill  
Mr. W. Hussain  
Miss S. Jaiserrisingh  
Mr. K.M.E. Jonas  
Mr. M. Nissar  
Dr. L.E. Ramsahoye  
Mr. J.G. Ramson  
Mrs. P.A. Rayman  
Mr. E.M. Stoby, J.P.  
Mr. S.H. Sukhu, M.S., J.P.  
Mr. C. Sukul, J.P.  
Mr. H.A. Taylor  
Mrs. L.E. Willems

**(Absent)**

**(Absent – on leave)**

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

Mr. M.F. Singh, Leader of the Opposition  
Mrs. E. DaSilva

## **OFFICERS**

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

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

16.12.74  
2.05 p.m.

National Assembly

2.05 – 2.10 p.m.

## PRAYERS

### ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER

#### Leave to Members

**The Speaker:** Leave has been granted to the following Members: to the hon. Prime Minister and the hon. Member Mr. Ambrose for today's Sitting; and to the hon. Member Mr. Corbin from the 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> December, 1974, both days inclusive.

## PUBLIC BUSINESS

**Mrs. DaSilva:** Mr. Speaker, we do not have a quorum.

**The Speaker:** Mr. Clerk, please take a count. [Pause] Hon. Member Mrs. DaSilva, there is a quorum.

## MOTION

### APPROVAL OF ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURE FOR 1975

Assembly resolved itself into Committee of Supply to resume consideration of the estimates of expenditure for the financial year 1975, totalling \$458,687,527.

*Assembly in Committee in Supply*

**The Chairman:** Pages 131 to 134.

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

Question proposed that the sum of \$9,741,831 for Head 41, Ministry of Education and Social Development, stand part of the Estimates.

**The Chairman:** Hon. Member Mrs. DaSilva

**Mrs. DaSilva:** I have nothing to ask on pages 131 and 132; starting at page 133, subheads 12, 13, 22, 24 and 27 and subhead 44 on the following page. Starting off from page 133, subhead 12, Free Places, Secondary Schools, this is almost an annual question, to which, I am sure, the hon. Minister has become accustomed by now.

In view of the serious shortage of places in our schools the custom has grown of giving extra lessons to children every day in order to give them a better chance to qualify for free places through the Common Entrance Examination. Parents spend money which they cannot afford on these extra lessons. Teachers, tired from a day at school, put in extra time to try and cram into children the necessary knowledge so that they may be able to pass the examination and, hopefully, get a free place.

I want to ask the hon. Minister how long this will continue. I want to ask her about a solution because it is not a satisfactory state of affairs which is created by the system of giving extra lessons. It tends to lead to favouritism. And what is the Government doing about getting more school places for the children? Schools are woefully overcrowded.

**16.12.74**

**National Assembly**

**2.10 – 2.20 p.m**

**(Mrs. DaSilva continues)**

**2.10 p.m.**

Subhead 13 deals with Education of the Blind and this, too, might appear to be pleading and begging more than criticizing. In connection with the education for the blind, first of all, I note that the Approved Estimate in 1974 was \$4,000. The Revised Estimate is only \$2,500 and we are now being asked to pass \$2,000. Why was this grant not fully used? The blind are trying to help themselves and this is to help them to help themselves. Would the explanation be that there is a great shortage of materials in the blind school?

I do not know if the Minister is aware of this but the authorities have had to close the school earlier this term because they have not got enough materials. They use pulp cane for basket making because people who buy the baskets prefer pulp cane. The blind persons themselves prefer to work with pulp cane. They are accustomed to handling it and it is easier to use. At present pulp cane cannot be obtained and they have been using polythene twins which is very hard and bruises their hands and fingers. It is also difficult to work.

I discussed this question with someone who asked why the local stuff cannot be used. The blind are perfectly willing to use nibbi and people will buy it when made into baskets and lamp shades and so on, but an adequate supply cannot be obtained. Can the Ministers, the Regional Ministers who may be here or any of the other Ministers, use their good offices to help get a supply of nibbi for the blind school in order that they might be able to help themselves to earn a living? Surely it is not a difficult thing to ask. Now that we have all these Regional Ministers dotted around Guyana, they may be able to get the nibbi.

Going back to the matter of pulp cane, I understand that the Government has commissioned one of our firms to order pulp cane for use in the National Service. I hope that the National Service will make available to the blind school some of this pulp cane when it comes because, naturally, that would fetch a higher price; it is stronger and the people prefer it. Maybe the National Service can make that gesture to the blind.



I am told that an order was placed for pulp cane from the U.K. for the blind. The Blind Institute could not get it and had to try as far away as Singapore. This is very expensive for them so they have had to cut that order down considerably. I would like to ask the Minister if anything can be done to help and to see that the grant for the blind is used up to its fullest. Not only does the Revised Estimate show that \$2,500 was spend instead of \$, but we have cut the 1975 Estimate further to \$2,000. I do not think the Blind School should take a cut.

We come now to subhead 22, Grant to Voluntary Organisations, I see from the Revised Estimates \$6,000 was used. Surely our voluntary organisations could do with all the assistance they could get. We are now asked again to approve the sum of \$8,944. I hope to see that this grant is fully utilized.

The Fredericks School of Home Economics, subhead 24. Year in and year out the sum of \$10,000 is voted for this school. The vote has been used up and this is fine. But in view of the stress that is placed on non-academic subjects, it is time for the grants to be increased so that these home economic classes in our Aided Secondary Schools. We talk continually of the ever rising cost of living especially in foodstuffs and yet these home economic classes, particularly in the Government-aided Secondary Schools, are being asked to continue with the same grant year in and year out. When will consideration be given to having the grants increased?

Turning over to page 134, subhead 44, Overseas Examination, Local Expenses, \$100,000. The legend explains that it is a new subhead. That is not what I am interested in at the moment. I want to ask the Minister what arrangements are being made about a Caribbean Examination on a regional level to do away with the overseas examination that we take right now, bearing in mind that London University announced about six months ago that by 1977 they will be stopping their overseas examinations. 1977 is not far away. How far are we advanced towards getting our own examinations?

I was rather amused when I read in a newspaper that the President of the Association of Masters and Mistresses, Mr. Sancho, was very indignant that London University had dared to opt out of allowing the Caribbean to take the external examination. He thought they should not do that but we should have the right of saying when we would stop. I thought that was very amusing. We do not like anyone to tell us to do something; we must do what we want and when we want it. London University has declared that it will stop the overseas examination by 1977. What are we doing about it?

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

**The Minister of Education and Social Development** (Miss Baird): Mr. Chairman, I think I would like to respond to the question on blind education first, if I may. I think there is some misconception here. I think the hon. Member is of the opinion that the allocation is made to the Blind Institute. Allocation is not made to the Blind Institute, the allocation is made to the Trinidad School for the Blind where our children used to be educated over a number of years. That arrangement is being phased out. As you know, we have that David Rose School for the handicapped which caters for the education of the blind. There is one person there who is trained for teaching the blind and we are preparing to have other people exposed to education for blind children.

I may point out that that is the School that deals with multiple handicap, hearing impaired, blind and mentally retarded but we find that we do not get a very good response from children who are blind. Apparently, the incidence of blindness among children – and this is perhaps what we have to conclude – is not as high as the incidence of deafness and mental retardation. One other reason may be, perhaps, that parent of blind children are still reluctant to bring them forward to be educated. We have not been able to identify what is the reason for not being able to attract a large number of blind children but the provision is made for the education of the blind at the David Rose School for the handicapped and that accounts for the decrease in allocation to the Trinidad School.

With respect to the Fredericks School of Home Economics, I want to point out that the grant was increased from \$7,000 to \$10,000 and I think the hon. Member made a remark which went something like this: “That since we are stressing non –academic subjects ...” In fact, we are not stressing the non-academic subjects. We are effecting a proper balance between the academic subjects and what you call the practical subjects. What we are doing is to ensure that whatever is taught is taught in theory. The application of theory is made for the practical subjects and it is true, of course, that practical subjects are now getting the proper emphasis. But it is really a balance and we are aware that schools like the Fredericks School of Home Economics need help. We are giving that help in ways other than by monetary help. We give advice and that kind of thing.

**2.20 p.m.**

Now with respect to the Caribbean Examination, I think the first set of examinations is due to begin in 1976. The administrative staff has been appointed, the Registrar and so on, and each territory is engaged in, or has completed, the assignment compiling syllabuses for the Examination. I am not quite sure in what subjects we will begin, but I think agriculture, history and geography are three of the subjects which will receive attention first.

You know that we are working closely with the University of the West Indies which serves the West Indian Islands and other parts of the Caribbean. The University of Guyana is represented on this Council and it is a joint relationship between the University of Guyana and the University of the West Indies. All the research that has to be done in preparation for the examination, research on curricula, research on textbooks is being done by these two Universities and a part of the examination will then begin.

There is an arrangement between the current Examining Board and the Caribbean Examining Board and they will make decisions on how these certificates will be awarded. Because you realize that in the Caribbean we have a shortage of technical skills, the kind of skills

[Miss Baird continued]

needed for setting up our own examination board and that is why we have to phase this. One other reason why we have to phase the programming for the examination is that we in the Caribbean do not have an adequate supply of the kind of textbooks that we need to support the curricula for the Caribbean Examinations. This is the position with the Caribbean Examinations.

Mr. Chairman, I wonder if it would be proper for me to ask the hon. Member to repeat her comments on the free places and on voluntary organisations because I was not quite clear what the question was.

**The Chairman:** There is also item (27), Grants to Aided Secondary Schools. Hon. Member Mrs. DaSilva, will you please repeat the queries on the items.

**Mrs. DaSilva:** Yes, sir. On the item of free places I was merely talking about the custom of giving extra lessons after school and on Saturdays and Sundays. Many parents willingly make a great sacrifice to get the money to pay for these lessons. They do this because these schools are overcrowded and they naturally want their children to get the best opportunity to qualify for secondary education.

But this system is a very bad one. The teachers are tired, the children are tired. It lends itself to favouritism because when they go back to school next day the child is one of a class of children and teachers naturally favour their “private” pupils. There may be six or eight or ten children in that class whose parents cannot afford the money. It is only hum that the teacher is going to look after her private pupils first.

This system should be abolished but we are so desperately short of school space we can appreciate the problems of the parents. I was asking the hon. Minister: Has she any suggestions she can make? I said that later on I am going to talk about a suggestion for the increase in school

[Miss Dasilva continued]

places. I was wondering whether she had anything to say about how these children can be provided with opportunities because these schools are woefully overcrowded. I know we are coming along to the multilateral school in a little while but I am talking about the primary schools.

The multilateral schools are secondary schools. We cannot take children to secondary education if their basic education is lacking. I think this is one of the big problems facing our education system in the country. There is not enough school space at the primary level; School children do not have an opportunity to get education at a primary level. How can they go on to the secondary if they do not have the basic?

**The Chairman:** I think there were two other items, (22) and (27).

**Mrs. DaSilva:** Item (22) was just to note that the grant to voluntary organisations had not been fully used in 1974. We approved the sum of \$8,944 and in the Revised Estimate we see that only \$6,000 was used. We are being asked again to vote \$8,944. In view of all the problems facing everyone nowadays with the high cost of living it amazes me that this grant was not used up. Could the hon. Minister tell us why?

That also applies to item (27), Grant to Aided Secondary Schools. The Approved Estimate for 1974 was \$1,536,818. Actually what was used was \$1,145,760. I see now that we have been asked to vote \$1,200,000. Again, this is a question of grants not being fully utilized. What is the reason behind this? All these schools – particularly Aided Secondary Schools – complain that the grants they get for their domestic science classes and the science laboratories are woefully inadequate to meet rising costs. Can the hon. Minister say why these grants have not been used up?

**Miss Baird:** Mr. Chairman, with respect to the question on free places in secondary schools, I think the hon. Member was referring to the practice of people giving lessons in schools. Now, I do not know if the hon. Member is aware that the Ministry of Education called the attention of both schools and parents to the fact that the secondary school selection examination was a part of the evaluation process in primary education, that all children who attended primary school, were to take the examination except when handicapped or when evidence was given by teachers the children were not able to take this examination. That meant that the teaching should go on during the normal hours. But you will admit, that there are individual differences and some children will need extra coaching. On the other hand, I think that parents have to be blamed for the practice to which the hon. Member refers, for some of it because despite all our efforts they believe that the quality of education is improved if they pay for it.

The Ministry of Education has gone further. We do not permit, as long as it comes to our knowledge, any extra lessons to be given in a Government school. This is the position. In time it will be stamped out, particularly because they must show results. Teachers are now being made to be accountable, they must account for the performance of all the children who attend primary school.

The hon. Member remarked that the allocation for voluntary organisations was not spent. I want to call the hon. Member's attention to the fact that there are three organisations identified, and I think to date we have given two of these organisations their allocation. I think one other organisation is to receive the allocation of received it maybe a day ago. I am not quite sure. This is the explanation to it. Three organisations are to receive the allocation.

**2.30 p.m.**

Item 27 refers to Grants to Aided Secondary Schools. I think I should call the attention of the hon. Member to the fact that the grants were increased by 80 per cent for Science

Education, Home Economics and so on. The hon. Member will appreciate that we had a revision of salaries and we had increases in the cost of running these schools. We had to estimate what these costs will be. I think the problem now is that we perhaps over-estimated the cost of servicing the aided secondary schools. If the hon. Member looks at the figure quoted here, I think she will agree with me, if she knows the circumstances, that the figure is a realistic one. It is a figure that will enable us to improve the quality of education in these schools.

**Mrs. DaSilva:** May I first of all say to the hon. Minister that I am very pleased that the Government has made a realistic effort about this problem of private lessons. I appreciate the points that were made. Of course, some parents will still believe that when they pay for the lessons they will get better results but I do hope that in time this practice will be stamped out. It will be to the children advantage. I hope the parents will realize this.

Would the hon. Minister identify the three voluntary organisations, please?

**Miss Baird:** Mr. Chairman, the three organisations were: The Theatre Guild, the Y.W.C.A. Early School Leavers and the Adult Education Association.

*Head 41, Ministry of Education and Social Development - \$9,741,831 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 135

**HEAD 4- MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT –  
IN-SERVICE TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMME**

Question proposed that the sum of 334,914 or Head 42, Ministry of Education and Social Development – In-service Teacher Training Programme stand part of the Estimates.

*Head 42, Ministry of Education and Social Development – In-Service Teacher Training Programme - \$334,914 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 136

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

Question proposed that the sum of \$27,640,590 for Head 43, Ministry of Education and Social Development – Primary and Secondary Schools, stand part of the Estimates.

**Mrs. DaSilva:** Under Head 43, I will deal with subhead 1, and subhead 7, 8, 9, 12, 14 and 15. Many of them go together.

Dealing with subhead 1 (4) – Assistant Teachers, I notice that in 1975 there will be an increase in the number of Assistant Teachers. In 1974 we had 3,428. This year we hope to have 4,156. But looking at the amount of money spent, I notice that here again there is a small drop between the approved estimates of \$12,270,720 and \$11,908,020. Now, we are going up to \$13,979,412. Were the schools short-staffed in any way last year or did they have their full complement of teachers?

Subheads 7, 8 and 9 deal with Supplies to Government Schools, Cleaning of Government Schools and Upkeep of Schools' Recreation Ground respectively. Now the revised estimate for Supplies to Government Schools were \$35,000. This amount has now gone up to \$45,146 for 1975 which seems to be a rather large increase. Admittedly, \$10,000 in a Budget of millions of dollars may not be much but we feel that these small sums here and there add up to quite a significant amount.



With respect to the Cleaning of Government Schools, \$85,600 is shown in the Revised Estimates column for 1974 and now we are being asked to pass \$10,000 for 1975. I note the legend states that part of the provision is being transferred to subhead 1(12). I wonder if the hon. Minister is aware that the charwomen who clean Government schools enjoy a better standard of wage than those who clean Government Aided Schools. Could the hon. Minister explain why this exists and what could be done to stop it? Why should one group of women doing the same type of work be entitled to a bigger wage than those in the Government Aided Schools?

Subhead 12 – Supplies and Equipment for School Farms and Agricultural Plots. We only used \$40,000 for the 60,000 that was approved for 1974. In view of our thrust to correct the imbalance between academic and non-academic subjects – and I noted the correction that was made by the Minister – why was this grant not used fully for the School Farms and Agricultural Plots? Could the Minister say why this is so? I note that we are being asked to vote \$60,000 for next year. Another School Farm has been much in the news – the one started by St. Stanislaus College across the way – so I hope that this grant will be fully utilised.

Subhead 14 deals with the purchase of exercise books for free distribution to school children. Some time ago I did talk about the fact that some children had only received two books each. I know for a fact that this happened in one particular school but I have been assured that they now have their exercise books. I hope there will not be a shortage in the new term.

I wonder if the hon. Minister could tell me which comes first, love of country or love of person? Before exercise books were distributed free we very proudly had Coat of Arms, and our motto, One People One Nation One Destiny, on the exercise books. I am very sorry, sir, but we seem to be preaching and talking just to idolize one person. Is it correct? Shouldn't it be love of country first? It is very nice to have a picture of our hon. Prime Minister on the new exercise books, but his picture is all over the school buildings. Every building has one. Surely the exercise book should show love of country first, we could have our motto, One People One Nation One Destiny.

[Mrs. DaSilva contd.]

The last subhead on this page is 15, which deals with National Insurance. I am not criticizing the National Insurance Scheme. It is not for that purpose I talk of national insurance. What I am using this subhead for is to find out how the Ministry of Education is making out with national insurance. When the members of the office staff in schools were responsible, the national insurance payments were always up to date, cards were stamped and all the rest of it, at the right time. I appreciate this is over a year old now, and it is still going on, since it has been taken over by the Ministry of Education.

I mentioned the last time that the computer could not cope with the work, but this state of affairs still continues. This is very unsatisfactory. If an employer in the private sector did not have his cards stamped up to date, and an inspector from the N.I.S. came in, the employer could be in serious trouble. Government should lead the way and set the example. Why should it be allowed to get away with not having its National Insurance Scheme stamps up to date? [Interruption] We cannot prosecute the Government but the Government should lead the way. It should set the example. Perhaps, the Minister will tell us what progress has been made.

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

**Miss Baird:** Mr. Chairman, with respect to the increase in the number of Assistant Teachers in the schools, the situation is a simple one. Every year, more teachers come out from the training institution and one will notice we have made an attempt to reduce the number of interim teachers, meaning the number of teachers who are not professionally qualified as we would like them to be qualified. It means we are attempting to increase the number of qualified teachers. We are therefore improving the quality of the staff and that will account to a large extent for the increased allocation to schools. Then we have to think, apart from increasing the quality of the staff in existing schools, of increasing the number of teachers for new schools.

[Mrs. DaSilva contd.]

The answer to the question relating to the supplies to Government schools is this: we all know that costs have gone up considerably, and there has been an increase in the number of schools that we have to service. That will account for the cost of supplies being increased. The hon. Member will also realise that since we are improving the quality of education at this period in our history, we are not only concerned about increasing the number of places, the number of children that we educate, but we have to improve the quality of education. One of the ways by which we improve the quality of education is to provide more facilities to schools. This accounts for the increased allocation. Things like audio visual equipment, and all sorts of aids to learning and to teaching, are no longer regarded as frills.

If we look at item (13), we are talking there about payment to Sweeper/Cleaners of Government schools. I think the heading comes under Other Charges, subhead 8, but I think we should look at subhead 1 item (13), and we will find \$89,320 for salaries and wages to cleaners.

**The Chairman:** Hon. Minister I do not think that is the point the hon. Member was making. She was asking why is there a differential in salary paid to cleaners in respect of primary schools and in respect of certain other institutions.

**Miss Baird:** Aided schools receive a grant towards cleaning. Government is responsible for providing cleaning in its own schools, and that accounts for the difference in the allocations. At the moment, we are considering increasing that rate of pay for the people in the other schools. I think I have to emphasize that we do not pay the sweepers and cleaners in the aided schools. We give the schools grants and whatever decision is made will be in respect of the increase in grants to the aided schools.

I think the hon. Member referred to the fact that the allocations for agricultural education were not fully used. I must point out that agricultural education is relatively new in the system. At the moment, we are engaged in preparing the teachers to teach agricultural education. We

have people who are trained in agricultural but not enough people trained to teach agriculture in schools. This is one reason why we have not used up the allocation. This is not to say that agricultural education is not going on. We have school farms all over the country but the quality of the teacher that we really want to carry out this exercise is not readily available. Some of the teachers are being trained and have already gone into the system, and some will go into the system early in the New Year. This accounts for our not being able to use the allocation. It is really that the quality of the teacher used for the most part in agricultural education did not allow us to use the sum allocated.

With respect to exercise books, I want to remind the hon. Member that we did not complain when the Queen's picture appeared on the exercise books. We all know about those pictures – the Prince of Wales, and so on. We will appreciate first of all that we must have some distinction made on these exercise books for protection, of course, I cannot think of any other fitting identification than the picture of the hon. Prime Minister. We make no apology for using that picture on the exercise books as a symbol of all that we stand for in the Co-operative Republic of Guyana. [Applause]

**2.50 p.m.**

*Head 43, Ministry of Education and Social Development – Primary and Secondary Schools - \$27,640,590 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 137

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

Question proposed that the sum of \$1,628,002 for Head 44, Ministry of Education and Social Development – Practical Instruction Centres, stand part of the Estimates.

**The Chairman:** Hon. Member, Mrs. DaSilva.

**Mrs. DaSilva:** Subhead 3 deals with Materials, Equipment, Books, Industrial Arts Classes, under the Ministry of Education, Practical Instruction Centres. I would like to ask the hon. Minister about Occupational Therapy. I mentioned it last year and when I come to it again under the Ministry of Health I will talk about it. There is one Occupational Therapist listed. She has assistant, but there are not enough people teaching Occupational Therapy.

There is need for Occupational Therapists. The hon. Minister talked about visual aids and films and the latest teaching methods. Just as you need these for teaching in schools, Occupational Therapy is needed, for nowadays it is considered as an important part in the restoration of patients to health. We are short of Occupational Therapists. Could the Ministry of Health in the Practical Instruction Centres institute a course if one is not available?

I am wondering if any assistance could be given to the manufacturing of artificial limbs. This is a Practical Instruction Centre so I am wondering if people could be trained to help out in this. There is a great need for artificial limbs. We have some being done but not on a large enough scale. So this, also, would help the Ministry of Health. Could the Minister say if any thought is being given to this? Will she consider this as a possible addition for the future?

Subhead 5 deals with National Insurance. I want to ask what is happening now that the Ministry of Education is handling National Insurance matters? I think I did speak about this by mistake on the other page. But what is happening now that the Ministry of Education is handling it? Since last year this matter was brought up and still we hear this year that there are problems with the National Insurance, that the stamping of cards is not up to date.

As I mentioned, if this went on in the private sector the employer could be open to prosecution by Government if an Inspector visited his place. Of course, one cannot prosecute the Government but it is the Government's duty to set the example and it should do so. Could the

hon. Minister say if there has been any improvement in this because I gather that up to recently there was still some turmoil and dissatisfaction expressed by the teachers?

**Miss Baird:** Mr. Chairman, I would reply to the last comment first by just simply saying that the matter of the National Insurance Scheme will be brought up to date by 31<sup>st</sup> December this year.

The hon. Member referred to Practical Instruction Centres. I think there is a bit of confusion here because Practical Instruction Centres cope with students at school in the fields of Home Economics and Industrial Arts and the teaching of the skills in these fields. We are not only teaching them the skills of production, but we are teaching them marketing skills. And I do not think this has anything at all to do with Occupational Therapy which really concerns the Ministry of Health.

In education, of course, we do cater for Psycho Therapy when you are dealing with deviants in the society and you know the Ministry of Education has the responsibility for the Probation Service. In that respect we are concerned with Psycho Therapy. Even in the normal day-to-day practice of education, teachers do have to contribute to the mental health of children. That is Therapy in one sense but we do not have need in our schools for Occupational Therapy. If we need Occupational Therapy they will have to go to some other department. I think this is a matter for the Ministry of Health.

What I do know is that more and more people are being trained in these fields. They are really fields that have become very essential if we are talking about development at all. The hon. Member must appreciate that these were fields which were not followed in the past but, as I said, they have become necessary and I am sure that arrangements are made to prepare people in these fields. This is built in the education system because since we are in the process of developing a guidance system for Guyana, a guidance system that will serve education in all its aspects, the

formal education system, the non-formal and the informal, you will be able to encourage and motivate people to go into these new fields, fields not hitherto identified and followed.

*Head 44, Ministry of Education and Social Development – Practical Instruction Centres  
- \$1,628,002 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Pages 138 and 139.

**HEAD 45 – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT  
GOVERNMENT TRAINING COLLEGE PRE-SERVICE TEACHER  
TRAINING PROGRAMME**

Question proposed that the sum of \$868,268 for Head 45, Ministry of Education and Social Development – Government Training College Pre-Service Teacher Training Programme, stand part of the Estimates.

**The Chairman:** Hon. Member, Mrs. DaSilva.

**Mrs. DaSilva:** Page 139, subhead 11 and subhead 14. Subhead 11 deals with Laundry and Sanitation and I note the legend states: “Increase in number of students.” There must have been a terrific increase in the number of students because the Approved Estimate for 1974 was \$3,000, the Revised Estimate was \$1,500 in 1974. The vote has now jumped to \$9,000. Is this in anticipation that by December 1975 there will be such a large number of students that \$9,000 will be needed? Similarly, could we have a little dissertation on the Arable Farm? I note that the Approved Estimate in 1974 was \$3,000. Only \$2,000 was used as shown in the Revised Estimates column. Now we are asked to provide \$8,000. Could the Minister enlighten us please?

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3 p.m.

**Miss Baird:** In September 1974 we admitted students into the Government Training College. That began our academic year and so allocation was not for a whole calendar year. The number of students increased because we now have students in the first and second year and I think we have a maximum of approximately 300 students at the Government Training College at the moment. These are residential students you will appreciate; that is why we have to provide laundry facilities.

The hon. Member wanted to know something about the Arable Farm. Since agriculture is an important part of our curriculum and is an important part of the National Development Programme we have to prepare teachers to teach agriculture. This is not being done only in a theoretical way, agriculture science, but the practice of agriculture is going on right there. You will appreciate this is in the initial stage, we have to begin from scratch, development of the land and things like that, I am not sure how many acres are available, but it is a large bit of land and this provides the practical base for agricultural education.

One of the features of this farm will be that students in addition to being prepared to teach agriculture in schools, will produce the food for themselves. The College will therefore become self-sufficient and in time, of course, the cost of feeding them will be reduced. I think that whatever allocation is made to the Arable Farm it is an allocation that is well deserved and necessary.

*Head 45, Ministry of Education and Social Development – Government Training College Pre-Service Teacher Training Programme - \$868,268 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Pages 140 and 141.



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

Question proposed that the sum of \$793,204 for Head 46, Ministry of Education and Social Development – Technical Institute Georgetown, stand part of the Estimates.

**Mrs. DaSilva:** Subhead 1, item 16, Watchmen. In 1974 the Approved Estimate was \$10,056. The Revised Estimate showed that actually \$20,138 was used which was almost double the amount provided. Why is the Ministry in 1975 asking for a provision of \$10,716 if last year it actually cost us \$20,138?

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

**Miss Baird:** Mr. Chairman, the answer lies in the organisation of the data here. Subhead 20, we have five watchmen on the temporary establishment, and the allocation is \$9,288. Also we have subhead 16 on the Permanent Establishment for which the allocation is \$10,715. The total then becomes \$20,138.

*Head 46, Ministry of Education and Social Development – Technical Institute Georgetown - \$793,204 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 142.

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

Question proposed that the sum of \$167,310 for Head 47, Ministry of Education and Social Development – Carnegie School of Home Economics, stand part of the Estimates.

**Mrs. DaSilva:** Subhead 8, Evening Classes – Rural Areas. In 1974 the Approved Estimate was \$3,700. The Revised Estimate is \$1,019. The vote was not used up. This year we have been asked to vote \$3,700. We have no objections to this vote but we would like to see it used up.

We would like the hon. Minister to explain why the vote has not been fully used. Or is Georgetown Guyana? Does not the whole country make up Guyana? The rural areas need evening classes more than any urban area because town people are more able to find substitutes for banned goods. By reason of educational facilities they are better able to cope, but in the country areas the people are basically not as well educated and they find it extremely difficult to cope with finding substitutes for the items of food they cannot get. They need more attention by way of education, by practical assistance such as that given by the Carnegie School of Home Economics. Why is it that the rural areas are not having these evening classes? Something must have happened because \$1,019 was used instead of \$3,700. Can the hon. Minister tell us why?

**Miss Baird:** There are two reasons I can advance for this discrepancy. One reason is that the Ministry of Education is suffering from a shortage of personnel. I said before that the quality of the staff that we want to produce is not there and we are working on the production of that kind of staff. This is not to say that we do not have teachers to teach Home Economics. But we have to be organized in the sense that we have one person responsible for organising the courses in the rural centres and we did not have that person for this academic year.

But education went on in the field of Home Economics in the rural centres because more assistant teachers were in schools all along the country and more schools, as the hon. Member will appreciate, had equipment for Home Economics. A lot of this work was done in the schools in the afternoons by teachers who gave voluntary service in most respects. That is why the special allocation for Home Economics was not used up. When we are talking about that we deal with a special group of people who are assigned to these rural workshops. That was done in

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many schools on the East Coast and on the West Coast and, I think, in Essequibo. They were done in schools rather than in the centres.

3.10 p.m.

*Head 47, Ministry of Education and Social Development – Carnegie School of Home Economics - \$167,310 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 143

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

Question proposed that the sum of \$461,804 for Head 48, Ministry of Education and Social Development – Queen’s College, stand part of the Estimates.

**Mrs. DaSilva:** Subhead 9, sir. This deals with the Queen’s College Cadet Company. As we go through these Estimates I notice that the hon. Minister is laying stress – and I am pleased about this – on quality rather than on quantity. What I also note is that for various reasons there is a shortage of staff. I wonder if all these people are being shunted off to be trained in National Service and whether that is the reason why they cannot be in the schools teaching the children as they are supposed to be doing.

What I want to ask in connection with Queen’s College Cadet Company is: How does the Queen’s College Cadet Company now shape up as against National Service? Will the members of the Cadet Corps now be disbanded and become National Service Young Brigade members? What is the position? I am sure that there are other associations that have this similar problem and I wonder if the hon. Minister could give us some explanation. Will we not see our Q.C. boys

in their khaki uniforms any more? Will they instead be parading around in their green “parrots outfits”? Could the hon. Minister please tell us?

**Miss Baird:** Mr. Chairman, I can assure the hon. Member that she will have the pleasure of seeing the Queen’s College Cadet Corps for all time or as long as they want to have the Corps. This is a service for Queen’s College as an institution. It has nothing to do with National Service. We can send the hon. Member some information on National Service so that she can see the aims and objectives of National Service. We will give her all the information in writing but, if she listens very carefully and if she reads the State Paper, she will appreciate that National Service is an extension of the formal education programme. It serves people in different ways.

The people who are disadvantaged intellectually, socially or otherwise will have a chance to catch up with their peers. Those who have the advantage of a high quality education have other deficiencies that we want to correct. Now, when I look at this programme, for example, I see some of the disadvantages they will be able to catch up on. For those people who have had an opportunity of a high level education, what they have will consolidate what we have and National Service will fill in what they do not have. They will get a chance to look at things like the language of economics. They have to understand the circumstances in which they live, the national goals, why we have national goals, what they grow up and get into working life they will appreciate all the strategies that are designed for the development of the country and for their personal development.

We are not overlooking the important educational input of human development – developing the person – a confident person, a person who has a feeling of self-worth. National Service has all these kinds of programmes by people who are qualified to teach. It is not done in an **ad hoc** way. I think it will be a good thing for the House to know that the Ministry of Education has responsibility for looking at the curriculum and programme of National Service so

that it will be truly educational. They are looking at things that all Guyanese in any walk of life should know.

With respect to people with a high quality of education like people at Queen's College and the other schools that provide that kind of education, they will have an opportunity of looking at things that perhaps they could not do in school –at markets, supply and demand, international trade and Guyana and so on, so they will develop into citizens who can support all that is planned for the development of Guyana and their own development.

I do not think that any citizen has anything to fear from National Service. It is designed, as I said, and I repeat, to supplement and extend the formal educational system and it will give the deprived a chance to catch up. Those who are not deprived intellectually, might be deprived socially. Everyone has some sort of deprivation – it might be social deprivation, emotional or so on and National Service will give the deprived a chance to know and appreciate the circumstances of their fellow men and certainly it will make them better citizens.

**Mrs. DaSilva:** Could I ask a supplementary question, please, sir? I thank the hon. Minister for the explanation. Apparently, I did National Service when I was at school too, because all that sort of thing was drummed into my head. But what I want to get the Minister to explain to us is this. **[Interruption]** We all learned love and pride in our country at school. We do not have to wait for National Service to do that.

I was pleased with the Minister's reassurance that the Queen's College Cadet Corps boys will still be around. I am not quite clear about this: As far as I understand, the age groups are about the same for the Cadet Corps and the Pioneer Corps, so how can one boy cut himself in half and be in the Queen's College Cadet Corps one minute and National Service another minute? What I am trying to find out is this: If a child belongs to an accepted organisation, let us say, like the Queen's College Cadet Corps or maybe the Red Cross, Boys' Scouts or Boys' Brigade which all teach love of country, use of initiative and self-reliance, will he have to give

up that organisation and join National Service? Can one be in two places at the same time? One cannot be two people; one either belongs to one organisation or the other; so, will one have to give up the Cadet Corps to be a National Service member? Would one have to give up being a Brownie to be a member of the Young Brigade?

All these well-known organisations have been in our schools for years. Many of us in this room belonged to these organisations as children. They taught us love, pride and loyalty to our country and gave us some initiative and self-reliance. Will the young people have to give up these organisations and transfer to National Service, or will they work the two together? How is it done? Can the Minister explain?

**3.20 p.m.**

**[Interruption]**

**The Chairman:** Hon. Members, please let us have some order.

**Miss Baird:** I find it very difficult to understand why the hon. Member does not think that one person can be a member of two institutions at the same time. Sir, National Service, as you know, right now is voluntary. I think the hon. member appreciates that. I think she will also appreciate that Queen's College is a formal educational institution, in fact, a school, and they have vacations, and during school vacations it is normal practice in this country, for a number of years now, for schools to go out to camp. The people who do Geography go out on studies and this is quite normal. They have three sets of holidays, and during vacation, Queen's College boys, or any school boy, will go to National Service. It is not a repetition, the same kind of experience.

The National Service Centre is geared to give an experience in living. It is not an institution like the Boy Scouts or the Cadet Corps where people meet for a few hours and carry out one kind of operation. This is an experience in living, in actually getting to know another

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person, and in listening to people's points of view and trying to appreciate somebody else's circumstances. It is quite different. They would not have to divide themselves into any number of parts. It is something where one person can belong to a number of institutions, and I can assure the hon. Member that the boys are anxious to go to National Service.

There are various arrangements for National Service depending upon the person being dealt with, the circumstances of the country, because the Ministry would not close Queen's College and let everyone of them go to National Service. Sensible arrangements will have to be made so that everyone has his turn.

*Head 48, Ministry of Education and Social Development – Queen's College - \$461,804 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 144

**HEAD 49 – MIINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT –  
BISHOPS' HIGH SCHOOL**

Question proposed that the sum of \$387,397 for Head 49, Ministry of Education and Social Development – Bishops' High School, stand part of the Estimates.

*Head 49, Ministry of Education and Social Development – Bishops' High School - \$387,397 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 145.

**HEAD 50 – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT –  
ANNA REGINA SECONDARY SCHOOL**

Question proposed that the sum of \$161,177 for Head 50, Ministry of Education and Social Development – Anna Regina Secondary School, stand part of the Estimates.

*Head 50, Ministry of Education and Social Development – Anna Regina Secondary School - \$161,177 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 146.

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

Question proposed that the sum of \$279,365 for Head 51, Ministry of Education and Social Development – Berbice High School, stand part of the Estimates.

**Mrs. DaSilva:** Subhead 1 (4), Master/Mistress II, this deals with the staff at Berbice High School. We note that the grant was not used in 1974; the approved estimate is \$138,840, the revised estimate shows that only \$122,630 was used. Now we have been asked to vote, \$143,985. Could the hon. Minister explain this situation, because the salary scale remains the same. Was it because the Berbice High School did not have a full complement of staff and, if so, does the school have a full complement now?

**The Chairman:** Hon. Minister.

**Miss Baird:** The problem was that we have had an unstable staffing situation at the Berbice High School. There were vacancies and we had a shifting situation which is now being corrected. We have been able to fill most of those vacancies at the Berbice High School.

*Head 51, Ministry of Education and Social Development – Berbice High School - \$279,365 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*



**The Chairman:** Page 147.

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

Question proposed that the sum of \$521,814 for Head 52, Ministry of Education and Social Development – New Amsterdam Technical Institute, stand part of the Estimates.

*Head 52, Ministry of Education and Social Development – New Amsterdam Technical Institute - \$521,814 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 148

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

Question proposed that the sum of \$286,887 for Head 53, Ministry of Education and Social Development – College of Education for Secondary Teachers, stand part of the Estimates.

*Head 53, Ministry of Education and Social Development – College of Education for Secondary Teachers - \$286,887 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 149.

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

Question proposed that the sum of \$889,757 for Head 54, Ministry of Education and Social Development – Curriculum Development Unit, stand part of the Estimates.

**Mrs. DaSilva:** I have just two items on this page. Subhead 1, (2), Materials Production Officer – I believe it is a gentleman, not a lady – on the salary scale A 24. I believe his salary is at the top of the scale, and has been there quite a while. Why is he receiving \$360 more this year than he was paid last year?

Subhead 7 dealing with Publications, \$340,000 was the sum approved in the Estimates for 1974. The Revised Estimate, \$240,000, shows that the vote was underspent. These publications have gone up in cost and the House is asked to provide \$753,000 in 1975. Could the Minister say what is the explanation for this large jump in the amount of money required. We know we have been getting a lot of publicity about two recent books for the teaching of the children in the National Service. Could the hon. Minister say what is this sum, \$753,000 by way of publications? Is it for genuine education? Because we need it in so many aspects of our lives. We need to read, and when we read, we want genuine publications for the advantage of children, for them to benefit from it. It must not be used as a means of propaganda. Could the Minister give us some idea about how this is being spent?

**Miss Baird:** I refer to the salary of the Materials Production Officer. This was due to the normal revision of salaries and increments. This is a perennial question of money spent for the production and publication of education material and I am quite surprised that this is an issue in this House. If we are really interested in education, I think part of the thrust will be to produce reading material that is relevant and reading material that we urgently need.

**3.30 p.m.**

Every year at Estimates time I have to repeat myself that Materials Production is a part of a Curriculum Development Centre which is an essential unit for producing what we need in education. Now, there are two sets of departments in the Centre. One is the Curriculum Development Unit and the other is the Materials Production Unit. The Curriculum Development Unit is the section that deals with research, with going to the schools, seeing how the teachers

(Miss Baird continued)

teach, looking at the content of education, looking at the equipment and materials one uses in education, looking at the kind of evaluation we use in education. That is a necessary part of curriculum development because after all this has been tested in school. Here I may suggest that perhaps the hon. Member will be well served if she looks at the recently published booklet called “A Decade of Progress.” There are two other bits of material that I can furnish for her information.

Now, the research carried on there, the testing and the activity in school, is intended to form the background for the production of text books. When I say text books I am talking now about text books in subject fields, in science and mathematics, text books in which we use the language of the environment. We are going to teach the same principles because these are universal principles. But children learn more easily learning is made more effective if we use the language of the environment, if we use the situation to which they are accustomed, if we use the concepts which they can understand. So that is the function of the Curriculum Development Unit.

When they have developed the material and the material has been tested and they are sure it is effective and that it is serving the purpose which it is intended to serve, they pass that material on to the Materials Production Unit for producing a book. The hon. Member will realise that the work of the Curriculum Development Centre is going to be a slow process. They are not working by guess. They have to research which takes time and so they have not been able to produce any text books really. They are now tidying up some work and they hope to produce a reading series for children in Primary Schools. They are also getting ready to produce mathematics text books for children in Primary Schools. I think they are nearing the end of this task. When the material is quite ready they pass it to the materials Production Unit to make it into books.

There is another task for the Materials Production Unit, not the task of producing books that were booked on and researched on by the Curriculum Development Unit. There is another task for them and that is the task which Guyana knows best. I think the Caribbean, some African territories, the United Kingdom and the United States know about this other aspect of the work of the Materials Production Unit, that is, to write supplementary material which will reflect the values that we want to inculcate in the Co-operative Republic of Guyana.

There again, the material which I shall put at the disposal of the hon. Member will enable her to see that the values are values that any intelligent person, any person who is loyal to his country will appreciate. They are not values that people should be ashamed of. They are values which we all should aspire to foster among young people and values which we should practice ourselves. That is the other function of the Materials Production Unit.

I did not think it would have been necessary to come to this House to call attention to the fact that it is an expensive exercise to produce books. By the very fact that we all use and buy books, we know how expensive books are. The cost of books is almost prohibitive. If you want good books, you have to pay for them and so in the production of books the cost will be high. Newsprint has gone up, then we have to pay for printing, we have all sorts of things to do; we have illustrators who rank among some of the most outstanding illustrators in companies outside of Guyana. We have to try to keep them.

I think that the House will appreciate that there should not be any reason or cause to justify the cost of producing text books. We have just begun and this I can assure you will rise, not gradually, but rapidly because it is a fact that to produce books costs money.

*Head 54, Ministry of Education and Social Development – Curriculum Development Unit  
- \$889,757 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 150.

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

Question proposed that the sum of \$162,836 for Head 55, Ministry of Education and Social Development – Guyana Industrial Training Centre, stand part of the Estimates.

**Head 55, Ministry of Education and Social Development – Guyana Industrial Training Centre - \$162,836 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.**

**The Chairman:** Pages 151 and 152

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

Question proposed that the sum of \$611,890 for Head 56, Ministry of Education and Social Development – Probation and Welfare Service, stand part of the Estimates.

**The Chairman:** Hon. Member, Mrs. DaSilva.

**Mrs. DaSilva:** I should like to ask a general question under this Head dealing with Welfare Services. The need is very much there for both men and women, mothers and fathers, to work to develop our country, to earn a living and try to make two ends meet. But still, there is a great need for day nurseries where small children can be left because many of the working mothers have children who are of pre-school age. They have nowhere to leave these children. In fact, some of them “farm” the children out, as it were, with the next door neighbor or some woman in the area who might wish to earn a little extra money by keeping a couple of children while the parent goes to work. The parent is glad for the opportunity and the woman is glad for the opportunity to get the extra money when the child is left there. She tries to the best of her ability to look after this child.

But this is a duty of the State. The Government is stressing the need for everybody to be involved, everybody to be working, everybody to be helping to build Guyana and forgetting also the need that everybody needs money to live in a situation where costs are ever rising. Yet we have no nurseries. I think we have one official crèche in South Road run, as you know, by the Municipality. Could the Minister say if any thought is being given to this? Are there any plans for the future? Will the State have nurseries for these small children? Not only will they be better cared for, they will be meeting with other children and this will prepare them for the time when they have to meet with other children, when they go to school and to National Service. They will learn to mix and will get a balanced diet. Will the Minister say what plans are being made for this?

**Miss Baird:** Mr. Chairman, I suspect the hon. Member referred to day nurseries. Seeing that she directed the question to the Ministry of Education I think she was talking about nursery schools. But I am going to answer the question in respect to day nurseries.

**3.40 p.m.**

I think it was a good thing to think of the preventive aspects because it came under Probation and Welfare Services, and you are thinking of prevention rather than cure.

So far as I know, local authorities are being encouraged to set up day nurseries. When I say encourage I mean not only to encourage by words but a certain amount of training is going on in a training institution. That training is intended to prepare people, especially very young people, to serve in day nurseries as they are set up.

I think we know that the Municipality has one or two and I think in some rural areas day nurseries are being set up. The important thing is that we must be careful in setting these things up, in laying the foundation, and an important part of that foundation is the preparation of the

[Miss Baird continued]

people who will serve in those day nurseries, or more harm than good can be done. This is my answer to that; we are preparing the people to serve in the day nurseries.

Because the hon. Member referred to the preventative aspect. I think I should like to call the attention of the House to what the Ministry of Education and Social Development is doing for those who already have been deviants, those who have been put on probation. We are at this moment in the final stages of setting up a multilateral day centre which will provide an added opportunity, in addition to what exists already, for the rehabilitation of deviants. We are doing this by activities which we believe will help them to re-adjust to the demands of society through some form of remedial education, remedial in technical and vocational education. Many of them find have need of feeling their own worth, developing in them a feeling of self-worth. That would be part of the exercise.

The programmes are devised to develop in these people a feeling of self-worth and to give them the kind of skills they need, skills that they did not acquire in the normal educational process. Some of these activities will include things like group work, drama, athletics, camping skills, community services and, of course, the normal activities which we want to see developed on our society – agricultural skills. But the important thing is that we want to re-establish in those young people faith in the society which gave them birth and this is one of the developments in the treatment of deviants.

*Head 56, Ministry of Education and Social Development – Probation and Welfare Service - \$611,890 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 153.

**HEAD 57 – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

**BYGEVAL/MAHAICA SECONDARY SCHOOL – MULTILATERAL**

Question proposed that the sum of \$379,772 for Head 57, Ministry of Education and Social Development – Bygeval/Mahaica Secondary School – Multilateral, stand part of the Estimates.

**Mrs. DaSilva:** Heads 57, 58, 59, 60, 61 and 62, all deal with Multilateral Schools. So with your permission, sir, I will just speak here. What I say will be applicable to all of them.

This is the first year that we will be asked to provide current expenditure for the multilateral schools. They are in six areas. Incidentally I wish to note again, as I said earlier on, they are secondary schools and so this does not satisfy our need for more primary education.

These multilateral schools are in six areas: Mahaica, Anna Regina, Bladenhall, Christianburg/Wismar and Ruimveldt. As I said, this is the first year that current expenditure is appearing for these schools. Could the hon. Minister tell us how many of the six have been opened? Where are they situated? How long have they been open? What progress has been made? If none of them has been opened yet – I am not too sure on this point; I know some of them are not – would the hon. Minister say how soon can we expect to have these schools take in the children. I assume that by the end of 1975 all will have been opened and will be functioning. I wonder if at this stage in time the hon. Minister would be able to give us some idea of the number of children to be catered for in the six schools. Let us know how many places there will be.

**Miss Baird:** Mr. Chairman, the first multilateral school was opened at Mahaica in September this year. The schools at Anna Regina and Bladenhall will be opened in January 1975. The other schools, Wismar, Ruimbeldt and New Amsterdam will be completed in May in 1975 we hope and will be ready for opening in September 1975.

Now to give an approximate figure I would say that each school would cater for 1,000 children. Therefore, for six schools we will be able to offer 6,000 school places.



*Head 57, Ministry of Education and Social Development – Bygeval/Mahaica Secondary School – Multilateral - \$379,772 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 154

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

Question proposed that the sum of \$547,592 for Head 58, Ministry of Education and Social Development – Anna Regina Secondary School – Multilateral, stand part of the Estimates.

*Head 58, Ministry of Education and Social Development – Anna Regina Secondary School – Multilateral - \$547,592 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 155.

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

Question proposed that the sum of \$429,940 for Head 59, Ministry of Education and Social Development – Bladenhall Secondary School – Multilateral, stand part of the Estimates.

*Head 59, Ministry of Education and Social Development – Bladenhall Secondary School – Multilateral - \$429,940 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

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

Question proposed that the sum of \$398,236 for Head 60, Ministry of Education and Social Development – New Amsterdam Secondary School – Multilateral, stand part of the Estimates.

*Head 60, Ministry of Education and Social Development – New Amsterdam Secondary School – Multilateral - \$398,236 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 157.

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

Question proposed that the sum of \$376,220 for Head 61, Ministry of Education and Social Development – Christianburg/Wismar Secondary School – Multilateral, stand part of the Estimates.

**The Chairman:** Page 158

**HEAD 62 – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT  
RUIMBELDT SECONDARY SCHOOL – MULTILATERAL**

Question proposed that the sum of \$376,220 for Head 62, Ministry of Education and Social Development – Ruimveldt Secondary School – Multilateral, stand part of the Estimates.

*Head 62, Ministry of Education and Social Development – Ruimveldt Secondary School – Multilateral - \$376,220 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

16.12.74  
3.50 p.m.

National Assembly

3.50 – 4.00 p.m.

**The Chairman:** Page 159

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

Question proposed that the sum of \$6,095,000 for Division XXV, Ministry of Education and Social Development, stand part of the Estimates.

**Mrs. DaSilva:** Under Division XXV, sir, subheads 1 and 16, Subhead 1 deals with Primary, Multilateral and Secondary Schools. Under the Capital Expenditure we are being asked to vote \$2 million. What I want to ask the hon. Minister is this: What is the policy of the Ministry of Education with regard to allowing existing Aided Primary Schools and Secondary Schools to carry out extensions on their properties? I am particularly concerned with primary education.

In another two years' time, we will be celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in Guyana of the law which was passed in 1876 which made it compulsory for children to go to school but our primary school situation still leaves very much to be desired. There is the problem of overcrowding to which I have referred and to which we refer over and over again. I would like to know also, the Ministry's policy with regard to the extension to existing buildings or properties of Secondary Schools and of Aided Primary Schools in particular.

Under subhead 16, which deals with the University of Guyana, I wonder if the Minister would care to give this House any information regarding the unsatisfactory position with the Walter Rodney affair. Right now, the latest development is that the T.U.C. has, as it were, got into the act and is seeing the Board of Governors of the University. The University of Guyana must be a concern of the Ministry of Education. There is a very unsatisfactory state of affairs existing at U.G. Could the Minister give any information to this House as to the latest

development? Surely, it is an unsatisfactory situation and the Ministry ought to be concerned about the state of affairs at the University of Guyana.

Miss Baird: With respect to the first question, whether or not the Aided Schools are free to extend, the answer is “Yes.” They are free to extend their buildings.

Now, I want to make it clear that appointments to the University of Guyana are in the hands of an Appointments Committee and the matter of appointments is the concern of the Appointments Committee and, if necessary, the Board of Governors. It is not within my competence to say anything at all about the appointments of staff of the University of Guyana.

*Division XXV, Ministry of Education and Social Development - \$6,095,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 160.

**Division XXVI, Ministry of Education and Social Development – IBRD/IDA Projects - \$5,938,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.**

**The Chairman:** We will proceed with the Ministry of Health. Pages 161 and 163.

### **HEAD 63 – MINISTRY OF HEALTH**

Question proposed that the sum of \$1,143,122 for Head 63, Ministry of Health, stand part of the Estimates.

**Mrs. DaSilva:** May I take it page by page, sir? On page 161, under the Ministry of Health, I would like to ask the hon. Minister to give us, as it were, a little progress report on this

project. It is funny how this word “hope” plays so much a part of our lives in Guyana. There is our Finance Minister’s name, there are our “hopes” for the future of Guyana.

The project that I want the hon. Minister to tell us about is “Project Hope”. Dr. Frank Clarke – I think that is the gentleman’s name – is connected with that organisation in the United States. There used to be a ship called “The Hope” going from country to country and giving medical assistance to the countries at which it called. Now, I understand, the organisation sends personnel and I believe that about six months ago Dr. Clarke came to Guyana on a year’s assignment. I wonder if the hon. Minister would give us some information about the work being done by this gentleman and the assistance given to Guyana under the Project Hope Scheme.

Sir, on page 162, subhead 5 – Expenses of the Pharmacy and Poison Board and subhead 13, Convalescent Home for Children. Under subhead 5, I have two questions that are almost annual recurrences. I use this heading to talk about the problem that exists with the pharmacies with regard to the easy access children have to dangerous drugs. This situation is very serious and does not seem to improve as the years go by. Children can still go into the shops and buy things like malathion, weedicides, insecticide and so on. Their frustrated and hard-pushed parents eventually one day pick up a bottle and drink some of the liquid.

What are we doing about tightening up on the control of the scale of these dangerous items in small shops? We appreciate the need in the rural areas for a little village shop to carry a few patent medicines, but I think the pharmacists and druggists must be complaining that the shops are running in competition to them because the shopkeepers are like little doctors in their small areas. They prescribe, they dispense and they dilute as well.

Also, what is being done to tighten up and to provide us with drugs at a cheaper cost, particularly as the cost is being sent up by a high rate of duty?

In Trinidad, consideration has been given to lowering the rate of duty on certain drugs. Can the Minister say if any such consideration is being thought of in Guyana?

Again I make a plea for the Convalescent Home for Children, under subhead 13. They have been receiving this grant of \$26,000 for quite a long while now. There is no need to talk again about the ever-increasing cost. The home is being used more and more for abandoned babies. It is time for the Government to see the need for giving more towards the health and care of its citizens, rather than frittering the money away on unnecessary expenditure.

**The Chairman:** Hon. Minister of Health.

**The Minister of Health (Dr. Harper):** Mr. Chairman, I have been asked to speak about Project Hope. Project Hope is a private organisation based in Washington, D.C., that specializes in training personnel in developing countries, especially in health areas. It used to have a ship, which was an old U.S. Navy hospital ship. It is a very large ship, too large to enter our port. Last year, they were in Jamaica and recently it was decided to decommission the ship and send personnel. Dr. Frank Clark about when the question was asked was sent to Guyana when certain events in Ethiopia made it unfeasible for him to go there. He was sent here together with Mr. David Potter to help us to train our medical auxiliaries who are a type of health professional. These medical auxiliaries are going to do better what our dispensers have been doing so well in the years.

This year, an exception was made in the rule in that Dr. Clark was allowed to work in our casualty department until the training aspects of the programme were developed. Usually, Project Hope does not like its personnel to be used in service. As a matter of fact, we have requested Project Hope to train some our nurses as nurse anaesthetists. The Project Hope had a programme for this in Jamaica but it decided to pull out of Jamaica because Jamaica was using its personnel for service and not for training. Barbados and Guyana are going to have their own

programmes where either one of the two countries will be used as the centre to train people for the Eastern Caribbean.

Project Hope believes that in the future no country would have a Project hope programme if it did not agree for the training to be used on a regional basis, so when we start the Project Hope programme in nursing anaesthetists. If Guyana is selected as the site, we will be expected to take in candidates from the region.

A question was asked about the control of the sale of narcotics and dangerous drugs to children. It will be remembered that a few weeks ago there was an article in the **Chronicle**, written by Richard Ishmael accusing us of being unfair to the poor by making it difficult for poor people to buy antibiotics and other drugs over the counter.

I feel that we have to go even further. One of the problems that we have in Guyana is that we have an acute shortage of personnel. We would like to pass a law saying that no place of business would be allowed to deal with dangerous drugs, or antibiotics, or narcotics, except it has a fully-qualified registered pharmacist on the premises. We also would like to say that no company should be allowed to import or to deal with antibiotics or drugs except it had a fully qualified pharmacist on the premises. If we did this, there would be no pharmacist in Government service, so I think we have to do it in stages. I think that we have made a beginning.

I think that we are whipping up our health education programme to make the public aware of some of the implications and dangers of keeping malathion and other drugs within the reach of children. We are trying to get organized a series of control centres in different communities, where people could call in and be advised what to do if a child or somebody in their family takes a certain dangerous drug. This is a matter of First Aid.

We also have legislation, the Food and Drugs Act, which has been passed. The regulations are about to be implemented and we are going to ask for inspectors to enforce the law. Right now our Pharmacy board has a Registrar but we are short of inspectors, because the demands of our expanding economy have made it difficult for us to keep the inspectors that we have.

In respect of the lowering of the rate of duty on drugs, I think our Government has been aware of the importance of this and, at present, there are two hospitals in Georgetown, St. Joseph's and Davis Memorial, which pay no duty on drugs because those hospitals are non-profit hospitals. With the philosophy of the Government, it was not felt necessary to extend this facility to hospitals that are not engaged in non-profit activities.

*Head 63, Ministry of Health - \$1,143,122 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

*Assembly resumed.*

**Mr. Speaker:** Hon. Members, on the resumption when the Ministry of Health is concluded, we will do the Ministry of Trade and then the Ministry of Economic Development.

*The sitting of the House is suspended until 4.30 p.m.*

*Sitting suspended at 4.08 p.m.*



*On resumption - -*

**HEAD 64 – MINISTRY OF HEALTH  
MEDICAL**

**The Chairman:** Pages 164 to 167.

Question proposed that the sum of \$5,011,845 for Head 64, Ministry of Health – Medical, stand part of the Estimates.

**The Chairman:** Hon. Member, Mrs. DaSilva.

**Mrs. DaSilva:** Mr. Chairman, under Head 64 on page 164 I wish to deal with the question of staffing under subhead 1, items (5), (13), (15), (20), (23), (24), (25), (29), (33), (35) and (38). I am not taking them individually. It is a question concerning various members who make up the staff of the Medical Services. All the various items under subhead 1 would appear to show that during this year our hospitals have been grossly understaffed with doctors, in particular, and with dentists, to a certain degree.

We have heard this over and over throughout the course of the year and we see from the Revised Estimates that in the 1975 Estimates, in every instance practically, the amount that we approved in 1974 was not used because, obviously, the staff was not there. Now the original figures have been brought back for a full complement I would like the Minister to tell us, for example in the case of the Senior Surgeons, if we have six Senior Surgeons.

I note that although we were asked to approve \$12,756 for the post of the Medical Superintendent at Fort Canje under item (13), only \$6,378 was actually used in 1974. Does that mean that Fort Canje was without a Medical Superintendent for part of the year and that a Medical Superintendent will be there in 1975? Under item (15), there are four Senior

Ophthalmologists. Again, the vote was not used up which suggests that we did not have a complement of four. Has this been straightened out?

We come now to the post of Medical Officer of Health. There are four of these officers but we only used \$47,670 of the \$54,480 that we were asked to approve. One believes that some of the positions were vacant. We go now to item (23), the Principal Anaesthetist. I am seeing this item for the first time this year. I suppose that this post has been created for 1975. I hope there is someone to fill it. Maybe someone has been promoted from the rank of Anaesthetists. There were two of them in 1974 and there are still two this year. This Principal Anaesthetist is a new post although it did come up in 1974. We would like to know how this officer was paid in 1974 because, according to the Establishment, there was supposed to have been a Principal Anaesthetist in 1974. I see nothing here mentioned in the Estimates but his salary for 1975 appears.

There is one Principal Obstetrician and Gynaecologist. What happened in 1974? Only \$6,810 was used from the Approved vote of \$13,620. Is there a Principal Obstetrician and Gynaecologist? We come to Psychiatrist and the same position exists. Only \$6,006 was used from the vote of \$12,012. The vote for Medical Officers has increased. There are fifty-eight Medical Officers. We provided \$497,520 in 1974 and \$523,612 was spent. It appears that some doctors did come in. We are now asked to approve \$565,500 which appears that the Ministry is trying to bring the strength up to the full again.

The 1974 Approved Estimate for Dental Surgeons was \$93,720 and only \$74,040 was spent. We have now been asked to approve \$88,680. We would like to know if ten Dental Surgeons are employed. If not, how many posts are vacant?

As I said, all this deals with staffing. There is still a problem in recruiting doctors, dentists and professional people for our Medical Services. We have been informed that during

the year there were many resignations and it has been very difficult to fill the posts. As a matter of fact, the Kiwanis of America tried to help and during the course of the year a doctor, William Eagles, came to Guyana. He said that doctors were not interested in coming to work in developing countries because they earn far more where they are. Other reasons for not coming were the working conditions and the facilities available. It has been very difficult to get these men particularly from the United States of America but we have had to turn to India, the Philippines and so on. Are we getting any further response?

Another matter I would like to submit very respectfully to the Hon. Minister is the question of recruitment of officers. This is done through the Public Service Commission. This hon. Minister, Dr. Harper, is not a Minister who is given to twisting what we say. He takes our statements as we say them and answers very distinctly and clearly. He does not try to turn and twist what we say to suit himself. I do not want any misunderstanding that I am attacking the Public Service Commission because I am not doing so. The question is that by the very nature of the positions the Public Service Commission has to refer these people to the Minister and the Ministry of Health for their approval. It seems to take a long time for the positions to be filled. Is it not time for consideration to be given to changing the procedure and allowing the Ministry of Health to handle these appointments? Could the Minister let us know if any thought is being given to this?

Item (38), Port Health Officers: There are four Port Health Officers. I notice that the Approved Estimate and the Revised Estimate both show a figure of \$23,976. We are now asked to vote \$25,244. Is there an anticipated increase in the number of Port Health Officers during the year? If this is so, it will be very much appreciated. Is the increase related to increments or were posts vacant during 1974?

There are not sufficient Port Health Officers to cope with the entering of ships in Port Georgetown. It is appreciated that sometimes there are not many ships in port together but, on the other hand, if there is a ship all the way up at Ramsburg and another ship, say, has to be

entered by the Rice Marketing Board or in the Charlestown Sawmills area at this end of the town time is wasted. Time elapses before a Port Health Officer can come to clear the ship so that the immigration authorities, the police, customs can get on board. Also, there is work to be done and many hours can be lost because we do not have enough Port Health Officers for entering the ships. Many hours are lost in shipping and the Government can appreciate that that means money is lost. Can the hon. Minister say if there is going to be any increase in the number of Port Health Officers available?

I now turn to Subheads 12, 14, 18, 20 and 23 on page 167. Subhead 12 deals with the Notification of Infectious diseases. I use this Head not to make any point about the \$500 we are asked to approve, but to state that I have not noticed anywhere in the Current or Capital Estimates – maybe I have slipped up on it and the Minister may point this out to me – where money is being sought to put into effect the Immunisation Scheme that was passed in the House a couple of months ago. I appreciate the fact that everything cannot be done in one fell swoop and that this will be spread out over a period of time. But I do not see in the Estimates for the Ministry of Health, where money is sought for this scheme. Could the Minister say under what heading it falls or how it will be handled?

**4.40 p.m.**

Subhead 14 deals with Dental Equipment for School Children. I notice the Approved Estimate was \$10,000. We used \$9,700 so that \$300 was not used. This year we have been asked to vote \$12,000.

[Mrs. DaSilva continued]

We welcome this increase in the dental equipment for school children, because we have often spoken in this House of the position with regard to school children. The care of their teeth is very much a question of just extracting teeth rather than trying to save the teeth by filling the cavities. This increase of \$3,000 is very welcome indeed. We hope that full use will be made of it.

Subhead 18, Health Centres. The sum of \$30,000 was in the Approved Estimate for this year, and the Revised Estimate shows that \$29,800 was used. Therefore just \$200 was underspent. The same amount, \$30,000, is being asked for again. Are we not going to have an increase in the number of health centres? If these are going to be built, a vote under Capital Expenditure would be needed for them. Are there any plans to expand and increase the number of health centres?

Health Centres are particularly needed in the rural areas. We also need centres which care for small children, the infant welfare and maternity type of centre where parents can take their small children and where a great deal can be done in preparation for the immunization scheme that the Government plans to start next year.

Subhead 20, Mosquito Control Service: I notice that we asked for \$535,000 for this year and we actually spent \$599,000. We are not complaining about the increase. We never complain about increases in the medical services because we feel the money is genuinely spent. I notice that the provision for 1975 is \$337,000. Obviously the job has been completed, but would the hon. Minister say exactly how they went about it? Were there special areas? I was under the impression that mosquitoes were pretty well under control in Guyana and that we did not have the problem which existed in the days before Dr. Giglioli and D.D.T. Evidently it is an exercise that has to be continually carried out, and this is appreciated. Could the hon. Minister give us some information about this subhead?

Subhead 23, Health Education: It is stated in the legend: "Increase in prices." The provision for 1975 is more than what is shown in the Revised Estimate for 1974. The Revised Estimate for 1974 is \$3,990 which is short \$10 of the \$4,000 that was provided. I am glad to see that the Ministry can account down to the last \$10, it is more than can be said for some other Ministries. This year the provision is being doubled. It is \$8,000. We welcome this because we feel that this is a Ministry where health education, publishing and publicizing, cannot be overdone. This Ministry should call on the resources of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Information and Culture to help publicise, because ignorance in certain areas is really appalling. People are not aware of the basic necessities of simple hygiene for living. Even if they are very poor, soap and water are available. The appalling ignorance about health care and the prevention of disease is really very distressing. Any money spent on health education is very well spent indeed.

**The Chairman:** Hon. Minister of Health.

**Dr. Harper:** The hon. Member on my right made an enquiry about the Senior Surgeons. At present, five of the six positions are occupied. At Fort Canje we do have a Superintendent there in the person of Dr. Bose. Three of the four positions of Senior Ophthalmologist have been filled. With regards to the Medical Officer of Health, hon. Members will notice that higher up on the Estimates there is a Medical Officer of Health who is an Epidemiologist. One of the physicians has moved up in order to fill the position of Epidemiologist, so there is only one Medical Officer of Health.

The Government has agreed to subscribe and contribute to a regional virus laboratory in Trinidad where there is going to be a regional survey centre. In order to participate in that, we have to get a trained epidemiologist.

The Principal Anaesthetist was a position we had to create in order to normalize the situation in the Hospital where the head of each service was designated the Principal

Consultant in that field. The Public Service in the Job Description for this said that here requirement for this position was five years experience as a senior consultant. Nobody had qualified for this in 1974. In 1975 it is expected that somebody will qualify to fill this post.

The question with respect to the Principal Obstetrician/Gynaecologist is the same. The consultant qualified under terms laid down by the Public Service Ministry in the middle of the year that is why half of the year's salary is allocated for this.

With respect to dental surgeons, we have six on the Establishment and there are four vacancies. We have advertised and we expect to get some early next year. We also have to keep some of these positions open in order to accommodate Guyanese who may be studying abroad and wish to return home.

Subhead 33, Medical Officers: We have twenty-two vacancies. Recently, the Cabinet approved a revision of the salary scale of the Medical Officer to enable us to attract more of the Guyanese students who are at present studying at the University of the West Indies and who found it very difficult to resist offers from neighbouring Caribbean territories. I think we are in a better position now to offer comparable conditions of service and emoluments.

The discrepancy in the figures shown in the columns against Port Health Officers reflects the normal increments which are going to accrue next year. We have received no complaints about the necessity for more Port Health Officers, but I am happy to report that in 1975 in Guyana we will be conducting a training programme for Port Health Officers which will be conducted on a regional basis. It is sponsored by the World Health Organisation.

**4.50 p.m.**

On page 167, subhead 12 a question was asked about vaccines: Where was the money for the vaccines? It is not here. The money for the vaccines comes under Drugs and Dressings for

[Dr. Harper continued]

all Institutions which is under Head 67, subhead 14. The other amount comes under Transport and Travelling, page 167, subhead 2.

The sum voted for Dental Equipment for School Children has had to be increased because for the first time in the history of Guyana an attempt is being made to fill the school children's teeth instead of extracting them.

Subhead 18, Health Centres. The sum provided seems very small because we had an increase in Health Centres, but some of the costs of the Health Centres are included under Personal Emoluments. The sum of money is going to be implemented from funds that we get from UNICEF which provides funds for countries in our region with particular attention being paid to the care of children especially in rural areas. We could not ask for more money because the requested staff increases for Health Centres are still pending. If we get the additional staff, we may have to come up for some more money.

Under subhead 1 (84) there is an additional sum of \$291,717 which covers the Personal Emoluments and the question of malaria control under the Mosquito Control Service: Some time ago, I explained to the House that Guyana was at the verge of being certified malaria free, in that we had successfully passed a serological survey which is usually made before such a certification is done. A year then has to elapse before the final certification is given.

However, since I last spoke, there have been malaria epidemics in Surinam, Brazil and Venezuela on our borders and this will necessitate a vigilant and on energetic continuation of our preventive measures if we are to maintain our present position. I would like to warn the House that Sri Lanka and Sierra Leone are two developing countries which were in a situation similar to ours. Through relaxing their vigilance, they were re-infested and found it very difficult and more expensive to eradicate the second invasion of malaria than it was in the original situation.



[Dr. Harper continued]

Subhead 23, Health Education: We had to get an increase in the vote because the existence of the multilateral schools and National Service will require us to extend our activities in 1975.

*Head 64, Ministry of Health – Medical - \$5,011,845 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 168.

#### **HEAD 65 – MINISTRY OF HEALTH – BACTERIOLOGICAL**

Question proposed that the sum of \$769,205 for Head 65, Ministry of Health – Bacteriological – stand part of the Estimates.

**Mrs. DaSilva:** Subhead 10, Blood Transfusion Service. This always forms part of the annual debate – the everlasting need for blood. We hear this when calls for blood are made in the Press and over the air or from person to person. I notice that in the blood transfusion service \$45,000 was asked for in 1974 and we spent \$80,000. The legend states that the previous provision proved inadequate. We are quite satisfied with this spending of \$80,000 especially when we take into consideration, too, the increased cost of equipment this year in keeping with the increases that have taken place in every aspect of our lives. Now, we are being asked to provide \$75,000 in 1975. I think this is being under-estimated and we should at least have asked for \$80,000.

However, I want to ask the Minister if any consideration is being given to the use of plasma. I bring this up again and again each year because I do feel the need for it because we do

not have enough people willing to donate blood. There is always this problem of desperately trying to get blood and of the blood bank running low. I understood this Minister to say last year that they were thinking about plasma and I wonder if anything further has been done.

**Dr, Harper:** Mr. Chairman we requested the \$75,000 for the blood transfusion services in subhead 10, because I think it is nearer the true figure. The sum of \$80,000 that is seen there under the Revised Estimates column is not the actual figure spent but a figure that was estimated we might have needed. Since we did not spend the entire \$80,000, we cut it back to \$75,000.

We would like to use blood plasma in Guyana but we have no hematologist and we have no personnel trained to engage in these activities. This is one of the things that we hope to do when we can get the necessary personnel.

*Head 65, Ministry of Health – Bacteriological - \$769,205 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 169.

#### **HEAD 66 – MINISTRY OF HEALTH – X-RAY**

Question proposed that the sum of \$380,892 for Head 66, Ministry of Health – X-Ray, stand part of the Estimates.

**Mrs. DaSilva:** The Ministry of Health – X-Ray is, I think, one of the problem sections of the Hospital. It seems, too, to suffer very greatly a lack of staff. Such staff as there is, seems not to be working as smoothly as it ought to.

16.12.74

National Assembly

5 – 5.10 p.m.

[Mrs. DaSilva contd.]

5 p.m.

Could the Minister say under subhead 1, item (1), Principal Radiologist (Diagnostic), if this post has been filled and if someone is there? The question applies also to item (2), two Senior Radiologist and Therapy Officers. Under item (5), there should be fifteen Radiographers. The legend states that there are six posts vacant. Is there any hope of these post being filled?

Subhead 1, item (7), provides for five students of Radiography. Apparently, it has been in the mind of Government to have these students of radiography because there is also a token sum of \$1 in the Approved Estimates for 1974, and it appears again in 1975. Can the Minister say if we have been able to attract any of our young people to study radiography?

Item (10), X-Ray Technicians (Trainee): I notice the Approved Estimate show \$19,274 but this became \$9,600 in the Revised Estimates. This gives the impression that we were not very successful in having ten X-Ray Trainee Technicians. Has anything been done to remedy this, and are there now ten persons taking part in this exercise?

Under subhead 6, X-Ray Supplies, we were asked to vote \$75,000 in 1974. We spent \$105,000, and now we are being asked to approve of spending \$120,000 for X-Ray supplies. The legend states: "Expansion of services." In view of what I have said before, there seems to be a shortage in this X-Ray Department. Could the hon. Minister say how his Ministry hope to expand the services if it does not have the personnel? Could he tell us what the plans are?

**The Chairman:** Hon. Minister of Health.

**Dr. Harper:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The post of Principal Radiologist is filled. One post of Senior Radiologist and Therapy Officer is vacant. We have seven vacancies among the Radiographers. This, I think, is a problem that we have to face because quite a few of the Radiographers are married and we found it very difficult to persuade some of them to work.

Item (10), X-Ray Technicians, we are arranging to start a course of training in January, 1975. It will be a short course for one year. One of the problems we have been having here also, is that historically, in Guyana, this Government has created a precedent where people in Guyana expect stipends to students that are equal to the amount of money paid to people who work on jobs. I think we have had to revise the arrangements that were formerly made in order to get young people interested in coming into this technician course. We hope, with the advent of the multilateral schools, that perhaps we will find it a bit less difficult to persuade young Guyanese to choose careers in technical fields, than used to be the case formerly.

*Head 66, Ministry of Health –X-Ray - \$380,892 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Pages 170 to 173 inclusive.

**HEAD 67 – MINISTRY OF HEALTH –  
HOSPITALS AND DISPENSARIES ETC.**

Question proposed that the sum of \$16,240,579 for Head 67, Ministry of Health – Hospitals and Dispensaries etc., stand part of the Estimates.

**Mrs. DaSilva:** Page 170 subhead 1 items (12), (22), and (23). If I may deal with them one by one, item (12) deals with Dieticians, I presume that the Dieticians not only look after the diets of the patients at the hospital but also of the staff as well.

In relation to the problems which the hon. Minister has been having throughout the year, and in years past, and, probably, will have in years to come, the question of likes and dislikes food - wise by people. I am wondering if the time has not come for the Ministry of Health to think in terms of not providing meals for the nurses through the hospital kitchen but of having a

cafeteria service. Institutionalised cooking cannot please everyone, and everybody does not like the same type of food.

I am particularly thinking of the nurses' meals. Quite often during the course of the year, we have been hearing about the nurses either leaving the dining room, not having enough to eat, or not having what was originally on the menu and having to make do with eggs and rice and so on.

To avoid any misunderstanding with anyone who may want any special service in preference to another – the discontented ones will say it was given to their friends – the hon. Minister should have the nurses vote at free and fair elections to decide whether they should have a cafeteria service and to whom the concession ought to be given. They would be quite satisfied if Mr. "X" secures it in preference to Mr. "Y", if he got it as a result of free and fair elections. Maybe, it might set an example to the Government how to run free and fair elections. Maybe, the Ministry of Health can set this example.

We come to item (22) which deals with Occupational Therapists. I am sorry the hon. Minister of Education has gone home, because when I was speaking under her Ministry and dealing with the need for occupational therapists, I suggested that we could have used the Industrial Arts section of her Ministry to deal with this, but she was very careful to point out to me that this was to prepare a person individually for life, and I remember her saying something about dealing with marketing and running a home.

I thought it would have taken in every aspect of life, and that the domestic science course would include arts that could be used not only to help out the Ministry of Health in its need for more occupational therapists but also to provide job employment.

As I could not get the hon. Minister of Education to see it this way, could the hon. Minister of Health tell us if his Ministry has any idea where we will find more Occupational

Therapists? As the hon. Minister of Education pointed out, in this day and age, education is not learning from a book and repeating back and forth what is taught. There are new forms and visual aids, and aids for learning. I know that the hon. Minister of Health realises the need for Occupational Therapists. The excuse under this Head cannot be used, as was done in the case of physiotherapists when I spoke about them last year. I had asked if we could not see a way of training and having a sort of auxiliary to the physiotherapists and it was pointed out to me that if they were not properly trained persons, they could do more harm than good. I would bow to that. But in the case of Occupational Therapists, I think much more could be done if persons were trained Occupational Therapists. The Minister spoke a little while ago about the Multilateral Schools providing young persons for the X-Ray department. Maybe this aspect will be taken up of training people than employing them as Occupational Therapists.

**5.10 p.m.**

Item (23) deals with two Psychiatric Social Workers. This is a branch that really needs expanding, as any visit to the Mental Hospital, Fort Canje, will show. What are the Government's thoughts on increasing the number of Psychiatric Social Workers? It is appreciated that special training is needed but is there any hope of getting more than just two?

I think the increase in mental illness in our country seems to be, as in the rest of the world, a condition caused by the stress and strains of everyday life. I particularly think of people who have retired after an active life in office or field and now have nothing to occupy their minds because they made no preparation for their retirement. This is posing quite a problem to their families and their friends. Eventually they get to the stage where they need psychiatric treatment and the problem reaches the Medical Department. If we had more Psychiatric Social Workers in districts meeting the people, this might act as a preventive method. Everyone knows that it is much cheaper in the long run to have prevention rather than to provide a cure. Could the Minister say if anything is being done to increase the number of Psychiatric Social Workers?

Page 171, item (42), Physiotherapist Trainees, and 943), (45), (47), (48) and (55): Again my question relates to staffing problems. There are supposed to be four Physiotherapist Trainees. The vote was not used up, it was \$8,448 in 1974 and in the Revised Estimates we see that only \$5,412 was actually used. Have we now got four Physiotherapist Trainees?

As I was saying earlier on, the Physiotherapists, as it was rightly pointed out, need to be more highly trained persons or they could do more harm than good. It is therefore just as well that the complement of these trainees be kept up. Have we been able to get four?

There are supposed to be 90 Ward Sisters but from the way money was used last year it appears that these, too, are down as well, because the Approved Estimates called for \$355,824 and the Minister actually used \$330,697. We have been asked to approve \$368,112. Have we got 90 Ward Sisters? Similarly, with the Senior Male Nurses. Are we employing six of them, because we only spent \$15,072 out of the Approved Estimate of \$22,224. We only spent \$9,756 out of the \$12,168 provided for the four Hospital Attendants. Now we are asked to approve \$12,888. Do we have four Hospital Attendants?

The nine Medical Rangers are very necessary because they go around, particularly in our interior areas. Out of \$22,224 we only spent \$18,744 so maybe we did not have nine last year. Are there nine on the job now? There is going to be an increase in the vote for Supernumerary Psychiatric Social Workers. Probably it is because of the usual increments which will be paid to Supernumerary Psychiatric Social Workers. Again, I make a plea to have the number increased from one.

There are supposed to be 357 Nursing Students according to subhead 1, item (65) yet the vote was very woefully underspent in 1974. We asked for \$952,644 and we spent only \$924,084. Now we have gone back to \$969,444. Do we have 357 Nursing Students? We do not seem to have the full complement of Nursing Aides, namely, 33 as shown at item (66). The

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**5.10 – 5.20 p.m.**

amount dropped from \$76,428 which you asked for originally to \$48,540. We wonder why the Ministry is asking for only \$69,696. Does it hope to get the complement of 33?

We see on page 171 that there are supposed to be 111 laundresses. Are they short-staffed there too or does the Ministry have the full complement? We were asked to increase the vote from \$286,808 which was approved to \$301,152. The Revised Estimate for 1974 is \$287,578. Will this provide for additional staff or is it to be taken up in the increased cost of running the laundry.

On page 172 we see by item (79) that there are supposed to be eight Dental Aides. Why is there a decrease in the provision? The Approved Estimate was \$28,296, the Revised Estimate is \$26,578. Why are we only asking for \$21,696 this time?

There are supposed to be twenty-four Dispensary Assistants as shown at item (83). The sum of \$60,936 was asked for; the Revised Estimates show that \$57,311 was spent. The Ministry is now asking for \$63,648. Is this to bring the number of Dispensary Assistants up to twenty-four?

I turn to the last page dealing with Head 67. I shall refer to subheads 21, 23, 28 and 33. Subhead 21 deals with Allowances to Patients and Discharged Inmates of Mahaica Hospital. The Approved Estimate for 1974 was \$11,000: \$10,600 was spent so \$400 was underspent. We are asked for \$13,000 now. The legend states "Increase in beneficiaries." I will take it to mean that there are more people receiving allowances after discharge from the Mahaica Hospital. We are pleased to support this.

**5.20 p.m.**

I should like you to use your influence, sir, with the publicity available to you and your health education services to instruct and to educate our citizens on the conditions that prevail at the Mahaica Hospital and about Hansen's Disease in general. Far too many people still do not know what conditions are like at the hospital, what the people are like, what they do, how they



live. People go around with the old-fashioned idea of leprosy which is a word that hurts the patients at Mahaica Hospital very much. Their disease should be referred to as Hansen's Disease.

In particular, a great deal of unhappiness was brought to them by a radio programme over G.B.S. – I think it was about two or three weeks ago – in which they were referred to in very disparaging terms. The appellations and names that were used for leprosy caused them much distress. I should like to urge that in your education programme you use that facility of health education to instruct the people so that unnecessary suffering is not brought to those at the Mahaica Hospital.

Subhead 23, Renewal of Bedsteads at Georgetown Hospital: The legend states: "Increased costs". I suppose that is the answer I will accept – I did not notice it before, the provision for 1975 is \$6,000; the Revised Estimate for 1974 is \$3,800. The legend states: "Increased costs."

Subhead 28, Financial Assistance to Needy Patients: I note that the Revised Estimate for this year shows that \$1,100 was spent. We had asked for \$1,200, we spent \$1,100. In 1975 we are again asked to vote, \$1,200 that is, \$100 more than was spent this year. It strikes me that financial assistance to needy patients is greatly needed. All that the Ministry is getting is \$100 more than was spent and yet we continue to vote money for subhead 33, Medical Services at Matthews Ridge and Port Kaituma. I am not saying that money is not needed for these medical services at Matthews Ridge but let us have it in proportion. These discharged people, these needy people, certainly should have more help than just an addition \$100.

Subhead 35, Uniforms. I did not mention this subhead before. I do not know if you would allow me, sir, to speak on it. The legend reads: "Increase in prices of material and increase in personnel." From \$149,990 which was actually spent the vote is going up to \$400,000. Yet we hear there is great dissatisfaction about the uniforms that have been chosen for

the nurses. Before the change was made were the nurses consulted? Were they shown various designs of what was available so that they could make a choice? If this has been done there should be no need for dissatisfaction. But I would appreciate an explanation if this is so.

**The Chairman:** Hon. Minister of Health.

**Dr. Harper:** My hon. Friend on my right was enquiring about the Dietitian. We have always had a problem in getting fully qualified dietitians in Guyana. The Ministry took steps this year to train graduates at Carnegie as dietetic aides who would be able to meet some of our needs in this regard. I feel that there is a need in our Ministry and other Ministries to train more of varitype personnel who would be able to function under fewer highly trained people.

The suggestion was made that we should feed the nurses by a cafeteria. This, I think, is in the plans we have for our new Hospital. Most of us in the present have to live in circumstances that have been created by our past experience, and in our Ministry traditionally nurses have been fed. I have personally visited the nurses' hostel very many times and many of the reports that you see in the Graphic are more lurid and sensational than accurate. I am happy to report that the nurses are very well fed in the Georgetown Hospital. The complaints I think are not due to any shortages on the part of the Ministry. I think if the nurses themselves would organize a cafeteria the better it would be. We prepare enough meals for everybody but sometimes the nurses in the earlier shifts eat more than they should and the nurses on the late shift never get anything. But this is not due to any shortcomings on the part of the Ministry. I have made attempts to get nurses themselves to regulate the situation there.

Item (22) Occupational Therapist: We agree with our hon. Friend that there is a need for more occupational therapists in Guyana. We are aware that an occupational therapist could play a very significant part in psychiatric medicine and also rehabilitative medicine. But, as I said, traditions die very hard and very many times we have to make decisions within the limitations of our budgetary allocations. As we engage more and more in developing industries, the necessity

for occupational therapists I think will become more apparent. I feel that perhaps if our unions pressure us more we will get more from them.

One of the members of the Physiotherapy Department is away now being trained to come back and train Physiotherapist aides. The number of Physiotherapists listed in the Estimates under item (16) is very misleading because later you will notice that we have four supernumerary Physiotherapists and four Physiotherapist Trainees. Therefore our Physiotherapist Department is not as limited as it might appear to be under this item.

Item (23), Psychiatric Social Workers: We have a very peculiar situation here, because in our National Health Plan we are committed to preventive health activities and in a preventive programme we should have psychiatric social workers not only in our regional hospital centres but also in our rural health centres. But I say again that a very peculiar situation is developing in Guyana where in our establishment a social worker who is described as a psychiatric social worker receives a higher scale of pay than any other type of social worker. We have discovered in Guyana that most of the social workers with more drive and ambition gravitate towards psychiatric social work. Also, it was pointed out to me that in Guyana there are different scales of pay for different social workers.

### 5.30 p.m.

The social worker who works in health outside of psychiatric social work is paid less than a social worker who works in the Department of Social Development. Probation officers get paid more than the ordinary social workers. When they want promotion, they leave Probation and go to the Ministry of Labour. I think that we would have to regularize this whole system of social workers in Guyana so that people will choose their level of activity according to their interests and not choose the level of their activity according to the salary. This is a very peculiar situation that has developed locally.

The question on item (42) physiotherapist trainees, I have answered already. We have four and we have a young lady who is being trained abroad to come back in order to improve the quality of training we can give them here. Guyana will never get the health services it deserves unless we train more and more of our personnel here at home and we are trying our best to make this possible in our Ministry.

Item (43), Ward Sisters: There are fourteen vacancies here. To be qualified as a Ward sister, the Staff Nurse has to have her training in midwifery. Recently, we have had a programme where all the Ward Sisters were being rotated through the School of Nursing so that they will be better able to give clinical supervision to the students on the wards.

The Medical Rangers I, item (48). We are trying to train more Medical Rangers and earlier this year, we trained a new category of Health Worker, the Polyvalent Health Worker who will be working out in the Rupununi and out in the riverain areas. One of the problems we have had with the Medical Rangers was that after Job Evaluation, the salary of the Mosquito Control Servicemen was made more attractive, so quite a few of the Medical Rangers opted to go and work in the Mosquito Control Service. Then, a few of our Medical Rangers were co-opted by other agencies, like Interior Development, National Service and so on. So, I think our programme is successful and we have to train some more.

We are having another problem also which I think we will have to face up to eventually. Originally, Medical Rangers were chosen because they were Amerindians who spoke the dialect of the region in which they lived. But eventually when they became eligible for more attractive jobs in different areas, as Guyanese it is very difficult for us to deny them the opportunity to more. Therefore, we have to keep on training more and more.

Subhead 1, (65) – Nursing Students: This is anomalous but you have to understand the system. In Guyana historically, we inherited the system where our Nursing Students are not

really students, they are student-employees. After job evaluations they were given increments every year like employees. If they were students they would be getting stipends without increments. When these students do not pass their final examinations they are allowed to repeat it twice. What actually happens is that the vote is larger than it may appear to be under normal circumstances because we are carrying as students quite a few people who did not graduate in time or did not graduate when they were expected to. We are therefore carrying quite a few extra people or, at least, more than we should have. If they were normal students they would be cut off as soon as they failed the examinations.

Also, we have to accommodate the increments which they accrue. We have had the anomalous situation, where some students who failed the examinations still came in requesting increments because they have worked an extra year. These are things which we have to discuss with the Union and get clarified alter.

Item (66), Nurse-Aides: This is a category of worker which we have not been increasing because we are expanding our Assistant Nurse Programme and we feel that we should concentrate on training Assistant Nurses rather than on getting Nurse Aides. Item (70), Laundry: The Laundry has 21 vacancies.

Subhead 1, (79), Dental Aides: We have a full complement of Dental Aides because, as I said before, we are expanding the programme. These Dental Aides work with the Dentists who work on the East Bank, the West Coast, The West Bank. They also work in the Schools and Health Centres.

Subhead 1, (83), Dispensary Assistants: These are new positions. Dispensary Assistants were introduced a couple of years ago because we discovered that very many of our dispensaries were engaged in activities which did not require four years training. The Dispensary Assistants count the pills, put on labels, prepare packages and so on. We have tried to encourage some of them to go to school and get the academic training to ascend the career ladder.

Page 173, subhead 20, Mahaica Hospital: A question was asked about health education and Public Education about the Mahaica Hospital. As members of this House know, the “Luckhoo Report” on this Hospital was published last year. There is an out-patient clinic of the Mahaica Hospital which very few people in Georgetown are aware of. It is on Hadfield Street, east of the G.B.S.

**5.40 p.m.**

In modern medicine, an attempt is made to integrate patients suffering with leprosy with ordinary out-patients because the modern thinking is that leprosy is not a more dangerous disease to treat than, say perhaps, tuberculosis, but historically and from biblical references, most people have inherited the ancient attitude towards leprosy where sufferers of the disease were shunned and kept apart. We are fortunate in having a very competent leprologist who is quite up to date in her current feeling and practice in this field. In early 1975, there is going to be a seminar in Georgetown where we are going to deal with some of these aspects of leprosy, and we would like to invite everybody here to attend.

Subhead 28, Financial Assistance to Needy Patients: We feel that we would not need more money than projected here because patients who need social assistance should go to the social assistance agency for help. We feel most needy patients get free meals and free hospital care, and this sum of money is just to tide them over short emergencies, not to give them long-term social assistance.

Subhead 35, Uniforms, the nurses have a Uniform Committee and changes in the nurses’ uniforms are never made without the approval of this committee. The large increase requested for 1975 is due to the fact that the unions insisted that since we did not find it convenient to issue uniforms this year, we should give the nurses cash for 1974 and then uniforms for 1975.

*Head 67, Ministry of Health – Hospitals and Dispensaries etc. - \$16,240,579 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**HEAD 68 – MINISTRY OF HEALTH  
ANALYST**

Question proposed that the sum of \$226,906 for Head 68, Ministry of Health – Analyst, stand part of the Estimates.

*Head 68, Ministry of Health – Analyst - \$226,906 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 175.

**HEAD 69 – MINISTRY OF HEALTH  
PALMS**

Question proposed that the sum of \$849,667 for Head 69, Ministry of Health – Palms, stand part of the Estimates.

*Head 69, Ministry of Health – Palms - \$849,667 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 176.

**DIVISION XXVII – MINISTRY OF HEALTH**

Question proposed that the sum of \$4,722,000 for Division XXVII, Ministry of Health, stand part of the Estimates.

**Mrs. DaSilva:** There is just a general question that I wish to ask, and then a question on subhead 10. The general question I wish to ask is whether the hon. Minister can tell us what is the position that the hon. Minister can answer right now; he may need time to look into the figures, but I wonder if he could give us an indication of the money collected, both from the Radio Bingo and the National Lottery. This money is supposed to be spent on the hospital.

Under subhead 10, Para-Medical Centre, for capital expenses, we have been asked to vote \$600,000. I really want to ask the hon. Minister to give us some indication of the progress made in this field of para-medical training. We support it wholeheartedly. We think it is a very necessary scheme. We would like to know how it is going and what the position is now. This Para-Medical Centre, I see, is to be sited at the U.G. campus. How are they getting on with the work there?

**Dr. Harper:** With your permission, sir, I will answer the second question first. The Para-Medical Centre which is being planned for construction at the University of Guyana campus is one of four such centres which are to be built in the Eastern Caribbean. There is to be one in Jamaica, in Trinidad, in Barbados, and in Guyana. It is hoped that these centres will be used for the regional training of para-medical personnel for the Caribbean.

Guyana has had quite a distinguished record of success in training certain para-medical personnel like nurses, public health nurses, dispensers, health engineers, and medical technologists. We, I think, have already begun, this year, by constructing a laboratory at the University of Guyana, which will be completed early next year, in order for them to accommodate our medical technologists and pharmacists. At present, in Guyana, there are three students from Trinidad who are taking the diploma programme in pharmacy at the University of Guyana, and we are hoping to have this diploma course admitted and accepted for a full credit towards a degree programme at other approved institutions.



I think that this Para-Medical Centre just exemplifies the trend in the region for us to train our own personnel at home. Those of you who read the newspapers will know that Guyana is going to be training very shortly, at the school of agriculture, animal health assistants for the entire Caribbean region. This is just a trend and, later on, we hope our nursing school, which is conducted by the hospital, will be transferred to this centre. We prefer to call it an institute of health sciences, because we hope in the near future to expand our activities there so that we may train our own dentist, our own physicians, and other types of medical personnel.

In relation to the question on the Georgetown Hospital, I am not qualified to answer questions about the lottery or bingo because I think they do not come under my portfolio. The new hospital, I think, is still under consideration. We are re-evaluating some of the decisions that we made in the past because of the new estimates that have come to our attention with the current increase in materials and cost and I feel we will be able to make a report on this later when it is convenient for us to do so.

**5.50 p.m.**

*Division XXVII, Ministry of Health - \$4,722,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Pages 189 and 190.

#### **HEAD 75 – MINISTRY OF TRADE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION**

Question proposed that the sum of \$14,556,946 for Head 75, Ministry of Trade and Consumer Protection, stand part of the Estimates.

**The Chairman:** Hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. M.F. Singh:** Mr. Chairman, I wish to refer to subhead 11 on page 189, Expenses – National Specification Board. I wonder whether the hon. Minister would tell us something about this Board. What did it really do in 1974? The Approved Estimate in 1974 was \$10,000. It \ seems static and it seems as though it might be a figure that is put down there so as to disillusion us. If it is not merely a figure put down, could the hon. Minister tell us how this money was actually spent in 1974, what is the composition of the Board and what exactly did it do?

So much has been said about flour that I merely want to say that there is a very significant sum at subhead 13, Subsidy – Flour, on page 190. We are using \$14 million to subsidize flour and what is so regrettable is that the poor people are still finding it very difficult to obtain the cheap flour sold by the pound. The expensive Robin Hood Flour is readily available in the supermarkets and in the shops but yet they do not seem to obtain the cheaper flour. In some areas, particularly in some interior areas, there is a very acute shortage of this very essential item. Even though we see truck-loads of flour on the streets the ordinary housewives still seem to find great difficulty in obtaining their supplies of flour. Something seems to be radically wrong in respect of the distribution procedures. There are allegations that there is favouritism and that the distribution is in the hands of certain favoured people. It is said that even employees of the flour mill are allowed to indulge in distribution while employed by the producers. I wonder whether the hon. Minister has any plans to try and alleviate the suffering in this area.

**The Minister of Economic Development (Mr. Hoyte):** Mr. Chairman, the allocation under subhead 11, Expenses – National Specification Board, has been used this year and will be used next year for the purposes for which Parliament has voted it. The provision here must be seen against the provision under the Ministry of Economic Development for the National Science Research Council. The actual work – what I may term the physical work in relation to specification and standards – will be done by the National Science Research Council with support from the Ministry of Trade on the subject of the actual problems with consumers, for example, encounter in the purchase and use of commodities.

This sum under the Ministry of Trade is used to purchase commodities which are on sale in shops. These commodities are sent to the Government Analyst for testing so that the Government Analyst Department could identify the problems. There are all kinds of problems concerning commodities on the market. Sometimes it is a problem of packaging which is something separate and distinct from intrinsic quality. A lot of preparatory work has to be done to enable the National Science Research Council to understand the nature and extent of the problem in setting up the necessary machinery to prescribe standards, prescribe specifications and correct the difficulties which consumers encounter at the moment.

The hon. Member has raised a question under subhead 13, Subsidy – flour. The problem here, in my judgment, will never be solved until we change the nature of distribution in this country. So long as private people are engaged in the distribution of essential foodstuffs, we are going to get all the problems which come from greed and people trying to get rich quickly.

There is no doubt that the flour mill has been turning out sufficient quantities of flour to meet the needs of the community. For example, this week it has turned out 19,000 bags. It is true that housewives and others have been finding difficulty in getting flour easily. There is a great deal of hoarding and black blackmarketing. And that is the difficulty. I was looking at comparative figures for prices and I observed that whereas in Guyana we retail flour at 16½ cents per lb., the lowest price one can get flour at in the Caribbean would be 33 cents. In some countries the price goes as high as 50 cents and sometimes nearer 60 cents per lb.

Once can see what quick profits people can make if they can buy flour here at this low subsidized price and export it to the Caribbean market where the price is more than double the local retail price. Government is doing everything possible to try and ensure that flour reaches the consumers in this country. But it is a very difficult job and it calls for great vigilance, it calls for the co-operation of every citizen. Unfortunately, there are many people who connive at the

illegalities to which I have referred because they have something to gain from the activities of those who want to blackmarket and hoard and make quick profits by exporting flour illegally.

*Head 75, Ministry of Trade and Consumer Protection - \$14,556,946 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**6 p.m.**

**The Chairman:** Pages 95 to 97.

### **HEAD 31 – MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Question proposed that the sum of \$1,684,963 for Head 31, Ministry of Economic Development, stand part of the Estimates.

**Mr. M.F. Singh:** Page 95, subhead 1 (10), Research Assistant II on salary scale A12. This post was included in the 1974 Estimates which we passed in December, 1973. We approved the sum of \$3,000. We note that nothing is listed in the Revised Estimate for 1974. Presumably this post has remained vacant for this year.

We wonder whether the hon. Minister will confirm that this is so. There must be something that is left undone as a result of this post being unfilled. Would the hon. Minister tell us when it is proposed to fill this post in view of the fact that we are asking for a similar sum, \$3,000, in 1975.

Down the page, Foreign Aid Unit, will take items (20) to (24) together. This seems to be new unit established because there was no expenditure on this before except for the Economic Adviser. This is set out as a separate and distinct unit now where as before it might have been under General Administration. Perhaps the hon. Minister would like to tell us the rationale for

setting it out in this way, and the functions of this Foreign Aid Unit. Are all those posts filled and how is the Unit operating?

Moving down the page to the head Statistical Bureau. I should like to take together items (27), (28), (29), (30) and (31). The Statistical Bureau, with which all these items are concerned, seems to be suffering from a shortage of staff or non-filling of vacancies. Because if we note, for example, item (27), Statisticians, the sum approved in 1974 Estimates was \$44,520. The revised amount is \$26,352. It is significant underspending. One would presume there must be vacancies.

Similarly, with item (28), Statistical Officer. There is provision for four of these officers. The sum approved in the 1974 Estimates was \$18,156 and only \$9,336 is listed in the revised column. In respect of items (30) and (31), Senior Statistical Clerk and Statistical Survey Officer, sums were approved for 1974 but there is nothing at all shown in the revised column. Presumably no person occupied these positions.

It appears that there are significant vacancies throughout and one is naturally concerned with these vacancies in a section like the Statistical Bureau. We would like an assurance from the hon. Minister that these posts will in fact be filled at a very early date.

We note that the Data Processing Unit seems also to suffer from vacancies because the 1974 Approved Estimate was \$26,740 and the revised amount is only \$13,152.

We have no questions on page 96, sir. On page 97 there is just one question on subhead 20, Preparation of New Development Plan. We are asking in 1975 for \$10,000 and the legend states: "To provide for the revision of the New Development Plan". Some time ago we had a draft of the Development Plan handed to us. It stated specifically "Draft". It was the "1972 to 1976 Draft Development Plan." We are on the threshold of 1975 so that we have only a little over one year to go for 1976, the end of the Development Plan.

We do know that some of the things incorporated in the Development Plan have, in fact, been started. The hon. Minister in his contribution to the Budget Speech told us that. But we are, of course, alarmed over the fact that it is coming to the close of the five-year period and we still do not have the final document in our hands. The sum of \$10,000 is being sought here to provide for the revision. Who will be doing this revision? If, in fact, the officers of the Ministry are doing the revision then one would presume that no money would be required, but there must be some reason why the sum of \$10,000 is required. Perhaps the hon. Minister would tell us and give us an indication when this Plan would materialize.

**The Chairman:** Hon. Minister, perhaps in your reply you may take Foreign Aid Unit as well as Statistical Bureau collectively.

**Mr. Hoyte:** Yes, sir. I had proposed to deal with subhead 1 (10), the Statistical bureau and the Data Processing Unit, because the hon. Leader of the Opposition really was asking whether the failure to spend the provision allocated this year resulted from our inability to fill the posts. The answer is, Yes. It is very difficult to get people with statistical qualifications and to get the type of people required for data processing. They are, first of all, rare birds and, secondly, they have such a wide scope for employment that the turnover rate is high indeed.

We are trying to solve the problem by mounting courses at the University of Guyana with a view to turning out a large number of people, so that even if there is wastage we would be in a better position to find people to fill these posts.

The Foreign Aid Unit has been set up to deal specifically with Foreign Aid and with the various agreements which we have foreign countries for technical, economic and other fields of co-operation, and to deal with foreign economic relationships generally. It has been put separately for tidiness so that we can, at a glance, see the various sections and subsections of the Ministry.

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**6.10 p.m.**

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**6.10 – 6.20 p.m.**

The function of the Foreign Aid Unit is, first of all, to identify the various sources of foreign aid and assistance and co-operation, and that in itself is an important task. Secondly, it has to analyse the various kinds of assistance given by different countries in the world. Thirdly, it has to advise the Government on the forms of agreements and on the terms of these agreements which, from time to time, we sign with foreign countries. Then, it has the important task of monitoring technical assistance programmes in this country. It has to be able to report at any given time on the status of various agreements and various projects which are being implemented under the Agreement.

Sir, as I said before, in the course of my contribution to the general debate, the current development plan is not a static document. It is a dynamic document and things are happening about it. Its programmes are being implemented; its projects are being implemented and priorities are changing all the time. Therefore, now that we are half-way through the plan-period, it is necessary to up-date the plan to take account of things which we have done and changes which we have made in the content of the plan. This is exactly what is being done now by the Chief Planning Officer of the Ministry and his staff.

I pointed out, for example, that in the plan as written, the hydro-power project for the Upper Mazaruni River was really identified as a project for the next plan-period. In this plan-period, all we had hoped to do, originally, was the feasibility study. Now, we have gone for past that. The feasibility study is finished; the engineering drawings are on the board. We are going out now for the financial package to get the project started. In fact, we have started with the building of the road to the hydro-power station site. The project has been advanced and therefore we have to bring it into the plan to show that we have a new, significant project in our current development plan.

The revision does need money because we have to get information; we have to use stationery; we have to employ staff for the specific purpose of getting information and data necessary to up-date the plan. I could not therefore agree with my hon. Friend that this provision of \$10,000 is unnecessary.

*Head 31, Ministry of Economic Development - \$1,684,963 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Pages 98 and 99. There is a slight correction here. This should be Head 33 – Ministry of Regional Development – Interior Development. The Head that is numbered 33 will then become Head 32.

### **HEAD 33 – MINISTRY OF REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT – INTERIOR DEVELOPMENT**

Question proposed that the sum of \$684,276 for Head 33, Ministry of Regional Development – Interior Development – stand part of the Estimates.

**The Chairman:** Hon. Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. M.F. Singh:** Sir, page 98, subhead 1, (16), Station Allowances. I am not questioning any quantum here. I am merely asking for an explanation of this. In 1974 the Approved Estimate was \$24,000. The 1974 Revised Estimate is \$47,240, which is nearly twice as much. The 1975 Estimate is \$45,000. In the last column on the right hand side, the increase and decrease column, there is recorded \$21,000.” It is usual, with increases generally, particularly with increases like that, to give some sort of an explanation why there is an increase. No explanation has been given at all. Would the hon. Minister tell us the reason for the deviation



from the approved amount in the Estimates to nearly twice as much in the Revised column and, almost the same amount in the 1975 Estimates?

Subhead 11, Amerindian Captains: The 1974 Approved Estimate was \$89,400. The Revised Estimate was also \$89,400 and the Estimate for 1975 is \$91,500. I am very happy to see the quantum. I am not questioning that, but the legend states: "Underprovided in previous year." I wonder what exactly this means. If there was under provision in the previous year, is it a correct inference that some Captains were not paid in 1974? I certainly would not like to know that that was the position. Perhaps we could have the reassurance of the hon. Minister in this respect because certainly the Amerindians in these areas are worthy of consideration.

We have been trying to get the Government to put more accent and more recognition on the existence of Amerindians but still they have not received their lands. We pay so much lip-service to the Amerindian Lands Commission Report. We make promises; we bring Amerindians down to Queen's College; we make many promises and give them the caps and batons from the old Volunteer Force and yet they cannot get titles to their lands as we promised then so long ago. I wonder whether it is not time to pay some more attention to these forgotten people in the interior areas.

**Mr. Hoyte:** Mr. Chairman, the increase in Station Allowances has been due to greatly increased activity by the officers of the Department in connection with the well-being and welfare of the Amerindians. There has been an intensification of economic activities by the Amerindians. For example, there has been greater production of many crops, such as white potatoes. More cabbages and legumes are coming out of the Paruima area, and in the Aranaputa Valley, there are peanuts.

What is happening in the hinterland is that the Amerindian communities, under the stimulus of Government's policies and under the guidance of Government officers, are making a

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**National Assembly**

**6.10 – 6.20 p.m.**

significant contribution to the economy of this country and are producing more and more of the foodstuffs which we require in this country.

**6.20 p.m.**

Since there is a grater movement of officers among them, well, then, the allowances which go with travel naturally increase.

Under subhead 11, Amerindian Captains, the amount has been increased, not because Captains were not paid, but because more Captains have now become eligible for the payment of a salary.

The principle upon which the salary is paid depends upon the number of people within the settlement and under the jurisdiction, so to speak, of the Captain. Communities keep growing and when communities become sizable and reach the population which has been determined by the Ministry, then the Captain becomes eligible to be paid. That is what happened, and that is what is happening all the time.

*Head 33, Ministry of Regional Development – Interior Development - \$684,276 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 100

## **DIVISION XIX – MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Question proposed that the sum of \$29,067,800 for Division XIX, Ministry of Economic Development, stand part of the Estimates.

**Mr. M.F. Singh:** We are fully aware, particularly in respect of Capital Estimates, that details cannot be listed, but since significant amounts of money are involved, we would always like to invite the hon. Minister to give us some of the details as to how this money is being expended.

We start with subhead 1, Purchase of Equipment, the sum of \$58,800 has been earmarked to be spent in 1975. The legend refers to “miscellaneous equipment.” We certainly would like some idea of the trend that this kind of expenditure would take.

Subhead 2, Industrial Development: Again this sum is very significant indeed. It is \$24,455,000. The legend does say in respect of this Head, “See note below.” The note states:

“To provide for the participation in joint ventures, industrial and agro industrial ventures, the purchase of trawlers and buses and the establishment of industrial estates. Chinese and C.D.B. loan.”

One of the things that arrested my attention immediately was this purchase of buses because there has been complaint emanating from Government circles that equipment has been purchased, vehicles and machinery have been bought, and vehicles, trucks, etc., are lying down in the compounds of various Ministries of the moment because of lack of spare parts. Sometimes small parts are needed but because spare parts were not properly stocked before the vehicles were bought, there is “down time.” Perhaps it is being penny wise and pound foolish. These vehicles may have been bought at price below the normal but when one calculates the down time for lack of spare parts, I am sure it is not be an economic proposition to continue buying them if spare parts are not properly stocked. Perhaps the hon. Minister will tell us some more about these joint ventures and the various things to be bought with the \$24 million.

The next question is on subhead 3, U.N.D.P. Projects. We know of some of them. The legend states: “To provide for the execution of various studies. U.N.D.P. grant.” We would like

some more information on those that may not have been told to us before, because the sum is nearly \$3 million. It is \$2,950,000.

At subhead 7, we are asking for \$25,000 for the publication of the Development Plan. We noted what the Minister said about the preparation of the Plan and we are anxious to know when it is likely that this Plan will be published because we certainly would not be happy if the Plan were published towards the end of the development period 1972-1976. We are coming to the end of the period and we would like to know that we get it before the period ends.

Subhead 8, Scheme for Remigration of Guyanese: The sum of \$225,000 is being sought for 1975. We have always been asking questions about this. We never seem to get many details on it. For example, how many Guyanese were involved in this remigration scheme during 1974? The Revised Estimates column for 1974 shows \$169,000 listed as the revised amount for this scheme for 1974.

Subhead 9, Tourist Development: This is a relatively new item with \$250,000 being sought for 1975. At one stage a few years ago, I well remember there was a lot of activity by the Guyana Development Corporation in this field of tourist development. Not very much materialised from those activities. Will this be a further waste of money, as happened previously, under the Guyana Development Corporation? We have always been conscious of the fact that our tourist attractions are very limited. We do not have the blue waters of the Caribbean around us. We do have beauty spots but it would be enlightening to hear from the hon. Minister what is now being planned for tourist development in Guyana.

**Mr. Hoyte:** The hon. Leader of the Opposition asked for details of equipment to be purchased under subhead 1. The Ministry will be purchasing a number of metal filing cabinets, calculating machines, special type of IBM typewriters, electronic calculators. That is the kind of

equipment which will be purchased under subhead 1, the kind of equipment which is necessary for the Statistical Bureau and some of the other technical units of the Ministry, where large numbers of calculations have to be made rapidly and where a special kind of printing has to be done for reports, particularly reports having a lot of statistical information.

Under subhead 2, Industrial Development, as I said in the general debate, we will be putting most of the money allocated on the capital side into productive fields. Many of the projects have already started or are at a point where they are about to start.

**6.30 p.m.**

I should like to give some idea of some of the projects which will be attracting this sum of \$24.4 million in the Estimates. First of all, the Guyana Marine Foods Limited will be allocated \$2 million to purchase trawlers to increase the amount of fish available to the Guyanese community. We have said that one of the things we want to do is to be able to supply the Guyanese people with adequate quantities of fish, that important source of protein, at a cheap cost. Already we are providing fish at around 40 cents per lb. and we hope to bring that down to thirty cents a pound and to have it available in large quantities in every populated centre in this country.

The Guyana Transport Services Limited will be allocated \$2.2 million to make initial payments for additional buses which are to be acquired, and also to provide terminal and other facilities at Georgetown, Rosignol and New Amsterdam.

Guyana Food Processes Limited, which is a joint venture between the Government and private entrepreneurs, will be allocated \$1.2 million. The project involves the construction of berthing and other facilities at Rome on the East Bank of the Demerara River. That work has started, berthing facilities are being built now and there will be installed next year storage and

(Mr. Hoyte continued)

processing facilities for shrimp. This will put us in a better position to store and distribute shrimp both for export and for the local market.

The sum of \$2 million will be going into the Demerara Fish Plant about which I spoke in the general debate. The facilities will be established at Houston, a little north of the site where the Guyana Food Processes Limited will be carrying on its activities. We are going to build there berthing facilities, processing plant, storage plant and distribution facilities for fish. The studies have already been completed; the drawings are in the process of being completed and we hope early next year to start the actual construction at Houston.

Forest Industries Corporation will be allocated \$1 million to promote greater production of wooden furniture and toys in this country. The claybrick and Textile Mills will be allocated \$4.4 million between them. Hon. Members will see that we have a large amount for specific finance, \$5 million. Most of the money for the Claybrick and Textile Mill will, in fact, be specific. Hon. Members know that the Claybrick Factory is already going up. Preliminary work for the Textile Factory has been done on the industrial site and construction work will start next year. I did tell the House that I have already received the engineering drawings and as soon as our technical officers have examined them and made their comments, construction will start. The Guyana Agricultural Products Corporation will be allocated \$4 million. That is the Corporation headed by Mr. Maurice fisher, which will have the responsibility for producing on a large commercial scale crops such as corn, soya beans and so on. We have already established the feasibility of growing these crops and next year we will be growing large acreages, thousands of acres of these particular crops.

The Guyana Marketing Corporation will be allocated \$2.6 million to complete the new Ham Processing Factory which is going up on the East Bank and to do some additional work to extend capacity. Those are some of the main projects which will absorb this large sum of money in the Capital Estimates.

I should make mention, too, of the Small Industries Corporation which will be given \$2.5 million to help small industries in this country. We hope to stimulate production by small people. The Small Industries Corporation was established in February this year and to date it has lent nearly \$900,000 to a wide range of industries, industries which are manufacturing furniture, garments, wooden toys, handicraft, cosmetics, household linen and industries engaged in food processing. It has also lent money to little people who are making condiments and food preserves and things like that, stretching over a wide geographical area; people who are living on the Soesdyke/Linden Highway; people in the Bartica/Potaro area; people in the West Demerara area; people in Essequibo; people on the Corentyne and people in Georgetown. This is precisely the kind of practical encouragement we are giving to people to enable them to produce. As I said earlier on in the general debate, we want to encourage our people to produce things. We do not only want to talk about it, we want to give them encouragement in a practical and intelligent way.

Under the U.N.D.P. Projects, subhead 3, there are several areas of training in which we are engaged with the United Nations Development Programme to increase and improve skills in this country and also to produce plans which are important to us for the development of various sectors of the economy. I would like to list some of the projects. They are as follows:

We have a Transport Planning Project; we have a Telecommunication Training Project; there is a project for increasing the capability of the Kuru Kuru Co-operation College to deal with the needs of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana; there are projects for physical planning; education planning; management development; forest development; topographic development; agricultural implement manufacture; veterinary services; technician training; technical and vocational training; clay pipe manufacture; land evaluation. All these things are being done in this country by this Government with the assistance of the U.N.D.P.

It may be a good point to remind hon. Members that Guyana has been elected to membership of the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme and will be taking its seat on the 1<sup>st</sup> January. This is another important recognition for the Co-operative Republic of Guyana.

Now, sir, I will deal with the Scheme for Remigration of Guyanese. I am happy to be able to tell the hon. Leader of the Opposition that during this year we brought back to Guyana twenty-three highly skilled Guyanese to serve their country.

**6.40 p.m.**

All of these people have been placed in very important areas concerned with the development of the country. Six of them have been placed in corporations such as the Guyana Telecommunication Corporation and the Guyana Airways Corporation. Ten of them have been placed in Government Ministries such as the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Economic Development. Two of them are at institutions of higher learning, namely, the University of Guyana, the Kuru Kuru College and the New Amsterdam Technical Institute. One of them has taken service with the Municipality of Georgetown and one of them, the internationally known and famous boxer who many years ago brought great glory to this country by his fistic prowess, Cliff Anderson, has been brought back to this country to serve with the National Sports Council to help in the physical training of our people.

Under subhead 9, we have the sum of \$250,000 for tourist development. I cannot agree with the hon. Leader of the Opposition that this country does not have tourist attractions. [**Mr. Singh:** “They are limited.”] No. I do not agree with him that they are limited either. We have a different kind of attraction from what we usually think about when we think of tourism, particularly in the Caribbean.



I want to say here and now that we do not intend to develop the kind of tourism which have been developed in the Caribbean and in some other countries of the world. We have seen the social dislocation which that kind of tourism has caused in those countries and we have seen the tremendous social costs to those countries of encouraging the kind of tourists who flock to white sands and blue seas.

What we are trying to do here is to develop our hinterland facilities, first of all, so that we can encourage our own people to enjoy the beauty of Guyana, encourage our public servants, our workers generally, to take their holidays in this country. This of course, does not rule out the possibility of people from outside coming to the country as tourists, coming not to bring and impose their culture on us, but coming to enjoy our country on our terms.

I should like to indicate some of the areas where this kind of development will take place. They are Matthews Ridge, Mabaruma, the Rupununi areas of Lethem, Pirara and Annai, Imbaimadai in the Mazaruni and Kaitaur; and on the coast, No. 63 on the Corentyne, and the Lakes in the Essequibo. These are areas that we are not just talking about; we are actually doing the preliminary work necessary for providing at least the basic facilities. It is no good telling people to go into the hinterland on holiday unless the facilities are there for them to be accommodated and to enjoy themselves.

The revision of the Development Plan should be completed around February of next year.

*Division XIX, Ministry of Economic Development - \$29,067,800 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 101. Head 32. There is a slight correction from Head 33 to Head 32.

**HEAD 32 – MINISTRY OF REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Question proposed that the sum of \$483,898 for Head 32, Ministry of Regional Development, stand part of the Estimates.

*Head 32, Ministry of Regional Development - \$483,898 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 102.

**DIVISION XX – MINISTRY OF REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Question proposed that the sum of \$1,350,000 for Division XX, Ministry of Regional Development, stand part of the Estimates.

**Mr. M.F. Singh:** Mr. Chairman, I will deal with subheads 1, 2, 3 and 4 collectively. From reading the legends I presume that these items of expenditure are in respect of equipment – vehicles, transmitting sets, office equipment, boats and boathouses for Regional Ministers. Why do we continue with this lavish expenditure on maintaining Regional Ministers merely to establish a P.N.C. top level presence in these various areas? In my humble opinion that is all it is.

We do have existing agencies and arms of the Government in these areas and those Regional Ministers cannot really achieve anything. Everything has to be channeled to the substantive Ministers in Georgetown within whole portfolios the matters fall. It is a waste of expenditure.

One wants to exhort the Government not to pursue this kind of wasteful expenditure for these holiday resorts for Regional Ministers and perhaps for party members when they go into the various areas.

Perhaps I should take subheads 5, 6 and 7 separately. Subhead 5, Establishment of Regional Councils. This is a new request for money. It has never appeared before. The legend states: "To provide for the establishment of Regional Councils." We have many regional bodies, local authorities, etc. What will this additional bureaucratic institution do? How is it intended to operate? Is this the instrument through which the Regional Ministers will work? Again, if this is so, it seems an absolute waste of money.

#### **6.50 p.m.**

Subhead 6, Minor Development Works. There again this is a new subhead and the legend states: "To provide for minor development works in the Region." This is further duplication. There are so many agencies. The Ministry of Works has a mobilized presence throughout Guyana. It normally undertakes development works throughout Guyana but we seem to be setting up another agency to compete with the other Government agencies. This, again, is duplication.

We go down to subhead 7, Interior Development. We have no quarrel at all with money being spent to develop the interior. The sum requested here is \$600,000 but at whose disposal in this money going to be put? Again, why the necessity to create apparently a special subhead under the control of a different set of people for interior development? It is certainly not the conventional people dealing with interior development and this, to my mind, is a further duplication by the Government, further expansion in the bureaucracy. If we had centralized agencies we could certainly cut down expenses.

[Mr. Singh continued]

**Mr. Hoyte:** Mr. Chairman, the hon. Leader of the Opposition has raised a number of legitimate questions on the nature of the regional system and I think it is only proper that I should respond to those questions.

**The Chairman:** Are you not going to deal with the smaller items first? Those are items 1, 2 and 3.

**Mr. Hoyte:** What I am going to say is going to embrace everything. Regionalism is an important aspect of the process of reconstructing our society. It is an important aspect of the process of reconstructing our society. It is an important institution for the development of this country as we envisage its development. It is concerned primarily with development, and I think that its success or failure will have to be judged in the context of the development of the people and the communities in this country.

At a certain level, it has a number of objectives but these objectives are all part of a larger objective which is development –development of people, development of communities.

The objectives to which I refer, which are part of the larger objective, are first of all, to ensure prompt and intelligent decision making on the spot; secondly, to ensure co-ordination of Government policies on the ground and effective implementation of Government's programmes; thirdly, to ensure effective deployment and use of Government personnel, equipment and other resources for maximum beneficial results; fourthly, to ensure the involvement of the people in the decision-making process in their communities and in the planning and implementing of programmes for the development of their areas.

It will be seen, sir, that it is through the regional system that a cardinal principle of development, as Government sees it, can be implemented, that is, the involvement of people. With regionalism there is a great deal of decentralization, both of decision making and of

implementation. As part of our development policy, the regional system is designed to ensure that within the regions we develop people who are self-reliant and confident, and that we develop productive communities, comprising people who understand the process of national development and accept individual and collective responsibility for the development of their communities.

I want, first of all, to destroy the belief that within the regional system there will be room for people from the centre, so to speak, to interfere with the work of decision making and implementation within the region. That is not going to happen. That is not envisaged at all. The Regional Minister has authority over all Government personnel, materials, equipment and resources in the region, so that whether the Government officer belongs to the Ministry of Works or is attached to the Ministry of Agriculture or to the Guyana Electricity Corporation, he is under the jurisdiction of the Regional Minister who has authority to give him instructions, who has authority to inspect his file and write in his file adverse or complimentary comments as the case may require. Within the region, all Government activities are one.

We inherited a system where there were little compartments and little empires. The man from one Ministry believed that he was doing something entirely different from a man in another Ministry, and that attitude has been a constraint to development because people ran in different directions and very often ended up by obstructing one another. The result of all this was inefficiency, lack of co-ordination and, in the final result, the failure to achieve the objective which Government wanted.

The provision for the establishment of regional councils is to do two things: One, to ensure the proper co-ordination of all Government personnel and activities within the region, and, secondly, to involve the people in all the work which is to be done.

There are going to be three Councils. First of all, the Regional Administration Council, of which the Regional Minister will be Chairman, will bring together all the senior Government

personnel and Corporation personnel within the region. They will meet regularly to advise the Minister, to help to plan for the region and to make sure that all their activities are geared towards the welfare of people and the development of the region. In that way, we are not going to have people tripping up over each other, fighting each other and ending up by doing things which are not in the interest of the region as a whole.

The second Council will be the Regional Development Council, where the Chairmen of the third Council, that is, the Sub- regional Development Council, will meet to co-ordinate development.

We are now getting down to the people. On those regional development councils we are going to have represented the people's organisations in the region – trade union organisations, religious organisations, farmers' organisations. Whatever organisations there are which bring people together will be drawn into the Regional Development Council so that they can make plans for the development of the people and of the community.

### **7 p.m.**

The region will be divided into sub-regions because these regions are large. A region like the Mazaruni/Potaro Region, of which the hon. Minister Bancroft is Regional Minister, has an area of 33,000 square miles. These regions will be divided into sub-regions and each sub-region will have its sub-regional development council made up of the people. The people will be involved in planning for their own development; they will be involved in making decisions relevant to their needs and their community's needs; and they will be involved with Government officers in the development of their particular regions.

In the past, people had a belief that the Government official must do all the work which was necessary to develop their communities. We are trying to change that way of thinking, to get people to think that "We have to do it, working along with Government officers." And

Government Officers in turn will understand that they are the servants of the people and their task is to work along with the people in these regions.

Since the Regional Minister must be put in a position where he can act promptly – because the whole purpose of regionalism is to facilitate prompt and intelligent decision making – the Regional Minister must have at his disposal, sums of money. That is what subhead 6 is all about. If the Minister goes into an area and finds that people's backyards are being flooded because a koker needs two planks of wood, he has at his disposal money to buy those planks of wood immediately and get the people to repair their koker without having to go through the long-winded process of making a formal request to the Minister of Works, and getting a Warrant, and all that sort of thing.

The Ministry of Works will have its scheduled programme for the year, but from day to day all kinds of little things drop up and the Regional Minister must be in a position to act promptly. He must have the money at his disposal and he must have the personnel at his disposal, because his job is to be involved with the people. He is not a desk man. He is a man who will be in the backdam; he will be in the rice field. He will be in the provision field; he will be up the river with the pork-knockers. He must know people's needs. People must see him as functioning effectively. This is what the regional system is all about.

The system is working. The fact that it is working has been seen by the great increase in agricultural production this year. Part of that increase has been due to the activities of the Regional Minister and the regional officers.

The system, of course, is new, and I am not pretending that there are not problems. There are problems, but the problems are there to be solved. Once we identify them, we must solve them. The system, like all others, will always have defects. But that is no reason for saying, as the hon. Leader of the Opposition is saying, that is not working because there are problems. I believe that it can work. I believe that it has already had an impact upon the rural communities.

I believe that, with this provision which we are asking Parliament to make to ensure that the Regional Ministers have adequate staffing and adequate sums of money to get on with their work we will see manifold improvements in the well-being of people in this country.

Under subhead 7, the provision for interior development will in fact be administered by the Interior Development Department. It is intended that the Interior Development Department should control this money and get on with its work.

*Division XX, Minister of Regional Development - \$1,350,000 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

*Assembly resumed.*

### ADJOURNMENT

**The Speaker:** Tomorrow, we will do the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Labour, and the Ministry of Home Affairs. If the hon. Prime Minister is here, we will do his Ministry.

**Resolved,** “That this Assembly do now adjourn until Tuesday, 17<sup>th</sup> December, 1974 at 2 p.m. [The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Leader of the House]

**Adjourned accordingly at 7.05 p.m.**

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