

THE
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
OFFICIAL REPORT

(VOLUME I)

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE
FIRST LEGISLATURE CONSTITUTED UNDER THE
BRITISH GUIANA (CONSTITUTION)
ORDER IN COUNCIL, 1961

25th Sitting

Tuesday, 17th April, 1962

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

Present:

His Honour the Speaker, Mr. R. B. Gajraj.

*Members of the Government
People's Progressive Party
Ministers*

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| Dr. the Honourable C. B. Jagan | <i>—Premier and Minister of Development and Planning (Member for Corentyne—East)</i> |
| The Honourable B. H. Benn | <i>—Minister of Natural Resources (Member for Demerara Coast—West)</i> |
| The Honourable Ram Karran | <i>—Minister of Works and Hydraulics (Member for Mahaica)</i> |
| The Honourable B. S. Rai | <i>—Minister of Home Affairs (Member for Demerara Coast—East)</i> |
| The Honourable R. Chandisingh | <i>—Minister of Labour, Health and Housing (Member for Lower Demerara River)</i> |

Dr. the Honourable Charles Jacob, Jr. — *Minister of Finance (Member for Vreed-en-Hoop)*

Dr. the Honourable F. H. W. Ramsahoye — *Attorney-General (Member for Canals Polder)*

The Honourable E. M. G. Wilson — *Minister of Communications (Member for Boerasirie)*

Parliamentary Secretaries

Mr. L. E. M. Mann — *Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Works and Hydraulics (Member for Mahaicony)*

Other Members

Mr. S. M. Saffee — *(Member for Berbice—West)*

Mr. G. L. Robertson — *(Member for Leonora)*

Mr. M. Bhagwan — *(Member for Essequibo Islands)*

Mr. J. B. Caldeira — *(Member for Pomeroon)*

Mr. V. Downer — *(Member for Berbice—East)*

Mr. M. Hamid — *(Member for Demerara—Central)*

Mr. D. C. Jagan — *(Member for Suddie)*

Mr. H. Lall — *(Member for Corentyne—West)*

Mr. M. Shakoor — *(Member for Corentyne River)*

Members Constituting the Minority

(i) People's National Congress

Mr. L. F. S. Burnham, Q.C. — *(Member for Ruimveldt)*

Mr. W. O. R. Kendall, Deputy Speaker — *(Member for New Amsterdam)*

Mr. J. Carter — *(Member for Werk-en-Rust)*

Mr. E. F. Correia — *(Member for Mazaruni-Potaro)*

Mr. N. J. Bissember — *(Member for Campbellville)*

Mr. W. A. Blair — *(Member for Berbice River)*

Mr. R. S. S. Hugh — *(Member for Georgetown—South)*

Mr. J. G. Joaquin — *(Member for Kitty)*

Mr. R. J. Jordan — *(Member for Upper Demerara River)*

Mr. C. A. Merriman — *(Member for La Penitence-Lodge)*

Mr. H. M. S. Wharton — *(Member for Abary)*

(ii) United Force

Mr. P. d'Aguiar — *(Member for Georgetown—Central)*

Mr. R. E. Checks — *(Member for Georgetown—North).*

Mr. I. Crum Ewing — *Clerk of the Legislature*

Mr. E. V. Viapree — *Assistant Clerk of the Legislature.*

ABSENT:

Mr. G. Bowman, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Natural Resources (Member for Corentyne—Central) — on leave

Mr. S. Campbell (Member for North West) — on leave

Mr. E. E. Melville (Member for Rupununi) — on leave

PUBLIC BUSINESS

**APPROPRIATION BILL — BUDGET
DEBATE**

Mr. Speaker : Hon. Members, we shall continue the consideration in Committee of Supply of the Appropriation Bill and the Estimates.

Assembly in Committee of Supply.

The Chairman : When we adjourned last evening, we had just finished Head 24 — Printery. We shall now move on to Head 25.

PROBATION SERVICE

Head 25 — Probation Service — \$92,797

Subhead 1(3) — Probation Officers.

Mr. Bissember (Campbellville): I notice that in 1961, there was provision for eight Probation Officers. In the Estimates for this year, there is provision for an additional two, making a total of 10. As I understand the Probation Office the service it is desired to give in any community is a social service. That being so, I feel that the staff is not large enough to take in the entire country. May I inquire from the Minister concerned where these two new officers will be stationed and how soon they will be posted to their districts?

The Minister of Home Affairs (Mr. Rai): The additional two Probation Officers will be charged with the after-care of prisoners who have been discharged. One is for the Georgetown area and the other for the East Coast area.

Mr. Bissember: I do not follow that. There are at present eight Probation Officers — one in Berbice, one on the East Coast, one on the West

Coast, one in Essequibo and four in Georgetown. There is also after-care work being done in the Probation Office in Georgetown. For that, there are two Welfare Officers (Prisons). Is the Minister saying that these two officers will be doing after-care work in the rural areas only or will they also do after-care work in Georgetown?

Mr. Rai: These will be wholly after-care officers. As I have explained one is for the Georgetown area and one for the East Coast area.

Mr. Bissember: I am also informed that there is only one lady Probation Officer in the entire Service in this country. I know, and some of those around this Table here will agree with me, that as a result of the lack of employment particularly in Georgetown and the urban areas as well as in some rural districts, with young girls leaving school even before the school leaving age, there has been an increase in juvenile delinquency. With reference to young female offenders, can the hon. Minister tell me whether the Government intends to continue having just one lady Probation Officer for the entire country? Or does it intend to have more than one and if so, how soon does it propose to implement any such intention?

Mr. Rai: It is not proposed to have any increase in the number of female Probation Officers.

Mr. Bissember: Does the hon. Minister agree with me that there is an immediate necessity to have more than one female Probation Officer?

Mr. Rai: This may be so. As I said, it is not proposed to have any more at present. The volume of work is more in the direction of male offenders and, therefore, the emphasis is on male Probation Officers.

Mr. Bissember: I do not accept that. Can the Minister say how many female offenders from January to the present time have had to be looked after by the sole female Probation Officer in Georgetown?

Mr. Rai: I would require notice of that question, and I can assure the hon. Member that we will get all the figures for him—the offenders—girls and

Mr. Bissember: I make this point because last week, in one of Her Majesty's Courts, one of the Magistrates had to comment on it. There were three young female offenders appearing before him and he wanted a report into their background and intelligence. But he was told that the only female Probation Officer was investigating other cases which were placed under her care just some weeks before. So there was no female officer to report to the Magistrate who had to defer sentence for two or three weeks.

Mr. Rai: I was not present. I do not know if what my hon. and learned Friend says is correct. I would have to ask at the Ministry. That is not a matter of general principle.

Mr. Bissember: I do not agree with the hon. Minister. We are asked to vote \$92,797 for this Service. If this Government intended to give the people of this country any social service, it would have found out from the Heads of the various departments what great need there is of expanding the staff of the Probation Service. But here are the Estimates for 1962 with provision for two more after-care officers, and there is one female Probation Officer.

It is not fair. I make this point every day. There are young people leaving the rural area and flocking to the city. When they come to the city, sometimes as young as 13, they find

themselves in "bad" homes. Eventually, they appear in court and the Magistrate who has to investigate these matters has just one Probation Officer. I would like the hon. Minister to investigate this, and I recommend, from this side of the House, the voting of immediate supplementary provision to have at least two more female Probation Officers.

2.15 p.m.

The Chairman: The hon. Member has been permitted to speak on three or four occasions immediately after the Minister had endeavoured to answer the question put. I pointed out yesterday that the procedure in Committee of Supply is laid down very clearly in Standing Orders 66 and 67. When the question is put by the Chair a debate can only arise if an Amendment is moved in terms of Standing Order 67, which provides that Amendments shall be submitted to the House through the Clerk one clear day before. Only then can an Amendment be moved to enable a debate on that particular point. Other than that, when the Chairman puts the Question, as I have done, Members may indulge in criticisms of the overall policy and in relation to a particular point. We cannot have three, four, five or six attempts by a single Member to "keep the pot boiling," as it were. I think the hon. Member has fully exhausted the particular point, and if no other Member wishes to speak on the policy of the Department, I shall put the Question.

Head 25 — Probation \$92,797 — agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

ESSEQUIBO BOYS' SCHOOL

Head 26. Essequibo Boys' School—\$99,268.

Subhead 8—Bakery, \$4,650.

Mr. Correia: (Mazaruni-Potaro): Can the Minister say whether this item of \$4,650 is for the staffing of the bakery, or for the purchase of stocks?

Mr. Rai: It is to provide for the running expenses of the bakery. Staff and so forth are looked after under Personal Emoluments.

Subhead 13 — Maintenance of Stock Farm, \$6,050.

Mr. Correia: Does the Stock Farm provide milk and meat for the Boys' School, or does it only provide heifers for distribution to farmers on the Essequibo Coast?

Mr. Rai: Milk is supplied to the boys, and when there is a surplus it is supplied to the Suddie Hospital. Whenever heifers are available they are sold at public auction.

Head 26 — Essequibo Boys' School, \$99,268—agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

MINISTRY OF LABOUR, HEALTH AND HOUSING

Head 27. Ministry of Labour, Health and Housing.

Subhead 4 — Pharmacy and Poisons Board, Expenses of, \$12,800.

Mr. Merriman (La Penitence-Lodge): I would like to ask the Minister of Labour, Health and Housing under what Ordinance this expenditure is incurred? I am aware that there is an Ordinance of 1958 which was amended in 1960. I am aware that every Tom, Dick and Harry is allowed to sell poisonous drugs. I am also aware that there is no operative date for the 1960 Ordinance. This expenditure is therefore a waste of taxpayers' money because there is absolutely no control of the sale of drugs and poisons. I would like the Minister to explain the position at the moment to justify this expenditure.

Subhead 15 — Distribution by B.G. Red Cross of Surplus Foodstuff, \$40,372.

Mr. Correia: I observe that there is an increase of \$17,772 on this item. Can the Minister tell the House what surplus foodstuffs it is expected to distribute?

The Minister of Labour, Health and Housing (Mr. Chandisingh): I will deal with the last question first. The food distributed is milk.

With regard to the question asked by the hon. Member for La Penitence-Lodge (Mr. Merriman) about the expenses of the Pharmacy and Poisons Board, I wish to say that the expenses are justified in the sense that this money is provided for the inspection of registered pharmacies — places where dangerous drugs are kept — and thorough checks are made from time to time. Only recently I had occasion to see the Report for last year prepared by this Department, and I observed that the number and the extent of the checks made justified the expenditure under this subhead. In other words, I think they have been doing quite a good job. Pharmacies and registered pharmacists who keep dangerous drugs must keep records, which must be inspected from time to time to see that the drugs are properly kept and issued in accordance with international standards.

Mr. Merriman: I am somewhat alarmed at the reply by the Minister. He says that pharmacies are checked and that he has seen a report on such checks, but a look at the Ordinance shows that its purpose "is to make better provision for the control of the profession of pharmacy and the trade in drugs and poisons." I say that in the control of the trade in drugs and poisons absolutely nothing is being done. I would like to know which Ordinance is being enforced.

2.30 p.m.

It is particularly on the trade aspect that I want a reply. Every Tom, Dick and Harry can sell poisonous drugs, and yet there is no enforcement or control over the sale of such drugs! A great deal of revenue is lost, because there is no enforcement of the law. There is nobody who looks after the registration of these people and so on. I am alarmed when I look at the way in which the

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hon. Minister is dealing with this question of health.

Mr. Chandisingh: I do not think it is true to say that every Tom, Dick and Harry can sell poisonous drugs. There is a schedule of drugs which have to be sold by a registered druggist, and there is also a schedule of drugs which may be sold by ordinary shops. There is new legislation on this matter which has not yet come into force. When this new legislation comes into force it will further qualify and differentiate between the type of drugs which have to be sold on premises where there are registered and qualified druggists, and what can be sold across the counter.

Mr. Merriman: I have in my hand an amendment to an Ordinance which was assented to by the Governor on the 13th November, 1960. It states: "This Ordinance shall come into operation on such day as the Governor may by Order appoint." The day has not yet been appointed, and I am urging that the legislation should be enforced. What is the reason for this delay?

Mr. Chandisingh: The new legislation has not yet come into force. The control and sale of poisonous drugs will be dealt with by the Pharmacy and Poisons Board.

Mr. Kendall (New Amsterdam): Can the hon. Minister say when last licences were issued to business people in rural areas to permit them to sell poisonous drugs, and indicate where I can find in the Estimates the money he proposes to obtain from such licences?

Mr. Chandisingh: I understand that under the new proposals licences will be issued, but under the present legislation there are no licences.

Mr. Kendall: What is that?

Mr. Chandisingh: I understand that under the present Ordinance licences are not being issued. Under the new legislation new licences will be issued.

The Chairman: Is the new legislation the same as the Ordinance to which the hon. Member for La Penitence-Lodge refers?

Mr. Merriman: The Rules in relation to the amended Ordinance have not yet been made.

Mr. Kendall: Am I correct in saying that, for the last three or four years, Government has not collected revenue for licences from people who are selling drugs in rural areas?

Mr. Chandisingh: As soon as the new legislation comes into force, licences will be issued and revenue collected.

Mr. Kendall: This year, next year, or when? This Government says that it needs money, but for some reason or other it fails to collect money from people who are selling drugs in rural areas. I do not know whether it is a means of helping party supporters.

Mr. Chandisingh: I thank the hon. Member for his observations. I think it will be possible to have the necessary regulations made during the course of this year.

Mr. d'Aguiar (Georgetown Central): I am still wondering what is intended to be covered by the expenditure provided under Subhead 1, items (8), (9) and (10). With reference to item (10), I would ask what sort of contingency the hon. Minister envisages that may be covered by \$2?

Mr. Chandisingh: With reference to Subhead 1 (10)—Temporary Clerical Assistance, \$2—it is merely a token vote which would permit the employment of Temporary Clerical Assistance when necessary.

Mr. Correia: I have not yet received my reply from the hon. Minister with regard to Subhead 15 — Distribution by B.G. Red Cross of Surplus Foodstuff, \$40,372. This sum is provided for distribution of foodstuff, and I would like to know how much milk will be distributed? Is it pasteurised milk or powdered milk?

Mr. Chandisingh: The hon. Member need not quarrel over this matter. It is powdered milk from the United States of America.

Head 27. Ministry of Labour, Health and Housing \$237,707, agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

MEDICAL

Head 28. Medical—\$1,567,268.

Mr. Merriman: These items are of such vital importance that I wonder whether they can be taken page by page.

The Chairman: You may start with page 51.

Mr. Merriman: I would like to inquire how many posts for specialists are vacant? I am not taking into account unqualified officers who are carrying on the work.

Mr. Chandisingh: According to the figures available, the vacant posts for specialists are 7 (1 T.B. Officer; 2 Pathologists, 2 Gynaecologists, 1 Medical Officer of Health and 1 Medical Superintendent, Georgetown Hospital).

Mr. Merriman: I do not know whether the hon. Minister can give us an assurance as to the time when these posts will be filled. It is known that qualified Guianese gynaecologists are at present in the United Kingdom, and yet we have an unqualified officer do-

ing the job in British Guiana. He may be doing a good job, but he is unqualified in the context of our appointments.

2.45 p.m.

The Government is aware that there are trained Guianese gynaecologists who are willing to return here. The Government knows they can get jobs easily. I would also like to ask whether the Minister can give us the assurance that these posts will be filled early, particularly in the light of the availability of trained persons.

Mr. Chandisingh: The Government has been making very great efforts to fill these vacant posts of specialists and also of Government Medical Officers. The hon. Member says that there are Guianese in the United Kingdom who are trained gynaecologists. I would wish, on another occasion, that the hon. Member would see me on the matter and let me know of these Guianese who may be willing to fill such posts. We would be most pleased to offer appointments to such Guianese.

On the question of the assurance, I cannot give the assurance that these posts will be filled within any particular time because, as I said, Government is making very great efforts to try to get these posts filled. More than that, I do not think I can say.

Mr. Merriman: Following on the question of specialists, I would like to ask the hon. Minister if he does not consider it at the moment a necessity to have a physician at the New Amsterdam hospital. I am aware that there is a surgeon for New Amsterdam and, also, I think quite recently an ophthalmologist was appointed. Why is it that the New Amsterdam hospital is not provided with a physician?

Talking about vacancies, Suddie Hospital has been without a dentist, and there is not a dentist on the whole Esse-

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quibo Coast. The dentist has left there since last year, and up to the present day there is no service whatsoever and the equipment is lying idle. There is an amount in the Estimates for a dentist, but absolutely nothing is being done for the service of dentistry. I do not know if the hon. Minister can tell me anything about that.

Mr. Chandisingh: With respect to the New Amsterdam hospital, the services there are being built up. It does take some time before one can reach the ideal position, but a start has been made. Only recently, an ophthalmologist has been posted there. With respect to the dentist at Suddie, the post for an additional dentist has been advertised and quite recently, we have had an application from someone in the United States. It is likely that Government may be able to attract him to take up one of these posts.

Mr. d'Aguiar: May I ask the hon. Minister how many Medical Officers have resigned during the course of the year 1961?

Mr. Chandisingh: I think the hon. Member should give notice of this.

Mr. Kendall: I see here that in 1961, you made provision for 39 and you would like to have 52 in 1962. Do you still have the 39?

Mr. Chandisingh: As far as I understand the position, there are fewer than 39 now.

HEALTH EDUCATION OFFICER

Mr. Wharton (Abary): Under item (33), I observe that there is provision for only one Health Education Officer. I would like to know how and where he operates, if the Government feels that one Health Education Officer is enough and whether it is not absolutely necessary for others to be so appointed.

Mr. Chandisingh: There is a Health Education Officer who received training in the United States and that officer has been working in conjunction with a Health Education Officer supplied by the Agency for International Development. Only a few days ago, the department took on three persons who would be trained in the field of health education and would work under the control of the Health Education Officer listed here.

Mr. Cheeks (Georgetown North): I am informed that there is only one Medical Officer at the Casualty Department of the Georgetown Hospital during the night between 8 p.m. and 8 a.m. I am quite sure, if this is so, that it cannot make for efficiency when there is a stream of casualty cases coming in. I would like to find out from the Minister what provision has been made for the increase by one of the night officers in the Casualty Department.

Mr. Chandisingh: As regards the position at Casualty, the hon. Member is quite correct. There is one officer on duty at night, but the whole question revolves around the availability of Medical Officers in the Government service. As the posts we have provided for here in the Estimates are filled, there will be more Medical Officers to go around and it will be possible to have more than one officer at Casualty.

Mr. Cheeks: It is very urgent, what with the increasing number of motor vehicles and cases of poison and of attempted suicide. It appears that people are losing hope, but I should expect Government to regard the appointment of another Casualty Officer as urgent.

Mr. Merriman: I would like to ask the hon. Minister what provision is made for the visit to riverain areas—the Berbice River, Pomeroon and Essequibo — by Medical Officers or other health officers such as dentists.

Mr. Chandisingh: Periodic visits are paid to the riverain areas by various officers, including dentists, dispensers, and a lady Medical Officer of Health.

PSYCHIATRIST

Mr. Wharton: I wish to refer to item (20)—Psychiatrist. I must admit I am pleasantly surprised that there is a psychiatrist operating in this country. I would like to know where he operates.

Mr. Chandisingh: There is no psychiatrist in this country as yet. The post is a new one created with the hope that we will be able to attract one here.

Mr. Bissember: Was there not a doctor from Berbice who went on a course for two years to qualify? Can I get any information as to whether the course was in psychiatry?

Mr. Chandisingh: This officer, now at the Mental Hospital, Berbice, has been trained in psychiatry. He has not secured his diploma and it is likely that he may go abroad later on to try to secure his full qualification. However, he has training in psychiatry.

Mr. Bissember: Did this officer apply for an extension of leave to gain his diploma and, if so, did the Government refuse to grant the extension?

Mr. Chandisingh: The answer is "no". He had not requested any extension. He was on leave.

Mr. Bissember: Under the item "Medical Officers", I see Government is expecting to have 52 medical officers. I do not see anywhere any mention of part-time doctors. I know that certain private practitioners have been employed from time to time and are still being so employed. May I ask how many such practitioners are employed in the Government service and how they are being paid?

Mr. Chandisingh: I believe that there are about six part-time medical officers and they are being paid under item (63)—Additional Medical Assistance. That is a token provision on the Estimates.

Mr. Bissember: Can the Minister say whether he is satisfied with the service given by these private practitioners who have their own businesses to look after? Or does he intend to attract Guianese doctors who are away to return?

Mr. Chandisingh: The situation where we have to depend on part-time medical practitioners to help out is not in the best interest of the service. But we have had to call upon these part-time medical people to assist in the situation in which we have found ourselves. We have increased the number of posts to 52 with precisely the intention of eliminating the need for having part-time medical officers. As soon as the Government is able to fill more and more of the vacant posts, then the need for the part-time officers will cease.

3 p.m.

Mr. Bissember: There has recently been a final examination at the University College. Can the Minister say whether young doctors from the College are in a position to come to this country, and what efforts are being made to attract them?

Mr. Chandisingh: The Public Service Commission deals with the appointment of our medical officers, but in any event students at the U.C.W.I. are apprised of vacancies which exist in this country, and as a matter of fact two of them should be coming later to take up post as interns.

Mr. d'Aguiar: There is, undoubtedly, some confusion in the minds of the general public as to what services

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by doctors at the Public Hospitals are free, and what doctors are entitled to charge for. I would like to get a clear and definite statement of the policy of the Government with respect to the payment of fees to doctors at our public hospitals.

Mr. Merriman: Supplementary to the question answered by the Minister a while ago with regard to doctors and dentists visiting riverain areas, I do not think the Minister took into consideration visits to schools at the same time. As recently as Saturday last when I visited the Pomeroun district I was told of someone who suffered some reaction from the use of medicated salts, and that no doctor visited that area. On investigation I found that there are two doctors on the Essequibo Coast who are responsible for the running of the Suddie Hospital, and do not visit the Pomeroun district. It is not satisfactory to say that dispensers visit that area.

Mr. Chandisingh: I am informed that the Assistant Medical Officer at the Suddie Hospital pays monthly visits to the Pomeroun, and that a dispenser also visits that area. I would also like to say I am informed that the skin eruption referred to by the hon. Member was not caused by the use of medicated salt.

Mr. Kendall: In view of the fact that the Government is finding it very difficult to attract medical officers to British Guiana, I would like to know whether Government has ever thought of offering medical scholarships, or reviewing the conditions of employment of medical officers in order to attract the type of doctors it has in mind. During the debates the Minister of Natural Resources who, apparently, feels that we will reach the stage when we will not need doctors, suggested that we should manufacture them. I suggest that one

way to manufacture them is to award scholarships on the condition that when they have qualified they should return to serve the country.

Mr. Chandisingh: The point I wish to get across to the hon. Member is that there is at present a shortage of medical officers in the service in British Guiana. The training of doctors now will be the immediate solution to this problem. There are very many Guianese who are studying at universities and medical schools in various parts of the world, and I am certain that many of them, if not all of them, will be returning to British Guiana. But this is a long-term view, and what we have to do now is to recruit medical personnel to fill the gap which at present exists. A gap exists because the Medical Services in this country are expanding. More and more doctors are needed. As a matter of fact doctors are going to be provided to meet the needs of the people of this country. [Mr. Merriman: "More and more are resigning"]. Well, there are more coming in too, and places are being filled. What we want to do is not only to dig a hole to fill a hole, but to get some more medical officers immediately, so that we can see effective improvement in the Service, not in the next five or six years, but now. I think this is an indication of the rapid expansion of the Medical Service.

Item (38)—Mental Hospital Nurse, \$2,000.

Mr. Joaquin: Is this a new post?

Mr. Chandisingh: This is a new post provided in order to improve our service at the Mental Hospital.

Item (40) Senior Health Visitors, \$10,040.

Mr. Joaquin: I notice that in 1961 the approved estimate for salaries of two Senior Health Visitors was

\$5,040, but for 1962 it is \$10,040 for six Senior Health Visitors. I would like some explanation of the increase.

Mr. Chandisingh: I do not know if the hon. Member has looked at the note at the bottom, which explains that four additional posts of Senior Health Visitors are in substitution for four posts of Health Visitors. In other words, four Health Visitors are being promoted to Senior Health Visitors. This is being done to improve the supervision of Health Visitors, which will result in improvement of the service.

The Chairman: I think the point the hon. Member was trying to make was the amount of money required to be voted; that whereas in 1961 there were only two Senior Health Visitors and for 1962 the number is being increased to six, the sum to be voted is merely doubled.

Mr. Chandisingh: May I have an opportunity to check on that?

Item (50) — Interns (\$3,048), \$18,288.

Mr. Correia: I notice that in 1961 there were six interns. Can the Minister say whether there are six now in the Department?

Mr. Chandisingh: There are not six interns at the moment, but this is a provision in case we are able to get them.

Mr. Kendall: How many do we have now?

Mr. Chandisingh: There are now four.

Item (55) — Sicknurses and Dispensers and Chemists and Druggists — Training (25), \$24,012.

Mr. Merriman: I would like to ask the Minister when will these trainees complete their training, and whether there will be a qualifying examination.

3.15 p.m.

Mr. Chandisingh: We have provided for 25. They will be trained in batches; when one course is completed another course will begin. I understand that the training course for druggists and chemists for this year has not yet started.

Mr. Merriman: I would like to know whether there has been any examination for qualified chemists and druggists recently; when was the last examination held, or why an examination was not held?

Mr. Chandisingh: I understand that the last examination was held about eighteen months ago. I also understand that the curriculum is being revised and this, apparently, is the reason why there has not been an examination since.

Mr. d'Aguiar: It seems to me that the object of this exercise is to compare the Estimates for 1962 with the approved expenditure for 1961 against the actual expenditure in 1960, and it makes it rather difficult for us to compare these things when the actual expenditure is spread over 65 Heads. I am wondering whether it would not be possible to give us the estimated expenditure against the relevant heads, so that we could make a fair and reasonable comparison?

Dr. Jacob: It is not practicable to do that now, because the accounts for 1961 are not yet closed.

The Chairman: On page 52 the total expenditure on a number of items is \$1,124,715. These items are in a large bracket, and it is difficult to say

[MR. CHAIRMAN]

how much money was spent on a particular item. If hon. Members knew what was spent on a particular item in 1960, they could compare the figure with what was spent in 1961 and what should be spent in 1962.

Dr. Jacob: I am advised that this has been the practice with regard to personal emoluments.

Mr. d'Aguiar: May I ask the hon. Minister of Finance to modify the practice, in order to give us a more accurate figure for comparison between actual expenditure for one year and what was spent the year before?

Dr. Jacob: I am informed that this would involve a great deal more work, but I appreciate that it is a good suggestion.

The Chairman: I would like the Ministry to consider the suggestion. In order to compare the figures properly, it will be necessary to have the figures for the various items set out under 1960, 1961 and 1962.

Mr. d'Aguiar: The additional work may result in saving a few million dollars. The submission of these figures will enable hon. Members to make a proper comparison and arrive at the correct amount to be spent in any year.

Dr. Jacob: I would suggest that this should be done, if possible, in future.

Mr. Chandisingh: With regard to item (40)—6 Senior Health Visitors \$10,040—there seems to have been an error. The amount should have been \$12,960 for 1962 instead of \$10,040. However, in view of the fact that these posts are not yet filled and we are now

discussing the 1962 Estimates, I am informed that additional provision will not be needed when the posts are filled.

Mr. Correia: I understand that, Mr. Chairman. Can the hon. Minister say why there has been an increase in item (56)—House Allowances, \$14,000?

The Chairman: There is a footnote to item (62).

Mr. Bissember: The hon. Member is dealing with item (56).

The Chairman: The footnote to item (56) states that there is an increase in the number of Officers receiving house allowances.

Mr. Chandisingh: The increase provided is in anticipation of the filling of the vacant posts.

Mr. Merriman: This question of fees for specialists is a very vexed one. What is more disturbing about it is that the Government seems not to have laid down any policy that will guide an individual when he has to enter these public institutions. I, like the hon. Member for Georgetown Central, would like to know what is Government's policy in this matter. I want to know whether these specialists will be allowed consultation fees, private practice and so on? I would like to know what is Government's attitude towards health—the building of health centres at Mahacony, Leonora, Skeldon and so on? I would like to know what extra remuneration these Medical Officers would be permitted to receive? The withdrawal of certain fees must be taken into consideration *vis-à-vis* the conditions under which the officers are working in the light of the system which operated before they entered the various posts.

Mr. Chandisingh: The practice is that specialists can charge consultation fees, and the amount goes to them;

they get half of the operation fees, and the other half goes to the Government. It is Government's wish to implement the new policy whereby specialists will not be allowed to charge consultation fees, but, in lieu of such fees, they should be compensated. Hon. Members are aware that this aspect of the matter is now being considered by the Whitley Council, so the old system continues to apply in the meantime.

Mr. Cheeks: Would the dentist attached to the Georgetown Hospital be included in this matter?

Mr. Chandisingh: Dentists are not entitled to any fees.

Mr. Merriman: I am sorry, but I did not hear the hon. Minister's reply.

Mr. Chandisingh: I said that dentists are not entitled to fees.

3.30 p.m.

Mr. Merriman: I am aware that at the cottage hospitals, attention is free, but yet the medical officer has, at his home or somewhere near the hospital, a surgery or consulting room where the patient has to pay. It then becomes a question of "If you don't come to my place, you don't get the attention you should get." That is the danger of the policy laid down by Government—at the hospital free; at the home or surgery of the officer not far removed, you have to pay and pay heavily. What is the position? Is Government aware of this? Is this practice being condoned?

Mr. Chandisingh: Government Medical Officers, in districts at the moment, are allowed private practice. Government would like, as soon as possible, wherever possible, to abolish private practice by G.M.O.'s; that is, to require them to serve an institution or

institutions, such as a cottage hospital, and a few health centres, without the right to private practice. The Government was considering the implementation of such a policy, but as the position exists at the moment, when we take the Mahaicony cottage hospital, all patients who visit the hospital during certain hours—that is, the morning hours up to about mid-day or one o'clock—will be seen by the doctor free of charge. Then the doctor has to go on his rounds and if the patients wish to visit after these hours, if they wish to see the doctor at his own surgery at his home, they will have to pay. This is the position.

I have heard complaints from many sources. Whenever I receive complaints, they are investigated, but until we can establish the principle whereby G.M.O.'s are restricted from private practice and are required to attend public institutions—health centres and so on—this is the position. I said Government wants to change this and to pay institution allowances to medical officers who are required for service in medical institutions. Until this is put into operation, and it cannot be put into operation until there is adequate private medical attention in the area which is served by the Government Medical Officer, nothing can be done.

Government certainly does not and will not condone any practice whereby patients are inveigled into seeing the Medical Officer at his home rather than at the hospital. I think the public too should be aware of this and should see to it that they consult the Medical Officer at the hospital concerned rather than going after the hours and finding that they have to pay a fee.

Mr. Bissember: I would like to have some information on this question of consultation fees. I just want to know whether doctors employed in the Government service are supposed to

[**Mr. Bissember**]

charge fees for medical certificates and if so, whether the Government or the doctors get the fees. I ask because many times people come to me and say they had been examined by a doctor paid by the Government. I say, "Do you have a medical certificate?" and they say, "No, the doctor says I have to pay \$5.00."

Mr. Chandisingh : The G.M.O.'s at the hospital are not supposed to charge fees for medical certificates. Only specialists charge fees.

Mr. Bissember: I do not begrudge the medical practitioners. I know of many deserving cases, and human beings, where we on this side of the House are concerned, are the most important assets in this country. Is the Minister aware of the existence of this practice and will he investigate so that poor people will not have to pay this \$3.00 or \$5.00 or \$10.00 for a medical certificate?

Mr. Chandisingh : The specialists do charge fees for medical certificates. However, if the hon. Member wishes to bring any information to my attention, I shall be glad to look into it.

Mr. Bissember: I am bringing it to the hon. Minister's attention now. He has his advisers and they can look into it.

Mr. Chandisingh: It would help if Members would bring specific cases to my attention.

Mr. Wharton: It may be so much better if a circular can be sent to the G.M.O.'s instructing them not to charge fees for medical certificates rather than the bringing of individual cases to the notice of the Minister.

Mr. Merriman: Government Medical Officers at the hospital are not supposed to charge fees for medical cer-

tificates. I would like to know if G.M.O.'s in the out-stations are in the same position, because I am aware that a person has to pay for a death certificate. If the G.M.O. is certifying a death on an insurance application form, he has to be paid. I want to know if it is something laid down that they should not be paid for certifying any condition which they are the only persons competent to certify.

Mr. Chandisingh: What I meant was that in the hospitals, they are not supposed to charge for an ordinary medical certificate, but the G.M.O.'s in districts can charge. They can charge fees and they can charge for certificates.

3.40 p.m.

Mr. d'Aguiar: Everyone knows that in the Medical Department there have been very many frauds and losses of public funds, and I think that the Report of the Director of Audit reveals that this Department was second in the race as to which Department could lose the greatest number of vouchers and receipt books. I think the Medical Department lost 54 and another Department 55, so that it ran a very close second in the race to show the most inefficiency. The Director of Audit recommends that there should be greater supervision and better efficiency in the accounting methods of the Department. He also referred to the fact that there were no means whereby the Department could check on the fees received by medical officers, a portion of which was supposed to be paid into Government. I would like to know what steps are being taken to remedy this unsatisfactory situation, and when they will be made effective.

Mr. Chandisingh : With regard to fees received by medical officers, I do not know that Government is officially aware of this.

Mr. d'Aguiar: That is hardly an answer to my question, which was: what steps were being taken to implement the recommendation of the Director of Audit?

Mr. Merriman: It is clear to all that there is great difficulty in staffing our medical institutions. The ordinary working man, even in Georgetown, is highly dissatisfied with the demand for payment for medical attention, for which doctors are already paid by Government. There is also great dissatisfaction among the medical officers. It seems to me that the simplest solution would be for the Government to give the medical officers a reasonable allowance in lieu of private practice. The situation cannot be remedied until there is a sufficient number of medical officers, therefore Government should compensate them in lieu of private practice so as to remove the stigma on the officers.

Mr. Chandisingh: This is not new. Government has had under consideration much more far-reaching proposals than that. As I have said, Government is considering the granting of an institution allowance to doctors who are required to deny themselves the right to private practice. If that is to be done it cannot be done all over the country at one time; it will have to be done in selected areas. People in the country will have to adapt themselves to seeing the doctor at certain times, and only in cases of real emergency they should visit a doctor at his home. But this is a proposal just as the proposal for abolishing consultation fees charged by specialists. The fact that Government has not been able to put this into operation is no fault of the Government. There have been objections raised to the proposal, and it is the subject of discussion in Whitley Council.

Subhead 7—Dental Treatment for School Children, \$5,000.

3.50 p.m.

Mr. Correia: Can the Minister say how many part-time dentists are employed by Government, and if every school in the country districts is visited by them? How often are visits made to schools? Whether Government thinks this service is adequate or inadequate? If Government thinks this service is inadequate, will Government consider the question of increasing the service at an early date?

Mr. Merriman: Does this amount include the provision for dentures?

Mr. Chandisingh: Dental service can be divided into rural and urban. In Georgetown and New Amsterdam areas there are two part-time dentists, and in the rural areas there is a mobile unit which visits every school in those areas. There are four mobile units to take care of this aspect of the service. The answer is quite obvious when the hon. Member asks whether Government considers this service to be adequate or inadequate.

The Ministry of Health and the Government as a whole can never be satisfied that either its medical or dental services are adequate. The term adequate is a relative one, and what may be adequate in certain circumstances may not be adequate in others. It is not possible to say that the services are adequate, but efforts will be made as far as possible by way of staff and finance to improve the service from time to time.

Mr. Wharton: I have heard a lot said about Georgetown, Suddie and New Amsterdam in this House. I am the representative for the Abary district, and

[MR. WHARTON]

I know that when poor people in Georgetown, New Amsterdam and Suddie go to the public hospital they pay 1/- and get medical treatment. The poor people in the country districts can scarcely get work, yet they have to find \$2, \$5 or sometimes \$10 in order to obtain medical attention. Why? We are all citizens of this country.

The Chairman : What Subhead are you dealing with? We are now dealing with dental care, but, if the hon. Minister would like to comment upon your remarks, I would have no objection. We are trying to move on, and we are dealing with page 53 at the moment.

Mr. Correia: How often does the dental unit visit the schools?

Mr. Chandisingh: It is not possible to say whether it is once a week or once a month, but the medical unit has to visit each school in the area. I do not think it is good to guess the time, but one may say, perhaps, once in every two years.

Mr. Merriman: did not get a reply to my question. I asked whether the amount for dental treatment for school children included any provision for dentures for school children?

Mr. Chandisingh: There is no provision for dentures

Mr. Merriman: I wonder whether the hon. Minister knows that there is need, particularly in the slum areas, for giving dentures to school children?

Mr. Chandisingh: I do not know how many school children require false teeth, but the main object of the project is the extraction and treatment of their teeth before they reach a bad stage. I am not in a position to say whether Government will provide dentures in the future.

Mr. Joaquin: With reference to Subhead 9—Approved Sanitary Works—the expenditure for 1961 was \$19,000 but in 1962 only \$10,000 is provided. Can the hon. Minister tell us why?

The Chairman: It was a Subhead in the previous year, but there is no provision for so much equipment and supplies during the current year.

Mr. Chandisingh: I am in a bit of difficulty finding out what the hon. Member wants.

Head 28 — Medical — \$1,567,268 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

The Assembly resumed.

Mr. Speaker : The sitting is suspended for half an hour.

Sitting suspended at 4 p.m.

4.30 p.m.

On resumption—

Assembly in Committee of Supply.

Head 29—Medical—Bacteriological—deferred.

Head 30 — Medical X-Ray — \$108,201—agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

Head 31—Medical—Hospitals and Dispensaries—deferred.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING

Head 32 — Town and Country Planning.

PURCHASE OF PRINTING MACHINE

Mr. Correia: I see Subhead 6—Purchase of Printing Machine: Is this a new item in 1962? Has Government a printery? I was wondering what type of printing machine this was.

Mr. Chandisingh: This is a special type of equipment for printing plans.

Head 32 — Town and Country Planning — \$89,553 — agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

REGISTRATION — BIRTHS, IMMIGRATION, ETC.

Head 33 — Registration — Births, Immigration, etc.

Mr. d'Aguiar: What is the sum still outstanding in regard to immigrants originating from India and what does the Government intend to do with this sum?

Mr. Chandisingh: I am giving this matter consideration now. I would say that various persons have made representations to me with regard to policy in this respect. I have not yet completed my study of this question, but I hope to do so soon.

The Chairman: The hon. Member asked what sum remains at the credit of the fund.

Mr. Chandisingh: I am not in a position to give this information now. If the hon. Member would give notice of this question, I would be able to answer it.

The Chairman: Perhaps, the hon. Minister can send the answer subsequently to the hon. Member.

HINDI EXAMINATIONS

Mr. Wharton: Subhead 6 Hindi Examinations: I would like the hon. Minister to explain to this House what is responsible for the Government's endeavouring to foster the teaching of Hindi and not any other language in this country.

Mr. Chandisingh: I do not know that this is a question to which I can give an answer. All I am prepared to

say is that this sum is being voted to defray certain expenses in connection with that examination.

Mr. Cheeks: Can the Minister say to whom that money is paid?

Mr. Chandisingh: This money is paid to the examiners.

The Chairman: Perhaps I may say to the House that this particular item has an important historical reference. It comes, I believe, from the indentured system of immigration and, in particular, I think it refers to the necessity of holding examinations for the Interpreters. This is a departmental examination and includes any other form of examination that is held year after year. I believe it is an obligation which the Government has inherited. There are certain obligations which the Government has. One can find these things in the Indian Labour Ordinance.

Mr. Wharton: But this is a revolutionary age, and I am wondering if the Government would not consider the necessity of fostering some other language, e.g., *Wapishiana* or Chinese or something like that.

Mr. Chandisingh: This is a matter which does not arise under this Head we are discussing now.

MISCELLANEOUS

Mr. Joaquin (Kitty): Under Other Charges, may I have an explanation of Subhead 4—Miscellaneous?

Mr. Chandisingh: In the note at the bottom, it will be seen that this Subhead includes provision for messenger's uniform.

Head 33 — Registration — Births, Immigration, etc. — \$88,987 — agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

ANALYST

Head 34 —Analyst

Mr. d'Aguiar: I was in the Analyst Department a few years ago, I think, and I was appalled at its condition and lack of modern equipment. It is not as good as the laboratory at Bank Breweries. I would like to ask the hon. Minister what steps are being taken now, or have been taken, to bring this department up to a reasonable standard of equipment and efficiency.

Mr. Merriman: I would like to say that not very long ago it was reported that owing to certain deficiencies, whether in instruments or what in that department, a proper analysis of milk was not obtainable from this department. I do not know if equipment was involved here, but it would fall into line with the suggestion made by the hon. Member for Georgetown Central.

Mr. Chandisingh: To answer the question by the hon. Member for La Penitence-Lodge first, I understand that what he speaks of occurred in 1957, at a time when the department did not have the freezing point apparatus, and this accounts for that occurrence. But, generally speaking, the position with regard to the equipment at the Analyst Department has changed considerably since the hon. Member for Georgetown Central paid the visit two years ago. Perhaps if he would pay a visit now he would find that the standard of equipment has improved considerably.

Mr. Merriman: I did not get it quite clearly from the hon. Minister whether the necessary adjustment has been made. He made reference to the period and time, but he has not stated whether the position is better.

Mr. Chandisingh: understand that the equipment that was lacking then is now available at the Analyst Department.

4.45 p.m.

Item (2) — Scientific Officers, \$26,198.

Mr. Merriman: May I inquire whether the six Scientific Officers have all been appointed, and are all qualified to hold their posts?

Mr. Chandisingh: The answer is "No." All of the Scientific Officers listed for 1962 are not there. I understand that about three of them are in training and will be available in the future.

Mr. Merriman: May I ask when they are likely to be qualified, and whether they will be taking up their posts during the current year?

Mr. Chandisingh: One should be returning to the country this year, and the other two next year.

Mr. Merriman: In other words, there are only three qualified Scientific Officers at present. I would like to know whether their functions are being carried on by other unqualified but experienced officers.

Mr. Chandisingh: The answer is that the work of the Scientific Officers who are not available is not being done by other personnel. It simply means that the Department has to function at a reduced strength. So it is obvious that on the return of the other Scientific Officers I have referred to, the Analyst Department will be in a position to carry out more work.

Mr. Burnham: Can the Minister tell us whether it is true that Government will soon be losing the Government Analyst, and whether there is anyone qualified to take his post?

Mr. Chandisingh: I am not aware of this, sir.

Mr. Burnham : In case it is so, is Government in a position to replace the officer?

Mr. Chandisingh: The answer is yes, sir.

Head 34. Analyst — \$78,912 — agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

Head 35. — Labour — deferred.

MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Head 36. Ministry of Trade and Industry — \$555,728.

Mr. Carter: During the Budget debate the Premier intimated that there were a number of industries which the Government had under consideration. I wonder if we can hear what industries the Government has in mind to establish.

The Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Benn): In the absence of the Premier I can say that some of the industries have been under consideration by Government, such industries as a glass factory, which has been under consideration for a long time. There were several industries set out in the list, such as a steel rolling mill and a small oil refinery. These are under consideration for establishment. There was also under consideration the setting up of a complex based on wood, and one based on bauxite. These are some of the industries I can call to mind, and which I dealt with when I was asked to visit some countries in Europe. Certain officers of the Ministry of Development and Planning have been asked to do feasibility studies of all these industries, in addition to those under consideration for the development of industries based on agriculture, such as fruit canning and the like.

Mr. d'Aguiar: When we look back into the records of *Hansard*, when Government introduced new industries it was always alleged that the object was either to balance the accounts or to make a profit. I am referring to such Government enterprises as the Rice Development Company, the Central Produce Depot, the New Amsterdam Pro-

duce Depot, the Ham and Bacon Factory, the Processing Factory, the Fish Marketing Centre, the Milk Pasteurisation Plant, the Central Timber Manufacturing Plant and B.G. Airways. Practically all of these were intended to produce profits, to provide revenue as well as other benefits, and to benefit the taxpayers — not to be millstones around their necks. But we find from the records that in 1960 the Rice Development Company and the Anna Regina rice mill lost \$497,986, the Central Produce Depot lost \$157,826, the New Amsterdam Produce Depot lost \$12,507, the Ham and Bacon Factory lost \$6,388, the Processing Factory, \$34,425, the Fish Marketing Centre \$59,124, the Milk Pasteurisation Plant, \$246,275. The B.G. Airways' loss is so obscure in figures that it is impossible to find out exactly what it lost, but the figure carried forward is \$943,917.

I would like to ask the Government what steps, if any, are being taken to put all of these industrial undertakings of Government on a sound working footing, because I am quite certain that if Government goes into new industries, such as a glass factory (the glass factory in Trinidad has been operating at a loss), instead of benefiting this country the position will be much worse, as more losses will accumulate. Is Government going to say that it is not going into what may be called the profit-making sector of industry? As I mentioned earlier, at the time those industrial undertakings were introduced it was said that they were going to make profit, but everyone of them is making fantastic losses.

I would therefore like to ask what steps are being taken, if any, to put those industrial undertakings of Government on a sound business footing, so that the general public will be relieved of the burden of these losses? Many of these undertakings are not providing benefits to the consumers, as is often claimed. The losses incurred are the result of sheer inefficiency on the part of the management, and fraud in

[MR. d'AGUIAR]

the Departments. It is most important that something stringent be done to make these commercial undertakings by Government at least break even, and so relieve the taxpayers of the burden of about \$2 million to meet the losses which in many cases, are quite unnecessary.

The Premier and Minister of Development and Planning (Dr. Jagan): First of all we have to examine the conditions under which many of these undertakings were established. It is no use just getting up and shouting that because they have lost money therefore all Government undertakings in the future are going to lose money. This is as ridiculous as to say that because some private capitalist undertakings make money, all make money. We have examples in this country, such as Bank Breweries, making fantastic profits, but on the other hand we have Pliboard, for instance, which has lost money. But we do not hear the hon. Member speaking of this. The Tacama Sawmills, which were managed and run by, I believe, a supporter of the United Force, had to go into liquidation, and today owes the Credit Corporation nearly \$200,000. But we do not hear anything of those capitalist undertakings which have "busted."

Mr. d'Aguiar: They do not cost the taxpayers any loss of money.

The Premier: They do not, but in the case I mentioned it owes the Credit Corporation money. To go back to these undertakings, the Rice Development Company was set up here some time after the war; a marketing organization created out of the policy enunciated here during the war, for a Grow More Food Campaign when this country was threatened with a possible lack of shipping when ships bringing goods were being torpedoed, and the country was facing starvation. The policy enunciated was that we must grow

more food. The campaign was started by Governor Lethem. Arising out of that, the policy was adopted of guaranteeing to the farmers certain minimum prices for their produce. This is the policy being continued by this Government, and this is not the only country in which there is such a policy. The United States spends billions of dollars to subsidize agriculture. Agricultural products are bought and stored, and indeed the U.S. Government not only cannot sell such produce but cannot even give it away.

5 p.m.

The hon. Member must remember that if farmers are asked to produce more, particularly to go in for diversification of crops, then they must be given some guarantees. When we told them to grow coffee the price of coffee was about 60c per pound, but today coffee producers cannot get even 24c per pound. Are we to tell the farmers, at this stage, that they should cut down the coffee trees and go in for poultry rearing or something like that?

When this Government enunciated the policy of cocoa production a few years ago, the cocoa market was satisfactory and the price was up, but today the price of cocoa is down. If we are to give the farmers the incentive to go in for crops other than rice, then we must guarantee them some sort of stability by putting a ceiling price on the things they produce. The farmers prefer to plant rice, because they know they have a guaranteed market. When they grow rice, they know that they can either sell it to the Rice Development Company or the Rice Marketing Board and get their money. They may have to wait a few days for the money, but they do not suffer losses from the fluctuation in the price of rice, or from perishability. In the rice industry one will find some delay at times, but the farmers know that, when the rice is finally paid for, they will get a stable price for it.

I hope I have explained why the Government has to lose money in these undertakings. Government could refuse to buy things from the farmers; Government could buy only what it requires and allow the farmers to suffer. I do not know whether the hon. Member is suggesting that this should be the policy of the Government. I do not know whether he is suggesting that Government should scrap the existing policy, and go in for free trade. I know that the hon. Member is a great exponent of the philosophy of private enterprise. In the United States, so far as agriculture is concerned, the Government has sought to give some stability to the agricultural industry. But I do not know whether, in the light of our situation today, our opponents are proposing that we should not do that. If we fail to do that, then we will never have the diversification of crops which we all desire.

If it is the desire to have diversification of crops, then we must be prepared to give the farmers long-term security because of the fluctuation in prices all over the world and the competition in markets of the world. It will be necessary to give the farmers some security, even if it means a loss to the community as a whole. Let it be noted that, even if this may appear to be a loss to the country, nevertheless, it is not such a great loss because this policy will guarantee large quantities of food at reasonable prices. If it were not for this policy one may very well find, as one finds in Jamaica and Trinidad, that there is a shortage of food and because of that shortage the increase in the price of certain items went up in such a manner as to affect the cost of living of the working class all over the country. You can save in one way, but the community will have to bear the burden in another. The Government must, therefore, decide what policy it wants. The Government feels that this is the policy which must be pursued.

However, the Government is not saying that everything is running as satisfactorily or as efficiently as it should, but it is something which we have to live with. We have to live with machines, the Civil Service, producers and so on. We are now trying to see whether we can create a marketing board free from Government's redtape. We have two difficulties. On the one hand, the Government unions and other organizations resist any such move. On the other hand, there is the question of efficiency.

The hon. Member laughed a little while ago. This Government decided to close down the retail section of the Produce Depot. Why? Because it was losing money. It was felt that the retail section could be conveniently run by private enterprise, because some business people held the view that Government should not enter into business at that level. But the Government unions threatened to strike if Government enforced its decision. That is the reality of things in these Government undertakings. Some people are not prepared to look at things realistically.

With regard to modernisation, only yesterday the hon. Minister of Natural Resources mentioned that he needs money to put in cold storage plants and other plants which we know are necessary. It is a question of having money. The same hon. Members who are now asking for all sorts of things were tramping the streets with placards with such slogans as: "Down with the tax;" "Down with the Budget"—[**Mr. Burnham:** "Down with Kelshall's pay.] That is the level at which we have to conduct national affairs. It may be good to be theatrical about one individual, but that does not solve the basic problems facing us. Talking about Kelshall's salary and what a Minister gets will get you nowhere.

I am saying that Government is aware that it is necessary to have integrated organizations all over the place.

[DR. JAGAN]

[Mr. Burnham : "Let us have the Rice Development Company."] We are now blamed for that, '50. The Rice Development Company was not responsible for what happened at M.A.R.D.S. The Commonwealth was faced with a loss of rice in the Far East. The Japanese had overrun Burma, Malaya and several places in the Far East, and it was felt that there should have been some stable source for rice. Previous administrations were prepared to carry out experimentations and expansions in the rice industry in British Guiana so that we could have grain to supply to the Commonwealth.

Nevertheless, those who set up the rice mills at Mahaicony/Abary and Anna Regina did not plan things properly. This Government did not do that. The great Sir Frank McDavid was the hon. Member in charge of the Government and also in charge of this Company. I am sure the hon. Member would not say that it was a blunder, or that he was politically or ideologically motivated. Anyway, the rice factories were badly planned, for they were too large for the amount of padi which was available in the areas in which they were operating at that time. The result was that the operating charges were very heavy. That is what is causing a very great strain and what appears to be a loss. If these factories were smaller the interest charges would not have been so large, and the companies would have shown profits long ago. Add the amount of interest paid over the years; add the losses, and you will see why the losses occurred. The hon. Member does not refer to such things, but they are facts. What are we doing about them?

In May last year I went to the Import And Export Bank with a list amounting to \$2½ million for drying equipment, cleaning equipment and storage equipment in order to make the factories

fully integrated. When they were planned they had too much milling capacity. Today they have enough milling capacity for the needs of the padi produced in the area. But, unfortunately, because it is not fully integrated the padi in the area cannot all be milled as there is not adequate storage, cleaning and drying capacity.

Again we are faced with the question of money. Up to now we have not been able to get a reply from the Import And Export Bank or from the United States about this equipment. As I said last week, we have received offers from East Germany and we are examining them to see whether they should be proceeded with. Do not put all of the blame on this side of the House. Certain things have been inherited, and we are now trying to correct them. Certain things have been passed on to us. We feel that our policy is the best policy, and we will continue to carry it out as long as we feel that it is in the interest of the country. If hon. Members feel very strongly about it, let us have a motion to scrap the policy of the Government with regard to the marketing of produce.

I can assure hon. Members that, so far as corruption is concerned, this Government will always try to uproot it. If anyone has any information to give us regarding corruption, we will welcome it. It is our desire to put an end to inefficiency or corruption in any of these Government marketing agencies. I can also assure hon. Members that this Government not only thinks in terms of profit, but also in terms of the welfare of the people. If the public in this country has to be subsidized in a particular branch in order to provide cheap food, then we do not think that it must be regarded as a great loss.

However, this matter will be looked into from time to time. I give hon. Members the assurance that these things

will be integrated from time to time as funds become available. We hope to have better service within these organizations and, indeed, greater benefits to the agricultural producers of British Guiana.

5.15 p.m.

Mr. d'Aguiar: The hon. the Premier seems to be getting a little confused about agricultural policy and industrial policy. The question of subsidies to agricultural producers is not a matter to which I intended to refer at all and it has nothing whatever to do with the subject of the administration and efficient management of a commercial undertaking.

The hon. Premier referred to two companies — Bank Breweries Ltd. and the chipboard company. He said the chipboard company has been making losses, which I am certain is a grave pity, because if it had made profits it would have been able to expand and create employment. It has made losses, but these losses have not cost the taxpayers of Guiana anything. We are not asked to vote money to pay these losses. Just imagine what would have been happening if that company belonged to the Government! The losses would be voted year after year and would get bigger all the time.

On the other hand, Bank Breweries Ltd. has made profits. When it started in 1957, the Government was collecting approximately \$300,000 a year from the importation of beer, and there was an expatriation of capital to an extent of probably \$1 million a year. Government profited from the introduction of that commodity. Now the Government is collecting \$750,000 in excise duty on the local product and on the imported product, which continues at a lower level. When the tax holiday is over, which is very shortly, it will further be collecting income tax. The Government is collecting income tax at a rea-

sonably high level on the wages of the workers employed. So it is gaining approximately \$1 million a year. Whether the company pays the Government more or less, the public of Guiana cannot lose; whether the company makes a profit or loss, it does not cost the taxpayers anything. When the Government goes into business, the taxpayers have to foot the bill for the losses, and these losses tend to get bigger and bigger.

The hon. Premier said, in regard to the Rice Development Company, first of all, that the carrying charges were too high. I would like to mention that when Bank Breweries started, the carrying charges were in respect of loans of \$800,000. They were high and we were able to overcome that burden. But then he goes on to suggest that he had asked for a loan of \$2½ million. That is further adding a burden on the carrying charge. That would, as I estimate it, bring in additional carrying charges. Even at a 2½ per cent rate of interest, it will be something like \$50,000 a year in mere carrying charges to make more losses, by his own argument.

This shows where there is a complete lack of the understanding of fundamental commercial principles. An argument is used on the one hand and the same argument is used to prove the exact opposite. That is one of the reasons why we are asked year after year to vote more and more for these losses.

I was also glad to realize that the Government appears to have sympathy for the problems that management has to face with regard to unions and other things. Commerce, at least, seems to be able to overcome these problems, but it seems as if Government has not been able to do so. As the hon. Premier says, the Civil Service makes it impossible — and Government red tape — to run these industries efficiently. It would, therefore, seem to me that the

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Government ought seriously to reconsider the policy which has done nothing, in all the years it has been pursued, but increased the tax bill and produced absolutely nothing by way of revenue.

One thing the Government does not seem to understand is this: it is not the business that makes the profits. Some sawmills, like the one at Tacama, make losses. No doubt, the management was not efficient. Other sawmills, I know, make profits. It is not that the business of sawmilling is profitable *per se*. It is the way in which it is managed that is important, and it requires keen business ability in a competitive economy to create profits.

The normal business contributes approximately one-half of its profits to Government. It seems to me that this is, indeed, a better policy than the one that Government appears to be intending to pursue, that is, to go into business itself. This will be a big millstone around the necks of the public of British Guiana who will have to foot the bill year after year to pay for the losses which will grow bigger and bigger. Then you will have to vote \$2¼ million or \$2½ million, as the hon. Premier says, to revive the particular industry because somebody made a mistake in the beginning and did not buy the right type of machinery. You will find that after this has been purchased and more carrying charges to the extent of \$50,000 a year are involved, instead of that making it better, other problems will develop and the losses will get ever bigger.

The hon. Premier was indeed right when he said that these problems were not exclusive to British Guiana but were known in any country and in any Government where the Government expands too much into the field of industry. We have heard already from

many Ministers that there is a shortage of skills at the top levels in their departments. We have heard that top level jobs remain vacant because there is no one to fill them. This Government needs skilled people to fill the top level jobs, and there are not enough of them to enable Government to expand into the field of industry where it is already losing millions.

I certainly welcome the suggestion of the hon. Premier — the necessity for what he calls “integrating” the commercial undertakings with Government. I would like to ask him to explain to me a little more fully what he means by “integrating”. Does he mean what I have in mind — that is, creating a separate department to manage all these various commercial undertakings and put them on a strictly commercial basis, let us say, with a corporation with directors managing, either in separate units or in one big unit, all the commercial undertakings of Government? I would like some further explanation of that particular point.

The Premier: I have already said that the aim is to establish a marketing board. Whether we call it a board or corporation, it is the same. It will have statutory powers, something like the Rice Marketing Board, and will deal with these undertakings on a basis which will not have constant reference to the Ministry for its day to day activities. Overall policy will be decided by the Government and the Ministries, but the day to day functions will be carried out, as in the case of the Rice Marketing Board, as a statutory board or corporation. This is the intention.

I do not think that what the hon. Member said should be allowed to go without some explanation. He mentioned about Bank Breweries contributing so much to taxation and that if it was not for Bank Breweries, Government

would not have got all this money. The hon. Member must remember that the population of this country has been increasing, consumption has been increasing, and if people do not drink beer that we have, they will drink more imported beer or some other form of alcohol. So it does not necessarily follow that the revenue accruing to the Government would have been less, and it is a debatable question whether it is in the national interest for so much alcohol to be consumed, whether the Government gains in revenue or not; it is debatable whether so much of the national income should be consumed in liquor.

But that is a sideline. Let us not get away with the impression that this is such a wonderful benefit to the Government. It must also be noted that capitalist enterprises go in for the most lucrative sectors. That is why many countries remain underdeveloped because the marginal industries are left either undone or for the Government to step into. That is why the Colonial Development Corporation was established by the British Government — to go into these fields of marginal activities so that there will be some activity in these underdeveloped, so-called backward countries.

We know that, generally, the capitalist classes — we do not blame them — in their interest, have gone into the more lucrative sections: the making of rum, the running of pawnbrokeries and so forth. These are the most lucrative sections in any country. The Government does not always go in for these things, but if it did it certainly will not lose the money which it is losing in running the Milk Pasteurization Plant.

Let us put the Milk Pasteurization Plant into private hands. What would they do? Why is the Plant losing money at the moment? It is losing money because, first of all, at certain

times of the year there is a tremendous glut of milk. The supply of milk is seasonal. What would a businessman normally do in such a situation? He would refuse to buy or he would drop the price and pay what the market would bear. But the Government does not do that in the interest of stabilizing this industry, in the interest of encouraging what is called diversification of the cattle industry.

The Government gives a guaranteed price to the farmer all the year round and when there is a glut, it does not throw the milk away. It gives it to school children at half the price, and to medical institutions, so that other persons in the community benefit. But I am sure that if the Plant were run as a private enterprise, it would not give the stability to the industry which we want to give. Why didn't private enterprise take it over?

As regards the Rice Development Company, the hon. Member says that getting \$2½ million more is throwing good money over bad. But that is not so.

5.30 p.m.

The economics of the whole scheme have been worked out in great detail. Account has been taken of the income which will accrue to the Company by increased milling of all the padi which is now available in the area, but which the mill hitherto had to refuse, and when account is taken of that revenue, measured against the additional charges which will have to be incurred by way of interest and operating expenses, one finds that the mill will be better off with that additional expenditure than it is at the present moment.

So hon. Members must not feel that we are embarking on something merely to throw more money down the drain. The Government is as anxious as hon. Members of the Opposition to see that any ventures it embarks upon will be a

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success. We have two things to keep in mind, not only to make profit but to cause what is called circular growth. An industry in itself may not make profit, but it may create opportunities in other fields for circular growth in the development of other industries. This is what Government has to keep in mind. Sometimes an industry may lose money, or may break even, but even this can be in the national interest if it is helping to stimulate subsidiary industries. One might set up a glass factory, for instance, which may mean other subsidiary industries being established, such as transportation of sand, and quarrying. This is obvious, but one advantage in Government embarking on industries is that it can take the totality of the situation and look at it as a whole. A private capitalist cannot do this: he is looking at the balance-sheet and the profitability of the particular enterprise. This is why one finds that even capitalist industries do not get bigger and bigger and more ramified, because eventually they think in the same way.

I do not think we must apply the same yardstick to Government enterprise as to certain capitalist enterprises. Clearly Government does not want to lose money, but at the same time it must be noted that because those industries have lost money, not all Government industries will lose money. The Electricity Corporation is an example of Government running an enterprise, probably more efficiently than it was done in the past, and showing profits.

Mr. d'Aguiar: It seems an extraordinary suggestion for the Premier to make when he asked: why doesn't private enterprise take over the Milk Pasteurisation Plant? Is that a sort of system of denationalization, that the public should seize the plant from Government instead of its being sold at

auction? I am informed that the Milk Pasteurisation Plant was examined by an expert who had seen plants of a similar nature in other countries, like Africa, and he came to the conclusion that this plant is the worst and the filthiest example of a pasteurisation plant he had ever seen.

The Premier: Who is the expert? In the public interest I would like the hon. Member to tell this House.

Mr. d'Aguiar would have thought that the Premier would know. In England the price of milk is guaranteed to the farmer, which I think is only fair and reasonable. Nevertheless, the United Dairies pasteurise milk which is bought at a guaranteed price, and sells it at a fixed price throughout the year, and makes a profit on the transaction. On the other hand we have a good example, quoted by the Premier, of the C.D.C. The C.D.C. came here with British Government capital and entering into the field of commerce, like all Government ventures, they lost money in a sphere of industry which is profit-making. There are private investors, like Toosie Persaud, in the same sawmilling business, who make a good profit out of it, and contribute to the revenue of the Government by paying income tax. So that the arguments used by the Premier are all in favour of the contention, which the facts which face us bear out, that it is not the industry itself that makes profit or is profitable, but the way in which it is run. Nothing proves it better than the C.D.C. sawmills *vis-a-vis* the other profitable sawmill only a few hundred yards away.

The question of circular growth is also an important one. It is the side issue which derives from the development of new industries in any country. The more new industries that are established the more circular growth there is, and I certainly agree that circular growth is equally applicable to an industry star-

ted by private enterprise as it is to an industry run by Government. For instance, to give an example which the Premier so often cites, Bank Breweries purchase several items from local manufacturers, particularly greenheart, and these things create side effects on the economy of the country. Any industry, no matter how big or how small, creates advantageous side effects, and that is why other countries, especially Trinidad and Surinam, have gone so far as to encourage the development of industries, so that from a great variety of industries a maximum of circular growth results.

Government starts in narrow channels, and it is a bleak prospect for us to face, of Government going into industries, like the manufacture of glass, which are highly technical and are unlikely to produce profit, and more likely to produce losses. If it were private enterprises Government would not care a hoot about any losses, because it would not have to bear any part of such losses, but when Government enters into industry the taxpayers have to bear the loss. If there was a record of efficiency in the Government it would have a case, but it has been in power since 1957 and the losses on the Milk Pasteurisation Plant and the Rice Development Company, instead of decreasing, are showing a tendency to increase.

The history of Government's venture into industry is the history of loss, and it is only reasonable if the general public is afraid of Government venturing further into new industries. When private enterprise makes profit Government gets a share of it which is usually bigger than that of the people who make the profit, but when Government undertakings show a loss the general taxpayers have to meet that loss. I am extremely perturbed that the Premier has not been able to tell us of any scheme afoot to minimize the losses on these various industries already listed, by

putting them on a sound commercial basis, divorcing them from the general Estimates and running them as separate companies. That would at least be a step in the right direction of creating a background of efficiency necessary to make those industries produce profits and not losses.

The Premier: When the hon. Member gets into the Government he can reverse the policy, but as long as we are here we will continue the policy as enunciated. Government will definitely take the lead in the industrial development of this country. We hear a lot about this Government's acts which have prevented industrialization. The Minister of Trade and Industry made a speech at the Bauxite Company where he mentioned that at one stage there was no income tax at all. Why didn't new industries grow up during that period?

In comparing the C.D.C. with the other sawmills the hon. Member said that the C.D.C. is a Government-run Corporation. He failed to mention that the C.D.C. has some of the biggest capitalists in England running it. There are Government representatives on the Board, but the C.D.C. is run as a Corporation divorced from Government. They were given money and told to go ahead and spend it, and, as I said, they embarked upon marginal activities. They had the biggest business brains as Managing-Directors, and everything else. There were not Government officials running the C.D.C.

As regards their activities here, do not believe that it is only because it was Government-run. That is not the whole story. I was President of the Sawmill and Forest Workers' Union, and I had to deal with the C.D.C., Bugles Sawmill and others. One thing that can be said to the credit of the C.D.C. is that they deal with their workers fairly. When a bargain was made with them it was honoured. Many others paid starvation

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wages. We know quite a lot of capitalist enterprises are doing that and sweating labour. Go to some of the wood grants and find out how the workers live. The C.D.C. do not go in for such sharp practices, and that is why they may not be making money, and that is why other Government organizations do not make profits, unlike many capitalist ventures.

As I said earlier, the Government intends to put these organizations on a statutory basis, to divorce them from the day-to-day control of the Ministries and to make them integrated, by which I mean putting at their disposal more machinery and more equipment, so that they can be run economically.

5.45 p.m.

Mr. d'Aguiar: I do not wish to prolong this argument. The hon. Premier said that the Government industries lose money because they pay better wages. That is absolutely untrue when one looks at the facts. I think the level of pay in the Rice Development Company is, probably, as low as it could possibly be. The workers are more ill-treated in Government jobs than anywhere else; they get no guaranteed increments, and they do not get free medical attention. The workers in Government industries do not get anything like the treatment the workers get from the sugar estates, Bank Breweries, the Bauxite Company and some other industrial corporations. The prospect of the worker in Government industries is quite different from the worker in private industries. Apart from giving the cardholders of the P.P.P. an opportunity to get jobs, the average worker cannot be said to benefit from employment in the Government. I would like to ask the hon. Premier whether he would declare now that he would set the minimum wage in Government and in all industries not at \$4 a day, but at least \$4.50 a day?

The Premier: The Government does not run pawn shops and breweries, otherwise it would have been in a position to pay not \$4, but \$6 a day; not 40 per cent dividend, but it would have given the people bigger dividends. This Government has to take care of several sectors and it has to run things in keeping with the economy of the country. Why doesn't the hon. Member tell us that the C.D.C. looked into the rice industry and decided to loan money to the Government to establish these two rice mills. The C.D.C. wanted to go in for a plantation system of rice-growing in British Guiana but, because of the economics of this depressed industry, it decided that it would not be able to pay wages commensurate with the wages paid in the sugar industry, the bauxite industry or any other industry. Does this mean that we must close down the rice industry? I do not understand the argument that if the bauxite industry is paying so much, therefore, other industries must pay the same or more. Can the hon. Member tell us why the bauxite industry in this country does not pay wages on the same scale as it pays in Canada and the United States of America? This is because the capitalists, like birds of one feather, stick together. They compare like with unlike, but how can they do that?

I am saying that this Government is not out to make profits to suit anybody. This Government will pay either directly or indirectly maximum wages in keeping with the economy of the country; it will endeavour to create better working conditions, build better hospitals, build better schools and so on. The Government will pay better wages as soon as it is able to do so.

Mr. Burnham: Now that we have witnessed a battle of the giants, may I be forgiven for raising this question. I recall that during 1957 and 1961 there was a certain hon. Nominated Member of this House, Mr. Jocelyn Hubbard. I

also recall that he said that the fuel charge was iniquitous, unjustified and, in

fact with more mouth than determination, he said that he would not pay the fuel charge. Now that he is the hon. Minister of Trade and Industry— unhappily or happily he is not in this House to answer my question— I will have to ask his *alter ego*, the hon. Premier, why is it that, since Government has taken over the Electricity Corporation, the Minister of Trade and Industry has not seen fit to withdraw this charge which in the past was described by the present Minister as iniquitous, malicious and unjustified? I think the consumers of electricity had good reason to hope that, with the advent of this Socialist Government and the preferment to office of the hon. Minister of Trade and Industry (Mr. Hubbard), they would have been relieved of this charge. I do not understand these fancy arguments, when it is merely a simple answer to a simple question.

The Premier: The answer is also very simple. The terms of the Agreement with the former owners of the Electric Company provided for the existing rates, so the then prevailing rates must apply. To go back a little further, some hon. Members will recall that one of the reasons why the Government did not agree to the Company continuing with its new franchise was due to the fact that it demanded a net return of 8½ per cent on all of its investments. From the advice given to the Government as well as from the figures submitted, it was felt that this was too much and too exorbitant. Had the Government allowed the Company to do that and given it the franchise for the next 20 years, then it would have meant increased rates to the consumers. This is one of the reasons why the Government did not agree to an extension of the franchise.

It will be appreciated, therefore, that the Government had great difficulty in getting the Company to make conditions satisfactory to the consumers, or to get money from other sources to buy the Company. Although the British Government had agreed to permit the purchase of this Company when the last Government was in office, it said later on that it did not want to advance money for the take over of the Company. Finally, the Government had to go to the Company in order to work out an arrangement for the take over. Obviously the Company was in a very strong bargaining position, and it laid down its terms. The Company pointed out that it wanted its money as quickly as possible. Fortunately, the Government was able to get the Company to take the money over a period of five years, but in order to do this it was necessary to increase the rates.

The Company produced comparative figures of rates in other territories. The industrial rates in British Guiana were very low in comparison with other territories and should be increased, but we did not agree that the domestic rates should be increased. That is how the Agreement was signed, and the Agreement tied our hands in that respect. Regardless of the wishes of the Government or of the Corporation, until the Company is paid off, one cannot reduce the rates without violating the Agreement which has been signed.

Mr. Burnham: If I remember the remarks of the present hon. Minister of Trade and Production correctly, he said that the fuel charge was an addition to the rates. If one looks at one's electricity bill at the end of the month one finds that the fuel charge is in addition to the rate. Do I understand from the hon. Premier, this great bargainer, that

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he allowed himself to be put in a position where something that is in addition to the rate is construed as part of the rate? He did not say that he was forced to accept the same charges. He said that he was forced to accept the same rate per kilowatt, but the rate per unit should include the fuel charge. That is the point which has been made by Mr. Hubbard when he was a Member of the Legislative Council: the fuel charge is not part of the rate provided under the Ordinance or any subsidiary legislation in relation to the Demerara Electric Company.

Are we now to be told that when the hon. Premier was the Minister of Trade and Industry and was bargaining with the Company that he allowed himself to be placed in the false position of accepting as part of the rate an item which was not envisaged as a part of the rate in the legislation on the original franchise? Furthermore, why did he, like Chamberlain on his return from Munich, not tell us of these things? Why did the hon. Premier say publicly that the Electricity Corporation was making more money than was originally anticipated? If that is so, then it means that, possibly, with the revenue obtained from the fuel charge the Government will be able to liquidate the capital which it owes to the Company within 5 years. Let us have details like that. We do not want long lectures on the merits and demerits of Government enterprise and private enterprise. We are interested in finding out why we have to pay more for electricity, and why we should not be paying less for this service. We are not interested in all of these academics here and there—those are above my head.

The hon. Premier says that there was a comparison between the existing rates paid in British Guiana with the rates paid in other territories, and that the rates in other territories were higher. I would like to know the names of those territories. It cannot be the United States of America, Canada, Trinidad, Barbados or Jamaica. It is quite possible that the territories to which the hon. Premier refers cannot be properly compared with British Guiana. Furthermore, we are told glibly that the industrial rates here are lower than in other places. First of all, I question whether the rates here are lower than in any other territory, save in some places where a man sets up a diesel engine to run electricity works.

o p.m.

But the Premier said that the industrial rates here were lower. He omitted to say whether the domestic rates are lower. I am not talking about industrial rates, let me repeat. He is under some difficulty in following my point. I can see from the puckering of his brow. He says that the industrial rates here are lower than in other places. That, I doubt, but he does not say that the domestic rates are lower than in other places. So, even if the fuel charge can be considered part of the rates, even if — which I do not accept — the industrial rates are lower than in other parts of the world, why is it that the domestic rate had to be kept at the high point at which it was when the Government took over?

The Premier: I think I explained this is my original speech. I anticipated the arguments and made a long speech to explain this but I have to explain it again. The company wanted its money quickly. It made an estimate of income each year from the existing rates or charges. Because the hon. Member is splitting hairs as to what is "rate" or "fuel charge", let us use "rates". This estimate, added up over a period, indi-

cated to the company that it was not getting its money quickly enough. Therefore, it said: "I am not going to sign this deal unless you are prepared to allow an increase on the charges, both industrial and domestic". This is all.

I noted that the industrial rates — I was not talking about domestic rates — were lower than in many countries. We were shown comparative figures of other countries and the fact is — [An hon. Member: "What countries?"] — I do not have all that in my head at the moment. I can table it. The fact is that the industrial rates were not revised for many years — I have forgotten what was the year of the last revision — and the figures showed that they were lower than in other countries.

I said that the Government could not decrease the domestic charge. Whether you want to split it up to fuel charge, so much per unit, I am not concerned with that. The company was not concerned with that either. It was concerned with the total income it thought it would get over a period of years, and it wanted it quickly. I said that, politically, I could not go to the people and say that we would allow an increase in the domestic rate. Therefore, the hon. Member should have no quarrel, because the domestic charge remains the same. If we could have reduced it, it would have meant lower income per year for the company and, therefore, a longer period of repayment, and the company was not prepared to enter the deal on those conditions.

Let us face facts. We were in the hands of the company. We had no alternative but to sign. It demanded certain conditions — high rates of interest. I said so when I came back; nobody can say I did not say so. We were put in this position because the British Government did not give us the wherewithal to pay the company, and so put through

the deal and finish it off. I said that the company had to have certain things — who should be directors and managers and so on. It insisted on all this and more, which I did not agree to.

The company felt, first of all, it must have its money quickly and, secondly, the plant must run efficiently so that this money may be paid back in the time it felt it should be. That is the long and short of it. But the hon. Member should not forget that the total amount, however you break it down, has not been increased so far as the domestic charge is concerned. Had the company been allowed to enter into another franchise, then you would have had to pay not only fuel charge, but an overall charge increase.

Mr. Burnham: The hon. Premier's last proposition amounts to this: You should thank God that you are not robbed any more than you have been robbed in the past. I recall when he came back with this and the trumpets were blowing about this hero who had been able to execute this deal, I pointed out that it was not such an achievement as the Government was trying to make out because he had allowed himself to be dictated to by the Demerara Electric Company who was to dictate the directors, the managers, the policy; now, I am hearing for the first time that he also had dictated to him the rates that we were to pay.

But I read recently—and the hon. Premier would correct me if my understanding is wrong: I do not often misunderstand what I am reading provided it is written in a language that I know—that the Electricity Corporation made a greater income last year than was originally anticipated. If this is so, can you tell us what proportion of that extra income above what was anticipated can be allocated to repayment of the loan at an earlier date so that we will be in

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a position to have our fuel charge off? And further, is not the agreement that a certain fixed sum per annum be paid? If it is a certain fixed sum per annum and you can raise that certain fixed sum per annum without the fuel charge, send the agreement to me and I will show you how to get out of it.

The Premier: The agreement says that the net profits of the company shall be paid, as I said, on the existing domestic rate and an increased industrial rate. It also says that the surplus should be given over to the company. A ceiling was set, and if that figure was not reached by the company, then the Government had to make good the shortfall. But the agreement says too that anything which is in excess of expenditure is to be given to the company. This is part of the agreement. As I said, the company was imposing very harsh conditions because it had a strong bargaining card, and we had no alternative but to deal with this company.

As regards this question of blowing of trumpets, the hon. Member must realize that the whole community was suffering as a result of constant breakdowns. Therefore, it was a relief to have this problem solved. In the solution, we got additional credits amounting to over \$13 million from the Associated Electrical Industries and also from Taylor Woodrow. So, it is not true to say that, taken as a whole, the deal was not satisfactory to the country and to the people. It was an achievement, but I will be the first to admit that the conditions which were imposed by the company were very harsh. Indeed, some of the harsher ones were taken out. We had no alternative but to take it on those terms.

6.10 p.m.

Mr. Burnham I wonder whether the Premier can help us with two things, first of all by making available a copy

of this contract so that we can study it ourselves and put our own interpretation on it. I take it that it is not a private matter; it is not a document or a deal covered by the Official Secrets Act. Secondly, I wonder if he can tell us whether on that occasion when he needed this money very urgently to fix once and for all the electricity supply of this country, he did not approach any Government in Eastern Europe to lend him the money at the low interest rate of 2 per cent, or no per cent at all? It was a public service, and if he was prevented by the British Government, why didn't he tell us in the P.N.C., and we would have helped him to cut the British Government's throat?

The Premier: The next mission to Moscow will include the hon. Member, but to keep the record straight I will say that approaches were made to many organizations, including the World Bank, for this sort of money. It is no use talking now about approaching the Eastern countries. The hon. Member is only talking like that now, but if I had mentioned it to him then he would have run away, and we would not have been able to catch him. He is a good miler. [Laughter.] We have had experience of that, but we will take him up on this very shortly, and I can assure him that whatever the stringency of the conditions may be, they have not imposed any great hardship on the people of this country. We are all happy that this problem has been solved, and it is going to allow us to get on with development very rapidly.

As regards the laying of the document, I can say it is not a secret treaty. I understand that the Ordinance dealing with this matter was passed by the previous Legislature in 1960, and I am sure that the appendages to the contract can be made available to the hon. Member. I can assure him that there are no catch

phrases in the contract, and the quicker we get rid of this payment and all the strings attached, the sooner we can deal with such things as fuel charges.

Mr. Burnham : The hon. Premier has not complied with my second request, to tell us whether he approached any Eastern European Governments to get money at low interest rates, because it was at the period when the Premier was saying that we could borrow money at 2 per cent and 1½ per cent interest, but those terrible people in Britain did not want us to get money and put us in the hands of the Canadian cut-throats. I am asking the Premier, in view of his frequent assertion that money is easily and cheaply available from Eastern Europe, why he did not approach any of the Eastern European Governments for money to purchase the electricity works?

The Premier: The hon. Member must know our constitutional limitations. He must know that under the previous Constitution, and even under the present Constitution, this Government cannot approach a foreign Government on the question of loans. We can only approach a foreign Government on a trade agreement under the present Constitution. The hon. Member is very knowledgeable about these things, so I do not know why —

Mr. Burnham: I am knowledgeable with respect to the Constitution, but let me tell the Premier what I would have done in his position. If, as he said, getting loans from Eastern Europe was an easy thing so far as the would-be lenders are concerned, I would have made my contacts with the Eastern European Governments and found out in the same way as the Premier was able to make contacts with respect to the glass factory before the new Constitution. When I had ascertained that there was a would-be lender at 2 per cent or 1 per cent, I would have gone to the

British Government and said “I can get a loan from Yugoslavia or Russia of the requisite amount of money at a rate of interest which would not be oppressive, and I am asking you now to set in motion the necessary machinery to permit me to get the money.” There was no question of the British Government guaranteeing the loan. I am sure the “large-hearted” Eastern European Governments would never ask Britain for a guarantee, and if in those circumstances Britain said “No”, she would have to stand at the bar of public opinion, or Guianese public opinion.

In those circumstances I want to know why the Premier told his audience at Enmore that he could get all these things from Eastern Europe, but did not have the intelligence to ask them for it. The British Government could not stop him, because it would have had a lot of trouble on its hands. Furthermore, the Premier, who perhaps is in a lighter vein today, is suggesting that if he had mentioned Eastern Europe he would have had to run. Does he forget that when the Motion was moved in this House against trade with Cuba, the P.N.C. opposed that Motion and said that so far as it was concerned it did not object, save in the case of South Africa—and later we may move a Motion with respect to Portugal — to trade agreements on ideological grounds?

6.20 p.m.

With respect to the trade agreements, may I give the hon. Premier the advice which he attempted to give us earlier: we are not dealing in street-corner politics here. At the street corner it would be easy to say to his followers that the P.N.C. would not allow him to get money from Eastern Europe. I would still like to hear from the hon. Premier whether he made any official contacts with people in Eastern Europe? When he returned to this country and said that he had made contacts and had friends with rockets and guns, he cer-

[MR. BURNHAM]

tainly did not have those contacts with the British Government. When he said that he could get loans at 1 per cent and 2 per cent, he did not make those contacts through the British Government.

Mr. d'Arue: The general accepted principle is that when one buys something wholesale, one gets it at a lower rate than when one buys it retail. But so far as I know, British Guiana is one of the extraordinary countries where in its charges for electricity the minimum rate for wholesak consumers is at a higher rate than the minimum rate for domestic consumers. Inasmuch as the hon. Premier has declared his interest in everything industrial, and inasmuch as he was successful in preventing an attempt to increase the domestic rates, and having regard to the fact that already the commercial rates are at a higher level than the domestic rates—it is claimed in other countries that there should be a difference in these rates—why did he not refuse to agree to an increase in the commercial rates which had been made since the take-over?

The Premier: I have already mentioned that the records show that the increased rate which was chargeable for commerce and industry was fixed many, many years ago, and figures were shown to me in order to confirm the fact that our rates were lower than in other countries. The figures were supplied by the Electric Company, and they were examined by our consultants. We were guided by Preece, Cardew & Ryder, the Consultants, who were recommended by the Colonial Office.

I do not know whether it is being suggested that the I.D.C. and the people who advised us allowed the Demerara Electric Company to get away with murder! Sometimes one has to deal with people on the basis of good faith. Government pays advisers, and it has to accept the advice it receives. It would

be embarrassing for the Government to question the advice of its advisers on every occasion. I have already said that the domestic rates have not been increased, and we must thank the stars that we have been able to settle this problem which has been regarded as a nuisance to the people in this country.

I would like the hon. Member for Georgetown Central to supply me with the name of this so-called milk expert. It may be all right to make such irresponsible statements in the *Chronicle* and other newspapers, but when irresponsible statements are made in this House and they are published in foreign newspapers they can do great harm to this country. The Milk Pasteurisation Plant was set up by the Government in order to assist the people in Georgetown in getting a good supply of milk, and to help the farmers stabilize their position as milk producers. I think it is a disservice to the people of this country for the hon. Member for Georgetown Central to make such statements without saying categorically who made those statements so that they could be verified. I do not know whether the hon. Member made his statement in the interests of the sweet drink industry, or whether he wants to spread more propaganda. I would like the hon. Member for Georgetown South to mention the name of the expert, so that we could verify or refute the statement he has made.

Mr. d'Aguiar: I would like the hon. Premier to say whether he could get a certificate from an internationally-known milk expert to certify that our Milk Pasteurisation Plant complies with the sanitary conditions approved by the United States of America or in any modern country?

The Premier: I.C.A. experts from America have already visited this country, but the hon. Member is merely playing with the question. He said categorically that an expert in this field

had advised him regarding the sanitary conditions at the Milk Pasteurisation Plant, but he is now dodging the question

Mr. d'Aguiar: I have asked the hon. Premier whether he could produce a certificate to certify that the sanitary conditions at the Plant are good. The expert who spoke to me had made an unofficial visit to the Plant and, therefore, it would not be proper for me to disclose his name. It is a fact, however, that the Milk Pasteurisation Plant does not meet with the appropriate sanitary regulations. I would be more than satisfied and willing to apologize, if the hon. Premier could get a certificate from an International Health Authority regarding the sanitary conditions at the Milk Pasteurisation Plant and present it to this House. If he can get such a certificate it would mean that the Plant has either been cleaned up, or it was not in a sanitary condition at the time the expert visited it.

Head 36. Ministry of Trade And Industry — \$555,728, agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

Head 37. Ministry of Finance — \$568,942, agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

The Assembly resumed.

Sitting suspended from 6.30 p.m. to 8 p.m.

8 p.m.

On resumption—

Assembly in Committee of Supply.

The Chairman: At the suspension, we had just finished Head 37 — Ministry of Finance. We may now take Head 38 — Finance—Accountant General.

FINANCE — ACCOUNTANT GENERAL

Head 38 — Finance — Accountant General

Subheads 5, 18, and 26

Mr. Jordan (Upper Demerara River): There are three Subheads that seem to call for some explanation and, with your permission, sir, perhaps we can cover the three at once. I refer to Subhead 5 — Contribution to Commissioners in U.K. and Canada for Trade, Students and Migrants Services: I am wondering whether, in the light of past experience — \$107,000 was spent in 1960 and \$84,000 was voted in 1961 — \$108,000 to be voted now is enough; Subhead 18 — Loss of public money and stores: In 1960, the actual expenditure was \$35,000, in 1961, \$10,000 was approved and for 1962 there is only \$10,000 allocated. I am wondering if we are hoping for so much improvement. Subhead 26—Special visits and representation at external conferences: The actual expenditure in 1960 was \$72,000, approved last year was \$35,000 and this year \$70,000 is to be voted. I am wondering whether, in the light of past experience, this is adequate.

Dr. Jacob: Under Subhead 5 — Contribution to Commissioners in U.K. and Canada for Trade, Students and Migrants Services — this is an estimate that cannot be made with any great degree of accuracy. As regards Subhead 18 — Loss of public money and stores — that is a token amount. The same thing applies to Subhead 26. These things cannot be estimated with any great degree of accuracy or precision.

Mr. Jordan: What I am getting at is that past experience has shown that very much more than estimated seems to have been spent. So, I am wondering whether that experience is never brought to bear.

Dr. Jacob: As regards Subhead 18, we anticipate a reduction because we intend to exercise greater control

[DR. JACOB]

over public funds. I did state this in the Budget Speech. We have strengthened the Accountant General's Department and the Audit Department.

The Chairman: Would it be correct to say, in the case of the contribution to the Commissioners in the United Kingdom and Canada, that the Commissioner would send out at the beginning of the year some estimate as to the total expenditure, indicating how much each contributing territory should make arrangements to contribute? Again, in regard to special visits and representation at external conferences, hon. Members may wonder whether the figure of \$70,000, which has been provided for this year, has been studied in relation to the figure that was spent in 1960, because in 1960 there was a constitutional delegation and in 1962, we expect there will be another one. Hon. Members may wish to know if that was taken into consideration in deciding on the amount.

Dr. Jacob: There is a footnote giving that explanation.

The Chairman: I did not read that.

Head 38 — Finance — Accountant General — \$1,567,712 — agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

Head 39 — Finance — Central Registry — deferred.

CUSTOMS AND EXCISE

Head 40 Customs and Excise overtime.

Mr. Jordan: Subhead 1 (17) — Overtime — \$120,500. I am wondering if the fact that of the total wage bill a little over one-seventh is for overtime

does not indicate that more men are necessary for the job.

Dr. Jacob: The overtime here is absolutely necessary because of the very nature of customs work, and a great part of the money for this overtime work is paid by the importers or by the shipping agents.

8.15 p.m.

The Chairman: If the hon. Member will refer to the Details of Estimates of Revenue on page iv, he will see the figure \$100,000 as the approved estimate of revenue for 1961 under Head I, Subhead 9.

Mr. Bissember: The famous Budget Speech made by the Minister of Finance spoke of maladministration in the Customs and Excise Department, and that he intended to take active steps to curb that tendency in the Department. Can the Minister give us an idea of the steps he has in mind?

Dr. Jacob: The hon. Member is correct when he says that I mentioned in the Budget Speech that I intended to take steps to curb maladministration and irregularities in the Customs and Excise Department. I am not in a position to tell him precisely what steps I am going to take, but I can assure him and all other hon. Members, that this Government is determined to root out corruption, maladministration and all other forms of irregularity that have been characteristic of certain Departments of the Public Service. In my Budget Speech I also mentioned that the Inland Revenue Department was a very well administered Department, so I do not want the impression to get around that there is wholesale criticism of the Public Service. Indeed, there are many very honest, loyal and devoted public servants, and when any Minister of the Government criticizes certain Departments it is because those criticisms are justified. But the hon. Mem-

ber can rest assured that everything will be done as speedily as possible to correct the defects in the Customs and Excise Department. I have nothing further to add to what was stated in the Budget Speech.

Mr. Carter: Have there been any resignations from the Customs Department within the last two months? If, so, how many?

Dr. Jacob: I cannot say offhand how many resignations there were, but since the new Government took office steps were taken to rectify certain conditions, and there have been resignations, perhaps in order to escape what might happen. Indeed, the public knows that there have been certain disciplinary proceedings taken against officers and others in the Customs Department.

Mr. Carter: Do those officers include senior officers who have resigned?

Dr. Jacob: Investigations are in progress, and I repeat that officers and others are involved.

Mr. Carter: I asked a simple question.

The Chairman: I rule that it is not a proper question. Since the Department is a small one it is easy for one to know about whom the question is directed.

Item (19) — Temporary Officers, \$26,076.

Mr. Joaquin: I observe that there is an increase of \$12,076 in this item to provide additional officers for private warehouses. Can the Minister say how many officers are involved?"

Dr. Jacob: It is rather difficult to say exactly how many, but I think I should mention that here again the cost

is recoverable from the owners of the private warehouses.

Head 40 — Customs and Excise, \$781,258 — agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

FINANCE — INLAND REVENUE

Head 41. Finance — Inland Revenue.

Item. (4) — Senior Examiner, \$4,800.

Mr. Joaquin: I observe that a new post of Senior Examiner has been created. Can we get some particulars?

The Chairman: I would suggest that hon. Members should also read the footnotes at the bottom of the pages. A fair amount of information is given in the footnotes.

Mr. Joaquin: Thank you sir.

Head 41 — Finance — Inland Revenue, \$191,415 — agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

LICENCE REVENUE

Head 42. Licence Revenue.

Item (10) — Overtime Allowance, Collection of entertainment duty, \$6,650.

Mr. Jordan: At item (6) there is provision of \$6,624 for four Revenue Runners. Do the same people who collect this entertainment duty do the revenue running? If so, is it indicated that the number of officers should be increased rather than pay overtime?

Dr. Jacob: There is no duplication of the duties. Overtime is paid for work done at night. It is not the same number of people.

Mr. Jordan: Isn't there the necessity for more people to work at night?

Dr. Jacob: This is work done after the normal working hours, and it is necessary to have people doing overtime who are cognizant with the work which is done during the day.

Head 42 — Licence Revenue, \$70,895 — agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK

Head 43. Post Office Savings Bank — \$64,314.

Mr. Carter: We understand that there was a run on the Post Office Savings Bank some time ago. Can the Minister of Finance give this House some idea in figures of the withdrawals from the Savings Bank during the months of January and February this year?

Dr. Jacob: I am not in a position to give that information now.

The Chairman: I agree. Questions like the one posed by the hon. Member could be better answered if notice of the question were given.

Mr. Carter: I will take steps to do so.

Head 43 — Post Office Savings Bank, \$64,314 — agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

Head 44. Ministry of Education and Social Development — deferred.

Head 45. Ministry of Education and Social Development — Schools, Institutions and Miscellaneous — deferred.

Head 46 — The Palms, \$365,746 — agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Schedule.
8.30 p.m.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Head 47 — Attorney General — \$120,138.

Mr. Bissember: I notice that there are several vacancies and new posts mentioned under this Head. May I inquire whether an officer, who has just

arrived from the University in England, has been appointed to fill a post in this Department? I would also like to know whether the substantive post which he is filling was advertised, and whether the hon. Attorney-General can say whether other officers, who had been in this Department for the last four years, have made applications for the post?

The Attorney-General: I presume that the two posts to which my hon. and learned Friend refers are the posts of Principal Legal Advisers in the Attorney-General's Ministry. May I inform the hon. Member that no new vacancy has been filled, and that the very learned scholar to whom he refers is in the Attorney-General's Ministry as a Legal Assistant and is paid from Sub-head 1 (12), Additional Assistance and Crown Prosecution. He has made an application for one of the vacant posts.

With respect to the question whether officers in the Department have applied for any of the vacancies, there is to my knowledge only one officer in the Department who is qualified to apply for one of these posts, and I understand that he has applied. The posts are open to honours scholars who have had at least seven years standing at the Bar. The standard is very high, but not too high for a Guianese to aspire to. I understand that many Guianese have the necessary qualifications.

Mr. Bissember: Can the hon. Attorney-General tell me what are the special qualifications required for these two vacancies?

The Attorney-General: An applicant must have an honours degree in law, and at least seven years standing at the Bar.

Mr. Bissember: I am informed that the Public Service Commission has been asking for a master's degree. I would like the hon. Attorney-General to let me know whether this is true, and who gave the Public Service Commission

instructions to include such a requirement in the advertisement for the vacant posts?

The Attorney-General : The Public Service Commission has not required a master's degree, but it has indicated that the master's degree is one of the qualifications. It should be obvious to my hon. and learned Friend that the greater would include the less. There are people who have an honours degree, but the master's degree goes a longer way. However, it is not every scholar who has a master's degree who succeeds at the Bar.

Mr. Bissember: The hon. Attorney-General says that the officer to whom I have referred is paid under Sub-head 1 (12), Additional Assistance and Crown Prosecution, and that within the past 5 years no officer has been drafted into the Attorney-General's office as a Legal Assistant and paid out of the money which was provided for prosecution and legal appearance requested by the Attorney-General by members of the Bar. I would like to know whether any officer, during the past five years, has been drafted into the Department as a Legal Assistant and asked to make an appearance at the Bar?

The Attorney-General: The junior Legal Assistants recruited from the Attorney-General's office to make such appearances are paid from this vote. The present Solicitor-General was recruited in this manner, and the practice was never discontinued. If matters are taken by a lawyer from outside the Chambers, the Legal Assistant is paid from this vote; it was not intended to meet the payment of prosecutors only.

Mr. Bissember: The hon. Attorney-General is not correct. The present Solicitor-General, I am advised, was recruited into the Attorney-General's Department as an Acting Crown Coun-

sel, and not as a Legal Assistant. There is a big difference between the two posts.

The Attorney-General : The present Solicitor-General was not recruited into the Chambers as an Acting Crown Counsel but as a legal Assistant, as my hon. and learned Friend will see from a glance at the Establishment.

Head 47 — Attorney-General — \$120,138, agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

Head 48 — Official Receiver \$36,976, agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS

Head 49 — Ministry of Communications.

Dr. Jacob: The total should be amended to "\$71,497". There is a printer's error.

Head 49 — Ministry of Communications — \$71,497, as amended, agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

POST OFFICE

Head 50 — Post Office — \$1,618,289.

Mr. Carter: There have been many complaints regarding the opening of mail at the Post Office. I wonder whether an investigation has been made into these complaints and what has been the result of the investigation?

Mr. Wilson: My Ministry has been made aware of several complaints regarding the opening of letters. The Director of Post and Telecommunications has investigated several of the complaints, and it was found that most

[MR. WILSON]

of the letters complained about were posted in the same manner as they were received at the post office. A member of the editorial staff of the *Chronicle* was invited to see a bag of letters opened, and it was found that the letters were posted in the same way as they were received at the post office.

Mr. Carter: Were the letters found open?

Mr. Wilson: The letters were not properly sealed — some people used scotch tape to seal their letters.

Mr. Carter: How was the scotch tape applied?

Mr. Wilson: The scotch tape was found on the flap of the envelope.

Mr. Carter: I have received letters with scotch tape on them, and I was under the impression that it was an additional safeguard against the opening of letters. I want to know in what way the scotch tape was responsible for the letters being opened? It seems to be inconsistent with what I have learnt from experience.

Mr. Wilson: I did not say that the scotch tape was responsible for the letters being tampered with. I said that scotch tape was used to seal the envelopes and the letters were posted in that manner.

Mr. Carter: Does the hon. Minister mean that the use of scotch tape aroused the suspicion of the people?

Mr. Jordan: With regard to Sub-head 1 (26) Rural Postal Assistants — \$111,012, this amount represents an increase of \$14,140 over the provision for last year. I would like to ask the hon. Minister whether any additional Rural Postal Assistants are to be posted at Wismar in order to facilitate the people living in the Wismar Housing Scheme?

Mr. Wilson: As has been said here on a previous occasion, it is hoped that the Ministry will be able to employ additional staff in order to make a Postal Assistant available for the Wismar — Christianburg area.

Mr. Jordan: When will that take place?

Mr. Wilson: As soon as all of the requirements of the postal service are considered, it will be seen whether a Postal Assistant can be made available for the Wismar Housing Scheme.

Mr. Blair: I would like to ask the hon. Minister a similar question regarding the postal service for East Bank, Berbice River? I have already discussed this matter with the hon. Minister, and I am wondering whether he has made provision for improving the postal service in that area.

Mr. Wilson: The Ministry is giving active consideration to the requirements of East Bank, Berbice, and it is hoped that something will be done to improve the postal service in that district.

Mr. Carter: Is the hon. Minister delegating Rural Assistants to rural areas?

8.45 p.m.

Mr. Wilson: It depends on the volume of work, the size of the population and, of course, the availability of funds.

Mr. Jordan: In the circumstances, I feel the Wismar Hill Housing Scheme should qualify immediately. There are 751 adults living there and if additional funds are voted, I cannot see how that area cannot qualify.

Mr. Wilson: All that will be taken into consideration.

The Chairman: I would like to say that at the time of the suspension when I was putting a Head to the House,

I did not realize that the hon. Member for Ruimveldt (Mr. Burnham) had come into the House for the purpose of speaking. I did see some movement and I learnt afterwards that he wanted to speak on the particular Head, but I would have thought that the hon. Member, being younger and perhaps more athletic than I am, would have stopped me. My apologies to the hon. Member.

Mr. Burnham: Thank you, sir. I have worked out under what other Head I can raise the question.

I propose to seek some assistance with regard to the post of Director of Posts and Telecommunications. When the particular incumbent of the post was appointed, I understood that he was appointed on contract for a specific period — I think three years — and it was proposed to have a Guianese fill the post at the end of that period. So far as I recall, the third year ought to have elapsed by now. Will the hon. Minister be so kind as to tell us how soon this gentleman will be leaving and how soon he will be succeeded by a Guianese?

Mr. Wilson: I am not in a position to say when his contract will come to an end. I think it has a few months left before expiration, but steps are being taken to train Guianese.

Mr. Burnham : I desire, before making my next observation, to congratulate the Minister on his having assimilated the officialese: "steps are being taken to train Guianese". That is very unimpressive when it comes from a "Socialist" Government. I want to know how far these steps have gone to train a Guianese. You cannot, in 1962, tell us that steps are being taken to train a Guianese when in 1959 you said the appointee will be succeeded by a Guianese on the expiration of his contract period.

Mr. Wilson: I am happy to inform the hon. Gentleman that a Guianese has already been trained and is in readiness

to take the place of the Director of Posts and Telecommunications.

Mr. Burnham: I desire now to congratulate the Minister but still to castigate him for wasting two questions. He could have given that answer in the first place. May I take it that the post of Postmaster General will disappear?

Mr. Wilson: It has already been abolished.

OVERTIME

Mr. Burnham: How much money is still owing to persons for working overtime during the year 1961 in the Post Office Department?

Mr. Wilson: That question is one which requires to be dealt with under notice.

Mr. Burnham: I would have thought that since we enjoy the informality, in committee, of having the Ministers with their advisers to their elbows, notice would not have been necessary. Incidentally, may I observe, with regret, that he has not got his Director of Posts and Telecommunications at his elbow nor does he have his Permanent Secretary. Am I to assume more competence in him than in his colleagues?

I will tell the Minister this: my reason for asking this question is that my information is that it is the sum of \$247,000 that is outstanding in overtime due to employees who have worked during 1961. If this is correct, and there is no doubt that it is correct, I wonder why Government is so unrealistic in estimating overtime for this year at \$91,000.

Mr. Wilson: It is not that Government has been unrealistic in allocating a sum lower than actually turned out to be required but it is because of certain changes in overtime rates with regard to the Boland decision and increase in rates decided upon with the unions.

Mr. Burnham: May I inquire from the hon. Minister what are the changes brought about by the discussions with the unions and by the Boland Report?

[MR. BURNHAM]

I am under the impression that both the unions and the Boland Report would have increased the amount rather than reduced it.

Mr. Wilson: That is what I was saying. Because of these decisions, the amount was increased and these decisions were not made known until after the estimates for last year were decided upon.

Mr. Burnham: Perhaps I have not made myself pellucidly clear. The lack of realism with which I accused the Government is in the fact that it has voted \$91,000 for 1962 while there is outstanding a sum of \$247,000. It is unrealistic on the low side and not on the high side.

Mr. Wilson: I do not know if I can make myself clearer to the hon. Member for Ruimveldt. It happened like this: when the Estimates were passed early last year, it was not known that the overtime rates would have been changed and that is why this small amount has been put down. When the decision was made, the moneys had to be paid retrospectively as from the 1st January.

Mr. Burnham: Is it that the hon. Minister is saying that when the Boland award was known the Estimates for 1961 had already been prepared? That, I know; that, I understand. What I do not understand is whether the Boland award was not known when the Estimates for 1962 were being prepared.

Mr. Wilson: Those decisions were known, but it is hoped to reduce the overtime during this year.

Mr. Burnham: I wonder whether the Minister would be so kind as to tell us when the sum of \$247,000 which is now owing would be paid to those who have earned it.

Mr. Wilson: This money is not actually owing to anybody. I do not know that \$247,000 is owing to anybody.

Mr. Burnham: Perhaps my information is more thorough than that of the Minister. Perhaps, later on the Minister will be able to tell us. I will give notice of this question officially to allow him to get some research done.

Head 50 Post Office
\$1,618,289 — agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

Head 51 — Post Office — Telecommunications and Electrical Inspection—deferred.

TRANSPORT AND HARBOURS

Head 52 — Transport and Harbours.

Mr. Burnham: This department shows a net deficit. I am not criticizing that, for it is my view that rail transport, if it is owned and run by Government, shows a deficit; if it is owned and run by private enterprise, it has to be subsidized. So, I am not making heavy weather of the deficit.

I know that in this department there are certain senior posts vacant; for instance, the post of General Manager. That has become vacant rather recently, and I know that an acting appointment has been made. I wonder when there is going to be a permanent appointment. But apart from that, there is the post of Traffic Manager which has been vacant for some time as a result of the fact that the Traffic Manager, who was on contract, has left the country. My information is that there are two officers eminently qualified technically, academically and by experience to hold the post of Traffic Manager. I wonder why that post has not yet been filled.

I am not suggesting that it is the Minister who should fill it. I know the Public Service Commission is the body that should make the recommendation. But, certainly, I believe that if the Minister were appreciative of the necessity to have a permanent appointment, the question could have been sent to the Commission already and a decision arrived at. I wonder whether the Minister would care to tell us why his Government has been following in the ignoble tradition of the colonial Government of keeping posts open indefinitely.

Mr. Wilson: These posts have only recently become vacant and my information is that the Public Service Commission is very actively considering filling them.

Mr. Burnham : I would be grateful if the Minister were to tell us exactly in what year did this post become vacant. When did Mr. Sykes leave? He did not leave this place recently so far as I understand the word "recent." But let us have it in terms of year or month.

9 p.m.

Mr. Wilson: I cannot say the exact time, but it was some time during the latter half of last year.

Mr. Burnham : Are we to understand that the latter half of last year is recent? This is the fourth month of the year, and I am sure the Minister will agree that there are two officers who were trained at Government expense qualified to hold the post. There is no question of having to advertise in far-off England or Africa. There are two officers here.

Mr. Wilson: The Public Service Commission is very actively looking into that matter.

Mr. Burnham: There is another aspect of the Minister's attitude towards the Transport and Harbours Department

which I would like to bring to attention, and which I would like to have explained. Some time during the week beginning 11th February, 1962, on the instructions of the Minister, I am informed, the usual procedure of making fortnightly payment of certain employees of the Transport and Harbours Department was stopped. I wonder whether the Minister can tell us why he gave those instructions. Don't let him tell me he did not, because I know that he did.

Mr. Wilson: I think the employees referred to are paid monthly, and some time ago it was decided that they would be paid half-monthly, not before the 15th of the month.

Mr. Burnham: The Minister gave instructions that they should not be given fortnightly advances at all.

Mr. Wilson: That is absolutely untrue.

Mr. Burnham: I cannot argue if the Minister says it is untrue.

The Chairman: Your information may be wrong.

Mr. Burnham: My information is not wrong, but courtesy to this House prevents me from pressing the Minister.

Mr. d'Aguiar: I am somewhat concerned about the increasing losses in **this Department year after year, particularly** having regard to the fact that in 1950 the International Bank recommended a modernization scheme for the Transport and Harbours Department involving an expenditure of about \$10 million, because it was claimed then that the loss of \$1 million was due to the inefficiency of the equipment. Now we find that the losses have doubled, and I believe that about \$8 million has been spent upon new equipment. I

[Mr. d'AGUIAR]

would like to ask the Minister how much of the rehabilitation programme for the Transport and Harbours Department remains to be completed in the next three years?

Mr. Wilson: Most of that money is for the purpose of rehabilitating and reconditioning the terminals, and the provision of new ferry boats.

Mr. d'Aguiar: The question is: how much of the plan has been completed? Have you another \$5 million or \$10 million to be spent to complete the rehabilitation?

Mr. Wilson: I would like to have notice of that question.

Mr. d'Aguiar: May I ask if the International Bank report was correct? In other words, their report was that if this money was spent on rehabilitation this loss of \$1 million would be eliminated. Now we find that about \$8 million has been spent, but the losses have doubled. Would the Minister say what are the chances of reducing these losses as a result of the investment in new equipment, or is the loss likely to get bigger year after year?

Mr. Wilson: I should have said in reply to the previous question as to the amount of money left, that that is a matter for the Development Estimates. As regards to what extent it is hoped to reduce the deficit, I should say that first of all it is Government's policy to subsidize transportation to the community. Secondly, the expenditure on wages and salaries has been rising steadily in recent years, and it is not Government's desire to keep down wages and salaries.

Mr. Hugh: notice in Appendix A an item (27) — Entertainment Expenses, \$1,000. I am mindful of the fact that this Government is very firm

in disallowing entertainment expenses for commercial houses in respect of income tax. May I ask the Minister who is going to do this entertaining, who will be entertained, and why?

Mr. Wilson: My information is that this provision is for the purpose of entertaining V.I.P's — engineers and consultants — who come to advise Government in connection with the Transport Services.

Mr. Hugh: It seems to me that the Transport Department is the only Department that entertains.

Mr. Burnham: Do I understand from the Minister that in 1962, for the very first time, it is anticipated that there will be visits by V.I.P's and engineers, because I notice that the item represents an increase of \$1,000 on 1961? In other words, there was no such provision for 1961 or for 1960.

Mr. Wilson: My information is that in the past this amount for entertainment was lumped with other heads and not shown separately. We started from this year to show it separately.

Mr. Hugh: There is another item, (29) — Losses of Cash and Stores, \$500. For 1961 the approved estimate was the same figure. May I ask what are the items involved in the loss of stores?

Mr. Burnham: There is a note on page 3 of the Appendix which says: "Due to estimated numbers of officers expected to go on leave." Apparently the Department loses cash and stores when officers go on leave.

Mr. Wilson: My information is that officers of the Transport Services handle a lot of cash, and it is possible that at times certain sums of money may be lost or missing. This item is to take care of such losses.

Mr. Hugh: Isn't this amount really involved in the sale of old iron and things of that sort, where stores were lost?

Mr. Wilson: It is the usual accounting head to take care of possible losses.

Head 52 — Transport and Harbours, \$2,199,300 — agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

Head 53. Civil Aviation — deferred.

AUDIT

Head 54. Audit — \$209,361.

Mr. d'Aguiar: The Audit Department is extremely important, and I believe complaint has been made from year to year that it is inadequately staffed. Here the answer cannot be that there is not sufficient money, because the proper staffing of this Department can lead to the saving of millions of dollars. I would like to know what steps are being taken to have a fully equipped and competent staff.

9.15 p.m.

Dr. Jacob: The Government and I fully realize the importance of the Audit Department, and quite recently steps have been taken to strengthen the staff of this Department. The Auditor's Report has revealed a shocking state of affairs in certain branches of the Public Service with regard to the safeguarding of Government funds, and what has been done recently is with the object of putting an end to the waste that has been going on.

In my Budget Speech I referred—in para. 115, I think—to the expansion of the staff of the Audit Department as well as that of the Accountant-General's Department. Quite recently there has been enacted in this House the effect of improving the control over Ordinance. This Ordinance will have the effect of improving the control over Public Funds, and of ensuring that, in Departments where proper safeguards

are not taken or exercised, the persons responsible will be held liable for any loss or misappropriation of Public funds. The Government appreciates the need for these safeguards, and I want to assure hon. Members that this Government, at any rate, will see to it that the funds of the people of this country are properly safeguarded and wisely spent.

Mr. d'Aguiar: We are very glad to hear that our interests will be safeguarded, but it is just a broad statement. What specific measures will be taken to ensure that a better report will be received from the Director of Audit when the accounts for 1962 are compared with the accounts for 1960? Of course, the accounts for 1961 are not yet ready for audit. What steps will be taken to ensure that the accounts will be presented for audit at the proper time? For the last four years complaints have been made regarding the late submission of accounts for audit.

Dr. Jacob: I have already said that the staff of the Audit Department has been strengthened.

Mr. d'Aguiar: By 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5?

Dr. Jacob: The senior staff by 2, and the junior staff by 5.

Head 54. Audit — \$209,361, agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

Head 55. Public Prosecutions — \$45,943.

Consideration of this Head was deferred.

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

Head 56. Public Service Commission — \$170,740.

Mr. Burnham: Has the Public Service Commission been made an executive body, as recommended at the Constitutional Conference in 1960?

Dr. Jacob: No.

Mr. Burnham: Why not?

Dr. Jacob: I am informed that there are certain constitutional difficulties, and that the full implementation of the Overseas Aid Scheme has something to do with the fact that the Public Service Commission has not yet been made an executive body.

Mr. Burnham: May I inquire what are these constitutional difficulties?

The Attorney-General: The difficulties standing in the way of the Public Service Commission becoming an executive body result from the implementation of the Overseas Aid Scheme in which expatriate officers will be granted certain gratuities. The figure has been worked out at nearly a million, and British Guiana is expected to bear about half of the cost. At the moment negotiations are going on between this Government and the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and when these negotiations are concluded the Scheme will be fully implemented and the Public Service Commission will become an executive body. Until then the Governor will act, after consideration with the Commission, but he will not be compelled to take its advice.

Mr. Burnham: That seems to be a more lucid and intelligent explanation. May I ask whether the Public Service Commission's advice is sought with respect to appointments to the local service as distinct from the judiciary?

The Attorney-General: Yes. The advice of the Public Service Commission is sought with respect to the appointments in the local service, and the advice of the Judicial Service Commission is sought with respect to the appointment of judges and magistrates.

Head 56. Public Service Commission — \$170,740 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

PENSIONS AND GRATUITIES

Head 57. Pensions and Gratuities — \$505,624.

Mr. Carter: I would like to know whether, in view of the recent increase in salaries, the Government purposes to make commensurate increases in pensions and gratuities?

The Attorney-General: Do I understand the hon. Member for Werk-en-Rust to be asking whether, in view of the Guillebaud increase—

The Chairman: He did not say Guillebaud; he said "commensurate."

The Attorney-General: He asked whether the Government would consider increasing the existing pensions. Pensions are calculated in accordance with the Pensions Ordinance which gives the precise figure. Government is not giving consideration to any increase in pensions in the light of the recent increase in salaries.

As I understand it, salaries are increased in order to reduce the impact of the increase in the cost of living. Pensions are sums of money on which people are expected to live. It follows that, if the Government recognizes that it is impossible for people who are actively employed to live on the stipends they receive from the Government, then it should also recognize that it is impossible for people to live on the pensions they have been receiving. It must be remembered that those pensions would have been calculated on a different basis and at a lower original stipend. Previous Governments have always recognized that and have increased pensions *passu* with the increase in salaries. In view of the fact that this

is a "Socialist" Government, it should be interested in seeing that retired employees live comfortably. I wonder whether this Government would give consideration to increasing the rate of pensions?

The Attorney-General: A cost of living allowance is paid at the present moment to pensioners for the same reason given by the hon. Member. Consideration will be given to this question, and the answer will, of course, depend upon the extent of the funds available.

9.30 p.m.

Mr. Wharton: Can the Minister inform me whether or not there is a specific period between the retirement of a teacher and the payment of pension and gratuity? If there is a specific period, what is it?

Dr. Jacob: There is no specific period as far as I know.

Mr. Wharton: I must say for the benefit of the Minister that I know of teachers who have retired for four months who have not received one cent in pension or gratuity.

Dr. Jacob: It depends on the particular case. I am informed that at times there are certain features which delay the settlement of these matters. But if the hon. Member has any specific case in mind I shall be glad to know of it.

Head 57 — Pensions and Gratuities — \$505,624 — agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

Head 58 — Public Debt — \$8,216,387 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

LOANS FROM PUBLIC FUNDS

Head 59 — Loans from Public Funds.

LOANS TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Mr. Burnham : May I make an inquiry with respect to Subhead 1. First of all—— [*Interruption.*]

PUBLIC DEBT

Head 58. Public Debt.

Dr. Jacob: Mr. Chairman, there has been a mistake under "Public Debt". Some of this is provided by law. On page 106, "Total Public Debt"——

The Chairman: I have used the column headed "Estimate 1962".

Dr. Jacob: The amount that is not provided by law is that total at the bottom — \$8,216,387 — minus \$4,246,986, which is provided by law, and this gives a total of \$3,969,401. That should be the figure.

The Chairman: Do you wish us to recommit the Head to reduce the amount to \$3,969,401? Perhaps the hon. Minister will move a Motion for the recommittal of the Head.

Dr. Jacob: I beg to move that Head 58 — Public Debt be recommitted.

Question put, and agreed to.

Head 58 recommitted.

Dr. Jacob: I beg to move that the amount under Head 58 — Public Debt, be reduced to \$3,969,401.

Question put, and agreed to.

Head 58 — Public Debt \$3,969,401 — agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

LOANS FROM PUBLIC FUNDS

Head 59 — Loans from Public Funds.

LOANS TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Mr. Burnham : I was asking if these loans to local authorities — Sub-head 1 — are interest-bearing loans. If they are, what is the rate of interest?

Mr. Rai: I do not think I can be far wrong in saying that the interest charge is 6 per cent. The Government has borrowed money at 7 per cent, so that it lends to the local authorities at a lesser rate than that at which it borrows.

Mr. Carter: This is very odd. This Government has always deprecated the fact that it has to pay 6 per cent to the British Government, and I am amazed at this sort of two-faced attitude. It has to pay 5 and 6 per cent on loans from Western countries. If it borrows from the Eastern bloc, which it admires so much, it borrows at 2 per cent and yet it is lending at 6 per cent to local authorities.

Mr. Rai: The sum of \$150,000 is the estimate for 1962 for loans to local authorities, but this is merely part of the money which the Government has borrowed at 7 per cent which it is now lending at a lesser rate. What is illogical in this?

Mr. Carter: From what source has Government borrowed this money and at what per cent?

Dr. Jacob: From the banks.

Mr. Burnham: Though in theory there may be some attractiveness about the argument of the hon. Minister of Home Affairs, it is without a real base. Six per cent of \$150,000 is \$9,000. For Government, this is a small sum; for these small local authorities, it is a

large sum, and I cannot see why, in the circumstances, one cannot count the \$9,000 as a subsidy.

9.40 p.m.

Mr. Rai: I think that would be a bad principle — to have to pay interest on money which the central Government borrows, and then to lend it to local authorities free of interest.

Mr. Burnham: I think it would be bad in principle if we had a capitalist Government or a usurious Government. I am submitting that the rate of interest on money borrowed by the Government should be considered as a subsidy to the local authorities which need some new blood and some assistance.

Mr. Rai: Government does make grants to local authorities. The hon. Member says that we could expect this from a capitalist Government. This is not a capitalist Government but it is functioning in a capitalist society.

Mr. Burnham : I admit that this Government will have to borrow money from time to time, but in the first place I say that if Government is actually borrowing this particular sum and lending it to the local authorities it can write off, if it so desires, the rate of interest it has to pay on the sum borrowed, as a subsidy to the local authorities. Even a capitalist Government, if it wanted to give a subsidy, can do so.

I am further confused. Do I understand that this sum of money which is lent to local authorities is borrowed? It is not mentioned under Public Debt but under Expenditure. I wonder whether my learned friend will explain that little difficulty that has arisen in my mind.

Mr. Rai: The Government has had to borrow money to execute these works, and this \$150,000 is part of the sum Government has had to borrow in

order to meet its expenditure, recurrent and developmental. The hon. Member sneaks about subsidies. If Government were to lend money to local authorities free of interest it would not be proper to show the interest as a subsidy. Local Authorities are already heavily subsidized, especially under Drainage and Irrigation, to the extent of 80 per cent. The Georgetown Town Council, for example, is heavily subsidized so far as drainage and irrigation and roads are concerned.

Mr. Burnham: Maybe I am wrong, but the Minister must agree with me that if Government is borrowing this money it should not be shown here as coming out of revenue of the country; what should be shown is the interest. Government cannot ask us to vote \$150,000 out of revenue and tell us that it is borrowing this money. You may from time to time have to ask for small accommodations from the Bank, but it was never envisaged that this amount should come out of loan funds.

Mr. Hugh: Would the Minister say whether this loan is for the purpose of road repairs and the digging of trenches parallel with the public road?

Mr. Rai: These loans are used by the local authorities for building or maintaining roads — usually for roads, the digging of canals and trenches, for kokers and sluices.

Mr. Hugh: Would the Minister admit that the trenches along the public road are not the property of the local authorities, but belong to the Public Works Department which should clean them?

Mr. Rai: The local authorities do not expend any money on digging or maintaining any trenches over which the Public Works Department has control.

Mr. Wharton: Government grants loans to University students. I am made to understand by the Minister that loans

to local authorities are borrowed by Government and local authorities are made to pay 6 per cent interest on their loans. Of that I am aware, but I would like to know whether the loans to University students come within the same category, and if the students have to pay 6 per cent interest?

Mr. Benn: Loans to University students are made from money borrowed by the Government, but the rate of interest charged is lower: it is 4 per cent.

Mr. Burnham: May I inquire in what circumstances these borrowings are made, and whether the Minister of Natural Resources can show us where in the Estimates we will find evidence of the borrowing of this \$340,000 appearing under Head 59?

Mr. Benn: I think the hon. Member had a reply from the Minister of Home Affairs (Mr. Rai), and the reply I would give is no different.

Mr. Burnham: I am asking a different question, if the Minister would listen to me. The question this time is: where in the Estimates can we find this \$340,000 as income, because if you get something as a loan it has to appear on the income side. Where can I find \$340,000 on the income side to bear out the Minister's facile explanation that all the money expended under Head 59 is money on loan to the Government?

9.50 p.m.

Mr. Benn: The hon. Member has been given a satisfactory answer, and there is no other reply.

Mr. Burnham: There will be no reply. They are the sort of people who govern this country: some of them do not understand elementary book-keeping, and they do not know or understand the position. The hon. Attorney-General is smiling, because he knows that I am right. The hon. Chairman also knows that I am right, because he is a member of the Georgetown Town Council. If there is no Head where one can find this

[MR. BURNHAM]

amount as income, then one must conclude that it is coming straight from revenue. Subhead 2 seems to be divided between the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ministry of Natural Resources. The note at page 108 of the Estimate states: "Increased number of loans as no new Conditional Scholarship Awards are proposed". May I inquire from the Government what it proposes to do with regard to new Conditional Scholarship Awards?

Mr. Benn: Government has been considering the question of Conditional Scholarship Awards. It has been discovered that, for several reasons, many of the students who have received these scholarships have not stood up to their responsibilities in regard to the money they receive, and they do not want to return to this country. In some cases some of the students undertake to stay a certain period with the Government, but it has been found that several of them refuse to stay and work as long as they have undertaken to do. Sometimes it is better to permit an officer to leave rather than to keep him in the Service dissatisfied.

Therefore Government would like to give a student as much freedom as possible. He would be given loans for the various categories of the Service in keeping with Government's needs. The Government will continue making loans; those persons who want to go can go, and those who want to stay will stay. There may be some amount of wastage, but there would be no hard feelings on either side. I wish to say that the Government has come up against a considerable amount of difficulty in dealing with this question of scholarships or scholars. It is true to say that every month the Government comes across a scholar who does not want to abide by the terms of the contract or agreement which he had signed when he became a scholarship-holder, for a variety of reasons. The Government prefers to provide the education for them, and they can go to the Bauxite Company or somewhere else and work if they want to do so. The Gov-

ernment will continue making loans to students, subject to proper safeguards.

Mr. Burnham: It seems to me, the first place, that this Government should re-examine its policy, if it is finding such constant difficulty with Conditional Scholars. I do not think that the fault is all with the Conditional Scholars. I cannot understand the matter at the moment, because there are other territories where this difficulty does not seem to be as great as the difficulty referred to by the hon. Minister of Natural Resources. It appears to me that, in the same way as you can bond a borrower and a guarantor, you can bond a Conditional Scholar and a guarantor; so that if the Conditional Scholar is in breach of his undertaking to serve Government, then the guarantor or the Conditional Scholar automatically becomes liable for the amount advanced for the course.

It also appears to me that the answer is not to make loans available so as to get a 4 per cent interest, but to re-examine the stereotype form of contract to ensure that, when a Conditional Scholar is in breach and does not want to serve at home for a stipulated period, either he or his guarantor, who will be a person with property or some means, will be liable.

cannot agree with Government running a money-lending-service for education. Government must understand that it owes a responsibility to its citizens to give them the best possible educational facilities, and any Government in a territory like this should desire to see those on whom it spends money return to serve the country. The way to get over the difficulty referred to by the hon. Minister of Natural Resources is not to stop lending money, but to do something with regard to amending the contract or agreement.

The Minister of Home Affairs (Mr. Rai): A personal contract is unenforceable. The object of assisting students to go abroad and improve their education is, first of all, to give them an opportunity

to study the subjects and enter the fields which they feel may be of benefit to themselves and the people of this country who have given them the opportunity.

At a graduation ceremony at the U.C.W.I., a Professor from Lester University advised the graduates that they must consider themselves as apprentices. I repeat that the whole object of the Scheme is to enable the Government and the people of this country to get better qualified people to serve us. Whether it is a question of Full Scholarships, Conditional Scholarships or loans, many of the students are so unpatriotic they do not want to return to this country and serve the people who have provided the money for them to get higher education. How can one enforce a personal contract which requires a man to come back to British Guiana and work? My hon. and learned Friend knows that no court will enforce such a contract. I repeat that personal contracts are not enforceable.

Mr. Burnham: My hon. and learned Friend must not give us this sort of "under-the-tree-law". He can tell that to laymen, but he should not mention that in a House like this where members of the Bar are sitting. A personal contract is not specifically enforceable, but damages for breaches of the contract can be obtained. The hon. the Attorney-General knows that, too. Certainly the hon. Minister of Home Affairs must appreciate the fallacy in his argument. He says that some students are too unpatriotic to return and serve in this country, but what it is proposed to do now is to give no consideration to those who wish to return and serve. In other words, even if a student returns and serves Government indefinitely he will still have to pay back the loan. In other words, this Government is not aiming at free university education for those who can take advantage of it.

It is true that some of the recipients of loans may be minors, but there is an easy way to get over that difficulty. Let Government execute a deed with the

guarantor where no consideration need be shown; register and file that deed, so that, if the recipient of the scholarship fails to serve the stipulated time, then the guarantor has to pay. I see no real difficulty in that. As it is now, you give a loan. The person does not come back. How are you going to recover? From the guarantor. Just as how you can recover from the guarantor if the recipient of a loan does not come back, so can you recover from the guarantor if the holder does not honour the terms of the scholarship.

10 p.m.

Head 59 — Loans from Public Funds — \$340,000 — agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Schedule.

REVISION OF SALARIES, ETC.

Head 60 — Revision of salaries, etc.

Mr. Burnham: I want to ask a short question. It is not clear to me yet what is the position with respect to this matter. I originally understood from the Budget statement that this \$2,600,000 represented increases that would be paid on 1962 salaries. As I further understood the Motion that was passed in March — I think on the 1st March — the sum of \$2,600,000, for which approval was given then, was for the payment of increases on 1961 Salaries. Am I right, therefore, in saying that this year we shall have to provide \$5,200,000 to cover increases in 1961 and 1962, and if I am right, where is the further \$2,600,000 shown on these estimates of expenditure?

Dr. Jacob: The additional amount for this year is not shown on the Estimates. That will have to be done in a supplementary schedule.

10.05 p.m.

Mr. Burnham: If that is so, under what authority is Government paying the increased salaries for the months of January, February, March and April?

[MR. BURNHAM]

If this \$2.6 million was for this year, I understand, but if it is really for last year, which we approved, how is Government paying these officers who agreed to call off the strike?

The Chairman: I think we should adjourn at this stage until tomorrow

when Government may be able to give the information.

ADJOURNMENT

Assembly resumed.

“Resolved: That this Assembly do now adjourn until 2.00 p.m. on Wednesday, 18th April, 1962.”