

# SECOND LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

(Constituted under the British Guiana (Constitution) (Temporary Provisions) Orders in Council, 1953 and 1956).

Wednesday, 4th January, 1961

The Council met at 2 p.m.

## PRESENT :

**Speaker**, His Honour Sir Donald Jackson

**Chief Secretary**, Hon. D. M. Hedges

**Attorney-General**, Hon. A. M. I. Austin, Q.C.

**Financial Secretary**, Hon. W. P. D'Andrade.

*ex officio*

The Honourable **Dr. C. B. Jagan**

—Member for Eastern Berbice  
(Minister of Trade and Industry)

**B. H. Benn**

—Member for Essequibo River  
(Minister of Natural Resources)

**Janet Jagan**

—Member for Western Essequibo  
(Minister of Labour, Health and Housing)

**Ram Karran**

—Member for Demerara-Essequibo  
(Minister of Communications and Works)

**B. S. Rai**

—Member for Central Demerara  
(Minister of Community Development and Education).

**Mr. R. B. Gajraj**

—Nominated Member

**W. O. R. Kendall**

—Member for New Amsterdam

**R. C. Tello**

—Nominated Member

**F. Bowman**

—Member for Demerara River

**L. F. S. Burnham, Q.C.**

—Member for Georgetown Central

**S. Campbell**

—Member for North Western District

**A. L. Jackson**

—Member for Georgetown North

**E. B. Beharry**

—Member for Eastern Demerara

**S. M. Saffee**

—Member for Western Berbice

**Jai Narine Singh**

—Member for Georgetown South

**R. E. Davis**

—Nominated Member

**H. J. M. Hubbard**

—Nominated Member.

Mr. I. Crum Ewing—Clerk of the Legislature

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

## ABSENT:

Mr. Ajodha Singh, Member for Berbice River

Mr. A. M. Fredericks, Nominated Member — on leave

Mr. A. G. Tasker, O.B.E., Nominated Member — on leave.

The Clerk read prayers.

## MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Tuesday, 3rd January, 1961 as printed and circulated were taken as read and confirmed.

## ORDER OF THE DAY

## APPROPRIATION (1961) BILL

## BUDGET DEBATE

**Mr. Speaker:** We shall now resume consideration of the Appropriation Bill.

**The Financial Secretary (Mr. D'Anrede):** I move that Council resolve itself into Committee to resume consideration of the Appropriation Bill.

Question put, and agreed to.

## COUNCIL IN COMMITTEE

## SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

## OTHER CHARGES — DIETARY

**The Chairman:** Yesterday we stopped at Head 46 — Social Assistance — under which the hon. Member for Georgetown North had moved a reduction by \$1 of item (12) — Nurses and Servants, The Palms, \$149,973.

**Mr. Jackson:** After the adjournment yesterday I had a discussion with the Financial Secretary on this item, and we have agreed to discuss the matter further outside of the Council. I, therefore, withdraw the Motion for the reduction of the item.

But I now wish to move a reduction by \$1 of item 4 under Other Charges — Dietary, \$110,200 — in order to inform Government of certain aspects of complaints which have been made to me within the last 24 hours. Whether the complaints can be substantiated or not I am not at this moment prepared to say, but I would like to have the matter investigated or some consideration given to it. The inmates of The Palms have been complaining that there has been a reduc-

tion in the standard of the meals supplied them in the institution. They say that quite a few of the items to which they have been accustomed have been withdrawn either wholly or in part. They are not quite sure whether the reduction is in the nature of the economy which the Government is pursuing, or whether somebody is at fault.

Since there is no reduction of the provision made for last year, I shall be grateful for an assurance that the standard of dietary to which the inmates have been accustomed will be maintained. On the other hand, I am wondering whether the standard has been reduced because of an increase in the cost of certain items. I shall be glad to have an assurance that the matter will be gone into and that an effort will be made to maintain the standard of dietary at the institution.

**The Minister of Labour, Health and Housing**

(Mrs. Jagan): I am not aware that there has been any change in the quantity or standard of the dietary. If it is so it is not the result of any efforts to economize, because the same amount of money has been provided for dietary every year. Rather than a reduction, I think hon. Members will remember that we improved on the standard of dietary. We added one snack meal per day to the basic three the inmates were getting, as a result of a visit by the Minister of Community Development and myself. We found that the last meal was served at four o'clock, and the inmates were expected to survive on that until next morning. We therefore asked Finance Committee for an additional amount of money to provide a beverage and sweet bread.

In that institution, we met more or less the same problems. One is the monotony of diet. Mass cooking is generally not as appetizing or as well prepared as individual cooking. The problems at The Palms are being tackled in two ways. One is, we are giving additional training at the Carnegie School of Home Economics,

to the cooks so that they can get more ideas and techniques; and the other is, an improvement of the kitchen. A new kitchen is being built at The Palms. It is a fact that there was a horrible, disgraceful kitchen there all these years, and we are now getting down to providing a modern kitchen which must bring some improvement to the dietary standards.

**Mr. Jackson:** As I said, I was not sure whether the complaint was well-founded or otherwise. On the question of the kitchen, I remember two years ago I asked the then Financial Secretary to accompany me to The Palms to see the conditions under which the food was prepared. He went with me and assured me that there was going to be provision for a new kitchen, and that has been done. I am glad to hear that reference is made to it this afternoon so that, perhaps, we can give the poor unfortunate people in that institution some bit of information relating to the conditions under which they live. Although we know of the food monotony, it is imperative that we examine the circumstances so as to make sure that all is well at the institution.

**Mr. Burnham:** I am happy to hear that some provision has been made for improving the kitchen service as well as the environment at The Palms, but there are other matters which I shall be grateful if the Government will look into. For instance, such routine matters as the issue of soap which, I understand, is most disgraceful, the lowest quality and quantity meals, and certain other matters which, perhaps, it is a little disgusting to mention in this Council. There does seem to me that there is quite a lot of room and scope for complaint; and I rather suspect that it all arose over the fact that the attitude to the people at The Palms is one of having sympathy rather than one of recognizing that the community owes a duty to make these people comfortable at that particular time of their lives.

Another question which struck me, and I wonder whether Government has a policy or decision on it: The Palms houses, indiscriminately, chronic and incurable cases with people who are merely infirm, which causes a lot of dissatisfaction; for some of those chronic cases, because of the nature of the complaint, put great inconvenience on the other persons who are not inflicted in the same way. I wonder whether Government sees the point and whether Government recognizes the necessity to house in different buildings, if not in different institutions, chronic and incurable cases of different types. It does appear to me, however, that for an institution of that size, the staff is not sufficient. I should imagine that the staff for an institution like that would have to be *pro rata* as great as, if not greater than the Public Hospital's because you have a greater number of persons whom you will not find in the hospital, and I shall like to hear Government's comments on my observations.

**Mrs. Jagan:** The Medical Department has, from time to time, examined this question of what to do with the ill and aged persons at The Palms. There have been suggestions time and again to have them transferred to the Public Hospital but, as you know, the Public Hospital is already heavily burdened with what we call active cases — cases requiring immediate treatment. Most of the cases at The Palms do not really require very detailed medical treatment. It is more a question of providing normal bed space, food, some medication and rather elementary nursing care. But if we were to have a medical unit just for these cases, it would be additional expenditure at the moment which it is felt cannot be borne and, therefore, the matter has rested where it is.

Medical people do not feel very strongly that the cases at The Palms, in any way, would interfere with the well-being of the well inmates there. In fact, there is a slight therapeutic value to the

[MRS. JAGAN]

matter the fact that those who are not so ill can give assistance to those who are bed-ridden. In some cases it gives them a feeling of satisfaction that they are able to do something to help others. I can assure the hon. Member that no infectious cases would be allowed to cause any trouble to the persons residing at The Palms; and what he is advising may be a long-term policy.

**Mr. Burnham:** It is my conviction that taking care of the infirm and old can never be too expensive. I was interested to hear the hon. Minister say that the medical people are not particularly worried about the housing of the chronically ill with the merely infirmed. The point I was making did not arise from any feeling with regard to the infectious or contagious cases, but from the simple inconvenience which arises with regard to the absolutely helpless or chronically ill cases from whom refuse goes down to those on the floor below. They may not pick up any dreadful diseases but certainly, though they are inmates at The Palms, they are entitled to protection not only by the law or shelter from the showers; and that is what I have been thinking about.

**Mr. Jai Varne Singh:** I appreciate the point made by the Member for Georgetown Central today, but I wonder how long this situation has been existing at The Palms? If we cannot do something this year, something should be done next year. This institution has been in existence for a long time. When I visited it in 1953, it was in a most damnable state. I have not been there recently but if the hon. Member for Georgetown Central has, I think he should have made the suggestion to the Minister before now. I hope he has, and that the Minister has taken proper note.

The inmates need a large expanse of land where they can move around with ease. This, I hope, would be a project of

the Government which is interested in the indigent and destitute who cannot find persons outside the institution to care for them. This is a matter of great concern, but it has been so for ages. No one seems to bother about it. It is near Election, of course. The indigent at The Palms has a vote as any other person; that is why there is this "shout". I hope it will be done quietly, and that there will be the provision of a large expanse of land as is being contemplated for the Prisons.

**Mr. Burnham:** I can assure the hon. Member for Georgetown South that my observations have nothing to do with votes; but The Palms happens to be in the constituency which I represent. I have made this observation to bring it to the notice of the Minister responsible and it is my duty, as the representative of Georgetown Central, to see that my constituents are as comfortable as circumstances permit. Further, as one interested in the welfare of the people of British Guiana, to see that the State takes care of the poor unfortunate people who find themselves in that institution. I can assure the hon. Member that I do not need this platform to get votes. I have been making reference to this from time to time. I have always got my votes from them, anyhow.

**Mr. Jackson:** I beg to withdraw my Motion.

Question put and agreed to.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

#### OTHER CHARGES — CLOTHING AND BEDDING

**Mr. Jackson:** I beg to move the reduction by \$1 of Sub-Head 6 — Clothing and Bedding—\$10,000. I do so to get some information from the Government. About two years ago, I also inquired of the then Financial Secretary about the matter of laundering at The Palms. At that time, the conditions were rather old-fashioned, and there was no guaranter

that what was being done was being properly done. I was given the assurance then that a new building would have been erected and that some modern conveniences would be installed for the purpose of laundering the clothes of the inmates of the institution. I do not know whether the building has been erected; I do not know whether there has been any other arrangements made whereby the laundering of the clothes of the inhabitants of that institution has been improved.

**Mrs. Jagan:** There has been a change, and the plan has been altered. It was found, after most careful consideration, that the Public Hospital laundry had a greater capacity and could handle the clothes from The Palms. We are now experimenting, and we think we can use the Public Hospital for laundering the clothes from The Palms and save money. That is what we are doing at the moment. The Public Hospital laundry is one of the most up-to-date laundries in this area.

**Mr. Jackson :** I usually see an open lorry with large bundles of clothing going from one part of the City towards the Georgetown Hospital. I am wondering whether this is the new arrangement whereby items of soiled clothing are transported to the P.H.G. for laundering. I see them going back to The Palms the same way. There are no signs to show that the clothing has been pressed. I do not know whether the clothes are passed through an ironing machine, or whether the inmates press their clothes themselves.

**Mrs. Jagan:** I do not know whether the ironing is done at the Public Hospital, Georgetown, or at The Palms, but I can check on the matter.

**Mr. Jackson :** I beg to withdraw my Motion.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

#### GRANT TO DHARAM SALA

**Mr. Jai Narine Singh:** I beg to move the reduction by \$1 of Sub-Head 1 (17) — Grant to Dharm Sala — \$10,000, in order to make a few remarks on this institution which is situated in Albouystown. I should like to know whether the hon. Minister would be able to tell us the number of inmates as well as the size of the staff at this institution?

**Mrs. Jagan:** I know that the hon. Member is familiar with the Dharm Sala, having spent a little time there. Unfortunately, I do not have the answers to the questions he asks. Social Assistance is not my portfolio. The hon. Minister of Community Development and Education is unavoidably detained, but I am not sure whether he would have in his mind the number of inmates residing at The Palms, or the size of the staff working there. Perhaps, the hon. Member will be satisfied with a written answer to these questions?

**Mr. Jai Narine Singh:** I raised these questions because when I was a Minister that Department fell under my portfolio, and I can remember that the then Commissioner of Local Government specifically told me when certain assistance had to be given to the Dharm Sala that it was regarded as purely a Government institution as the overflow from The Palms went there. If that is the case, then I would expect the Government to give it a bigger subvention than it is now receiving. I now beg to withdraw my Motion.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

#### GRANT TO AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

**Mr. Jackson :** I beg to move the reduction by \$1 of Sub-Head 1, 18 — Grant to African Development Association — \$100. I have observed that the amount

[MR. JACKSON]

of money granted to this Association over the past number of years is not enough. It has been given \$100 in 1959, 1960 and 1961. I am wondering how it is possible for the people to run this Institution on this sum, and whether it is possible for Government to increase the amount. I do not know whether the Association made an application for an increase. Anyway, whether there has been an application or otherwise, I feel that the sum of \$100 is too small. I shall be grateful if the Minister, who has just entered the Chamber, will examine the possibility of increasing the grant.

**The Minister of Community Development and Education (Mr. Rai):** I am sorry I was not present to hear what the hon. Member had to say. I think he raised the same question last year, and I told him that I would be willing to examine any application from the Association for an increase. No application, so far as I am aware, has been made for an increase in the grant.

**Mr. Jackson:** I feel that while an application for an increase has not been made to the Government, the Minister could have got in touch with the Association in order to find out the true position of things. I would ask him to take this course of action, as I cannot see how it is possible to run the Association on \$100 a year. It may be said that this is not his duty, but he need not stick to his duty all the time.

**Mr. Rai:** I have no objection to inquiring how the Association is carried on, but in the case where voluntary work is being done by people, some of them are very jealous and they do not want Government to be officious in their affairs. It is not a good policy to foist on people moneys from the Government when they wish to do voluntary work. There are many organizations like this, and I do not think it is a good policy to foist on organizations financial assistance for which they have not asked.

**Mr. Burnham:** It is interesting to hear the Minister of Community Development and Education making the point that Government does not desire to be officious. Even if the people are prepared to do voluntary work, I cannot see them refusing financial assistance. There can be no excuse by way of a sudden *penchant* for not being officious. I know a little more about this matter than the hon. Member for Georgetown North.

At one time the sanitary convenience at the Association was most parlous, and it was only after the intervention of the Mayor of Georgetown in 1960 that something was done about it. It is true that the Minister would have looked into the matter if an application had been made for assistance. But we do not expect a Minister of the calibre and ability of the Minister of Community Development and Education to sit by and await applications to be made. We should expect him to be more vigilant in the people's business.

**Mr. Jackson:** The Minister has given a nod indicating that he will go into the matter, and I beg to withdraw my Motion.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

#### OLD AGE PENSIONS

**Mr. Burnham:** I beg to move the reduction by \$1 of Sub-Head 1, 20 — Old Age Pensions — \$985,000, in order to make an inquiry. I observed in the hon. the Financial Secretary's Budget Statement that it is proposed to raise the old age pension paid to persons resident in Georgetown as well as other parts of the country. I would like to inquire why no provision has been made for that here?

**The Financial Secretary:** The amount is stated in the Report of Finance Committee.

**Mr. Burnham:** I apologize; I am grateful for the reply, and I beg to withdraw my Motion.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

**The Chairman:** The Question is, that Head 46 — Social Assistance — be carried out at \$2,825,741.

Agreed to.

Head passed.

SUPREME COURT AND DEEDS  
REGISTRY

DEPUTY REGISTRAR OF THE SUPREME  
COURT

**Mr. Burnham:** I beg to move the reduction by \$1 of Sub-Head 1, (5) — 1 Deputy Registrar of the Supreme Court — \$6,960. I have to take this Head, Sir, because the Registrar's salary is on the Civil List. The holder of the post of Registrar, I understand, is now the Commissioner of Titles, and I cannot see in the circumstances why no appointment has been made to the post of Registrar. There is absolutely no excuse for this delay in making an appointment. There is no question of an officer not being available; it is just a part of Government's policy of keeping officers in the Magistracy and the Crown Solicitor's Department acting as long as possible before appointing them to fill vacancies. If the man who is acting is not good enough, then get rid of him and appoint someone else. There can be no integration here as between Medical and Education Departments.

**The Attorney-General (Mr. Austin):** The answer to the question is that the Commissioner of Title, as his designation implies, is concerned with the new system of land registration which was introduced a year ago. He was appointed to act because, being an entirely new system of conveyancing, we wished to start on a

pilot basis, to see what difficulties may arise. It was indeed fortunate that we did so, because we found that whilst we had a Commissioner of Title who heard claims for declarations of title, his work was held back because there were not sufficient surveyors available to serve him, and in point of fact for one period he was not able to do any land registration work at all. But he was not idle; there were other things for him to do, and he made full use of his time in other directions. We have had to go slowly because, whilst one surveyor was allocated to him, he now thinks he can work with eight. Recently he has been given temporary additional powers, and recently, too, some new small land registration areas were declared on which he hopes to start work when more surveyors are available.

Because the work of the Commissioner of Title is not clearly established as one which will engage the attention of one officer permanently, we have not felt able to make it a permanency, and that is why the Commissioner of Title has been on an acting basis, and the acting Registrar of the Supreme Court who has taken his place has also been on an acting basis. I called some time ago for a report from the Commissioner of Title as to how he sees the work of land registration planning out over the next 6 to 12 months, and if we feel that surveyors will be available to serve him so that there will be no hiatus in his work, then we can consider whether a permanent appointment should be created. That may involve other consequential appointments. The Government has not been sleeping, but has been looking before it leapt, which is a wise policy in the circumstances.

**Mr. Burnham:** If the members of the Government had been looking before they leapt they would not have had the post on the Estimates on the Fixed Establishment, but be that as it may, I do not want to be harsh on the Attorney-General, but I must say that his explanation does not convince me. It

[MR. BURNHAM]

may be due to some idiosyncrasy of mine, but certainly from the Ordinance there will have to be a Commissioner of Title, and it is clear also that the duties of the Commissioner will continue for as long as many of us remain in the land of the living, if not longer. Therefore, I wonder whether the Attorney-General will not now concede that a permanent appointment of a Commissioner of Title should be made, as he agrees that the post will remain for all time. The failure to appoint him is like ripples in a stream; the ripples go on and on through the senior grades in the Registry, and you have a number of people victims of uncertainty.

**The Attorney-General:** I have nothing to add to what I have said, which was that a report is awaited, upon which a decision will be taken as to whether a permanent appointment is justified or not.

**Mr. Burnham:** The Land Registry Ordinance provides for a Commissioner of Title, but Government is still wondering whether a permanent Commissioner is needed to inquire into titles to land for which there are no existing titles. The Attorney-General ought to know, because his predecessor in office sat on a Committee by which recommendations were made. The Attorney-General says that they do not want to leap without looking; well, if they are now wondering whether there should be a permanent appointment, I submit that they have leapt without looking, and they are attempting to close the stable door when the horse is out. You put it on the Estimates as part of the Establishment and yet you are awaiting a report to make a decision whether or not there should be a permanent post. The Attorney-General says he has nothing to add. I cannot force him to say more, and I therefore ask leave to withdraw my Motion.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

CLERICAL ESTABLISHMENT INCREASED

**Mr. Burnham:** I beg to move a reduction by \$1 of item (15) — Clerical Establishment, \$89,359. I notice that the Clerical Establishment has been increased by three, but the note at the bottom of the page states:

"(15) Three additional posts — one Class I Clerk to assist the Principal Officer, one Class II Clerk for the additional Judge appointed in 1960, and one Clerical Assistant for the Sub-Registry at New Amsterdam."

Really, then, so far as the Registry in Georgetown is concerned there has been an increase of only one clerk. The Sub-Registry in New Amsterdam has been crying out for proper staff for years, but the new Class II clerk is for the additional Judge, therefore he does not relieve any congestion of work that might have existed in the Registry, which I say has always existed. Then there is a Class I clerk who is really the only new person in the Registry. Time and time again when exhibits or books are sent downstairs to the Registry it is found that they cannot be found when they are wanted. When certified copies of documents are applied for it is found that they cannot be found. You will be surprised to know how many things cannot be found in the Deeds Registry today, so much so that it requires Job-like patience on the part of counsel and the Judge to complete a case. It is not due so much to incompetence but merely to poor arrangements and understaffing. There are so many things that have to be done, the office is small and staff is wholly inadequate.

I do not think that a policy of parsimony should be adopted in any Department which has to do with the administration of justice, and I feel that active steps should be taken to extend the Registry both from the point of view of cubic feet and staff. This provision in the Estimates does not even scratch the surface.

**The Attorney-General:** This is a traditional plea *ad misericordia* on the part of the hon. Member but, as usual, there is an element of truth in what he says. In fact there was more than an element of truth when he touched on the lack of accommodation, which is one of the chief causes of difficulty to locate records quickly. The hon. Member is not the first to point out these difficulties. Government is well aware of them and of many of the difficulties that face this country, and is doing its best in the overall picture to remedy them. It is pointed out that in one Department there is shortage of staff and the accommodation is inadequate, but in another Department it is exactly the same.

Government is charged with parsimony — it must be more liberal; it must increase its staffs and have better qualified staffs. But all these things cost money and Government has not a bottomless purse. It is a matter of doing the best to ensure that no problem of the Government is neglected entirely, and doing as much as possible to meet the overall requirements in the various Departments.

As the hon. Member knows, the members of the staff at the Registry are, on the whole, young, but no one can accuse them of not putting their backs into the work. There is a lot of overtime work done in the department, and they do their best to serve the community and legal profession with whom they are in close contact. Government has been aware for several years that the arrangement of the Deeds Registry and the Supreme Court Registry as one department is unsatisfactory, and consideration has been given, not once or twice but several times as to whether a move can now be made to separate the two and to provide them with better accommodation.

The Lands and Mines Department is next door to the Deeds Registry. There is no reason, as far as I am aware, why the Lands and Mines Department should be in that particular place. It would be

convenient if the Supreme Court Registry could take up the whole of the area where the Land and Mines Department is and the Deeds Registry could be next door. That is, alternative accommodation would have to be made for the Lands and Mines Department. Plans have already been approved, but it is a question of finding the money. It is well that my hon. Friend draws attention to these things. It goes down on the record and he gets a good Press; but it is nothing new. The point will be taken; and I am afraid I am not able to add anything more.

**Mr. Burnham:** Hitting the headlines is not the purpose of my moving this particular Motion. I do hope the Press would be kind enough not to publish my caustic remarks which I now make because, in fairness to the hon. the Attorney-General, he seldom hits the headlines; he is not a politician.

However, it is alarming to find a senior member of the Government getting up and saying Government has been aware of this problem for many years. [Interruption.] I have been taking him down in longhand. He speaks slowly. Government has been aware of the problem for many years and has done nothing — exactly nothing. He talks about the staff working overtime. I have already said that I am not accusing the staff of incompetence. I am merely accusing the Administration of not having the department fully staffed. It is not the fault of the poor clerks. As a matter of fact, their lives in many cases are worse than those of politicians. I sympathize with them; and Government cannot introduce the concept of not being able to afford where a department is concerned with the administration of justice because, as a result, you are going to have the whole community dissatisfied.

There is talk about Judges not getting their work done and about arrears in the Supreme Court: but the Judges cannot get their work done properly if there is no proper organization of

[MR. BURNHAM]

the office through which their work has to pass. I know, for instance, the other day there was a particular Judge who had decided to give a decision but he could not get a stenotypist and he told the parties concerned that he could not get a stenotypist to take his decision. It took over a week after he had reached his decision to give it; and I am surprised to hear that I have been unjustifiably accusing the Government of parsimony. I have been making the point in relation to certain departments. It is a hard thing for people to lose their vital documents; it is a hard thing to find offices of records losing their records. I am talking about records. I have had a case the other day and because of the loss of the record, the case lasted two more days because they had to prove the existence of this document. The Judge's time was wasted and the litigants' time was wasted. The only people who did not suffer were the lawyers because the longer the case last the bigger the brief.

I am not making the remark about the Lands and Mines Department. It seems to me that there is some justification for keeping the Lands and Mines Department near to the Registry. Plans that are deposited at the Registry are plans that have been lodged for a time in the Lands and Mines Department; and there are occasions when it becomes necessary to compare the plans from one place with those from the other, and then it is necessary to get a quick record from the Lands and Mines Department. If anything is to be done, it seems to me that the Crown Solicitor's Office can be removed from where it is at the moment and the extra space utilized by the Registry after the Lands and Mines Department is shifted. Perhaps, the Crown Solicitor's Office can go into the Attorney-General's Office because the Attorney-General is instructed by the Crown Solicitor. But that is routine. Only because I see that the Government is so devoid of ideas, I give them this suggestion *ex gratia*.

**The Attorney-General:** That sounds all very well but the Crown Solicitor has other duties to perform. The question of accommodation in the Law Courts building is one within the knowledge of the Government. There are plans to improve the position. There is a plan, resulting from a working party, to erect a fine new building on a lot close by the Law Courts to house Magistrates' Courts --- to clear the dreadful Wharton Building of the courts which are much too crowded. But it all comes down to the question of the money that hon. Members in this Council are prepared to vote; and my hon. Friend continues to labour the shortcomings of the Government saying it is parsimonious, that it should do this and that. It is easy to criticize and make these suggestions, but to put them into effect is as much within the grasp of my hon. Friend on the other side as it is here on this side.

**Mr. Burnham:** shall have it changed next year. I beg to withdraw my Motion.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

#### OTHER CHARGES — TRAVELLING AND SUBSISTENCE EXPENSES OF COURTS

**Mr. Burnham:** I beg to move the reduction by \$1 of Sub-Head 3 --- Travelling and Subsistence Expenses of Courts—\$5,000. I do so to make two separate points. Judges' salaries are not on the Civil List but under the Supreme Court Ordinance, but I think it is a useful opportunity to remark on the Judges' salaries. It is a fact that Judges' salaries are what are described as super scale salaries, but in the final analysis it is a matter for the Government. The status of Judges, as judged by their salaries, has gone down and down progressively over the years. To my mind, it is indicative of the lack of importance which successful Governments have attached to the administration of justice. I am not blaming this Government. It is something that has gone

on and on. If there is any blame to be laid on this Government it is the perpetuation of the unsatisfactory state. The Chief Secretary is better paid than a Judge, the Attorney-General is better paid than a Judge. Then before you appointed a Guianese, the Commissioner of Police was better paid than a Judge. Every Tom, Dick or Harry is better paid than a Judge, yet he is expected to be impartial and like Caesar's wife. You cannot attract truly successful and capable practitioners with the salaries you pay, not only from the point of view of their absolute salaries, but their relative status in the Service. If the Government finds it impractical to raise the salaries of Judges, at least make their salaries income tax free as the Governor's salary is. In the United Kingdom, Judges' salaries are tax-free; but the recent increase given them is not tax-free. I am asking that Government give this suggestion some consideration.

Once again, I am putting on what the Attorney-General thinks is my tape-recorder. Nowadays, a policeman is more important than a Judge, if you look at the Travelling and Subsistence Allowances for the Police; and I think something must really be done or else you will not be able to attract anyone of the calibre you want.

The Director of Medical Services and the Commissioner of Land Development get more than a Judge. What is the reason for this? Is it that some people think that lawyers are easily found? A good lawyer is very hard to find; a good lawyer is one of the most highly paid professional men in the world, and you cannot obtain a good lawyer at this salary. Is it because the Judiciary has, for a long time, been staffed by Guianese and West Indians? I notice that this also happened in Jamaica until the Government took up the matter. Whenever they begin to staff Government Departments with local people the salary status begins to fall. I hope this Government will not encourage this tendency.

There is a great deal of congestion in the Supreme Courts. We have been told for some time that Government proposed to introduce a system of Intermediate Courts. I do not know how far that proposal has reached; whether it has reached the Executive Council, and how long it will take to reach the Treasury. Since I assume it will reach the Legislature some time before the dissolution, may I ask the Government to make provision immediately for the housing of these Intermediate Courts. Unlike some of my colleagues, I do not look forward to a Judgeship. I hope to live a full life away from the bench.

**The Chairman:** Is that relevant?

**Mr. Burnham:** I was saying that when the Government decide to implement this proposal for Intermediate Courts, I hope that they will ensure that they have proper buildings and a proper Registrar from the outset. I understand that Government propose, when they introduce the system of Intermediate Courts, to use the Magistrates' Courts that happen to be vacant on a particular day. There is nothing to destroy the dignity of a Court like that; you immediately reduce it to the status of a Magistrate's Court, with cows and donkeys around it.

**The Attorney-General:** The hon. Member for Georgetown Central started his comments with respect to the salary status of Judges, and I have put down in longhand what he said. He said that "Every Tom, Dick and Harry is paid better than the Judges". I wonder what language he speaks, because in point of fact there are precisely six officers in the Government other than the Governor himself who are paid better than the Judges, and we have about ten thousand Government employees. If credence is going to be given to his remarks, surely they must have some meaning that the ordinary person can understand!

## [THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL]

It is wrong to say that "Every Tom, Dick and Harry is paid better than the Judges". Judges are amongst the most senior members of the Government Service — they are civil servants generally speaking. As the hon. Member knows he is advocating a general revision of salaries, but in every territory the salaries of Judges as well as other officers are correlated and you cannot get out of step one with the other. The question of a revision of salaries has been under consideration for a considerable time, and the salaries of Judges fall into place in this context.

I deplore with my hon. Friend any reduction in the status of Judges. It is most important that the laws of this country are administered by men of the highest integrity and of matched ability. I believe that the country is fortunate in having today a bench of Judges who ensure that a high standard of justice is administered. I wish to pay tribute to them. They work very hard and, in the circumstances in which they have to work in Courts which are not altogether ideal, they earn a debt of gratitude from the members of the public.

Despite the hard work they do, the arrears in the Supreme Court are heavy. Again the Government have been considering this matter. They have been thinking of these things for several years, but the answer lies not in just increasing the number of Judges, because it is necessary to provide them with staff and special accommodation. Possibly the root of the difficulty is the large gap between the jurisdiction of the Magistrate's Court and the Supreme Court. Until the jurisdiction, which has not been altered to any extent, is made adequate to meet the requirements of the time there will be difficulties. I believe that, in this new era with British Guiana about to have a new Constitution and entering into an era of industrial development, there will be more business, more litigation, etc., and something should be done to bridge the gap.

It is quite true, as my hon. and learned Friend has said, that the Law Reform Committee is at present considering whether or not the difficulties of arrears in the Supreme Court can be overcome by the introduction of a court of summary jurisdiction to be presided over by experienced judicial officers which would be midway between the two jurisdictions. The Law Reform Committee has not yet concluded its examination of the problem, but I believe it will do so before long and the Government will give full consideration to its recommendations. If these recommendations are that a middle court should be established, I am happy to know in advance that the hon. Member for Georgetown Central will give his support to such a measure.

**Mr. Jackson :** It is difficult to understand the excuse offered by the hon. the Attorney-General regarding the remuneration of the Judges. The hon. Member for Georgetown Central, during the course of his observations, suggested that the salaries of Judges be exempted from the payment of income tax as is done in other parts of the Commonwealth. I have not heard any comment on that point. The view expressed by the hon. the Attorney-General is: if you improve the salaries of Judges, you will have to include everybody.

**The Chairman :** It is questionable whether the Judges in the particular places referred to are exempted from the payment of income tax. That is one of the reasons why in that particular case on behalf of the Judges exception was taken to any exemption from payment of income tax by them, for they preferred a figure which would take care of that. I doubt very much whether the hon. Member's statement is correct.

**Mr. Jackson :** If we admit that the Judges are not paid adequate salaries, why should we not do something to improve their salaries without effecting a general salaries revision? When the doctors and specialists were clamouring for improved

salaries as well as every other category of worker, the Government did not wait for a full-scale salary revision before it gave them better conditions of employment. They are now receiving specialist fees from the public, and they are satisfied. Not so long ago it was agreed to pay fees to Public Officers in order to encourage them to obtain qualifications — [Mr. Rai: "Fees!"] — whether it is fees, allowances, or something else, you are paying them money for additional qualifications. [Mr. Ram Karran: It is an allowance.] The Minister of Communications and Works reminds me that it is an allowance. Why can't you give special consideration to the Judges?

**Mr. Ram Karran:** I am surprised to hear the hon. Member suggesting that this form of settlement should be followed. In the first place, I am not concerned with the quarrel among the hon. Member for Georgetown Central, the hon. Member for Georgetown North and the Attorney-General, because they seem to be discussing a trade union matter. The allowance which is paid to policemen is to encourage people with a better type of qualification to join the Police Force. I do not know whether the hon. Member is suggesting that educational allowances should be paid to Judges who have the required qualifications.

**Mr. Jackson:** The point made by the Minister is quite a good one, and I am grateful to him for reminding the Council that the allowances are paid so as to have better qualified policemen. I have no quarrel there, but the Attorney-General has just said that we have a Bench of Judges of which he is very proud. He said that the Judges are about the best we can find, so that qualification has almost been taken into consideration. Therefore, why not make it a study to bring other benefits to those people who are giving such fine service to the country?

**Mr. Burnham:** I would wish that the Minister of Communications and Works had maintained his unconcern with

respect to this matter which he describes as a trade union matter between the Attorney-General and myself, because he has opened his mouth and put his feet into it. The point I was making was that it was necessary to raise the stipends of Judges so as to ensure attraction of the best lawyers. In the same way as you provide allowances for policemen so as to attract a better qualified type, I say you have to do the same if you are to recruit the best members of the profession—not that the average member of the profession expects to get the same stipend.

The Attorney-General who spoke more to the point because he knows more about it, made the point that to revise the Judges' salaries is to revise everybody's salaries. I do not agree with that. Let me remind the Attorney-General that in the period 1841-47 a Puisne Judge got more salary than the Attorney-General and the same as the Colonial Secretary, now designated Chief Secretary, and more than anyone else except the Governor and the Chief Justice. But there has been a constant deterioration until now we find the Financial Secretary, the Attorney-General and the Chief Secretary receiving more salary than a Judge of the Supreme Court. I still say "every Tom, Dick and Harry", with all due respect to the three incumbents of the posts. I am not calling them Tom, Dick and Harry, but it is their positions *vis-à-vis* the post of a Judge, and it is an evil thing which has been going on since the West Indianisation and Guianization of the Bench. It is an insult. When Government revised the Chief Secretary's salary in 1943 and put it above that of a Judge, why did it not think of that then? You cannot say it is the previous Government, because the three particular officers present are part of the old and the new; they are the liaison between the old and the new and they cannot escape castigation for what the new is doing and censure for what the old has done. Except perhaps technical men, because this is an age when we want to encourage technical men, can any of-

[MR. BURNHAM]

ficers be more important than the Judges. Heads of Departments who merely have to add figures, and who sometimes cannot explain the heads which are relevant? By no stretch of the imagination should this thing be allowed to continue, and I warn Government that unless it is prepared to do away with the Judiciary it is going to have a poor Bench. The Attorney-General is not proud of the Bench.

**The Attorney-General:** That is not correct. It is quite untrue to say that I am not proud of the Bench.

**Mr. Burnham:** The Attorney-General did not say he was proud of the Bench.

**The Attorney-General:** That gives a wrong impression. I never even used the word "proud", because it was completely inappropriate in the context. What I did say was that the people of this country owed a debt to the Bench who were administering good justice in this country, and by implication I suggested that people may be proud of the Bench.

**Mr. Burnham:** All I say is that I apologize for quoting the Attorney-General as saying that he is proud of the Bench; he did not say he was proud of the Bench. The Attorney-General is saying that the Judges are administering good justice. If they are administering good justice they should be rewarded for administering good justice. I wonder whether the Attorney-General, who is the spokesman for the Government on this matter, can tell us what is the criterion whereby the post of Chief Secretary, the post of Financial Secretary, the post of Director of Land Development and the post of Attorney-General have been made superior to the post of the Senior Puisne Judge? What is the criterion?

**The Chairman:** As a matter of fact we are at the head "Travelling and Subsistence." When Members ask to be granted indulgence they frequently go off at a tangent.

**The Attorney-General:** What the hon. Member has said may lead Members to a completely erroneous view. He referred to those whose salaries were above those of Judges — the Chief Secretary, the Financial Secretary, the Attorney-General and the Director of Land Development. Why is it more important from the point of view of salary? The point about the salary of the Director of Land Development is that it is non-pensionable; it is a contract salary, and in pension terms it is probably considerably less than a Judge's salary. So it is quite wrong to say that that post, by virtue of salary, is higher in status than the post of a Judge.

#### LAW REPORTS

**Mr. Burnham:** If you will permit me, Sir, I ask leave to withdraw my Motion. I, however, move a reduction by \$1 of item 9 — Editing Law Reports, \$303 — in order to find out what is the position now, because we have not had any Law Reports later than 1957, which is most inconvenient and embarrassing to persons who need them.

**The Attorney-General:** It is quite true that the 1957 Law Reports are the latest to be issued, and I think the editing of the Law Reports is more a labour of love than anything else. I understand it is done by the Chief Justice who works very hard. I have no immediate information to give to the Council, but I shall obtain it and give it to the hon. Member.

**Mr. Burnham:** I am grateful for the answer, but I would like to make a few observations. It is true that the present Chief Justice is the person responsible and that it is a labour of love. It is also true, as far as I can see, that it is not humanly possible for him to turn them out faster, in view of the amount of work he does, which includes night sittings. It seems to me, therefore, that provision should be made by Government to pay a salary, or at least a reasonable honorar-

ium to some person or group of persons who can be invited and/or chosen by the Attorney-General or the Chief Justice.

**The Chairman :** When was the remuneration stopped?

**Mr. Burnham :** I am not aware. I think this \$303 is a mere honorarium. Perhaps the Attorney-General can tell us. I think a proper sum should be voted and competent persons who have the time should be paid to do the work. We do not want a labour of love by an over-worked official or Judge; it keeps things back. It is surprising how difficult it is to refer to a decision. Very often one has to rely upon the recollection of a practitioner. I think the Law Reports should come out within a few weeks of the end of the year to which they refer.

**The Attorney-General :** The cause of this problem is that within the last two years a new edition of the Law Reports has been published for the West Indies by Butterworths and is available in an excellent and commendable form. It includes a number of reports of cases from British Guiana as well as those from the other territories in the West Indies, but the fact that we have these new Reports will now exclude the issue of British Guiana Law Reports of cases which do not actually get into the West Indies series. The position is not as bad as it might have been had we not had the West Indian Reports, because the most important British Guiana decisions are reported in the West Indies Reports which are kept up to date.

**Mr. Burnham :** I understand what the Attorney-General has said, but he has inadvertently not made any reference to the question of having a Law Reporter or a Law Reporting Committee properly paid to turn out these reports regularly and promptly. Furthermore, perhaps he can tell us why the system of paying or Law Reporting came to an end.

**The Attorney-General :** Sir, I am afraid I cannot answer the last question. I cannot supply an answer at such short notice, but—

**The Chairman :** There used to be an honorarium given to a Reporter every year. It never used to be much. It used to be about 50 guineas.

**The Attorney-General :** An honorarium, I understand, is still given. What my hon. Friend, the Member for Georgetown Central, has said is a good point, that looking ahead one ought, possibly, to think of a more crystallized procedure for Law Reporting. I undertake to raise the matter, as indeed he could have done, with the Law Reform Committee which is the Committee designed to consider this sort of problem.

**Mr. Burnham :** I beg to withdraw my Motion.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

**The Chairman :** The Question is, that Head 47—Supreme Court and Deeds Registry—be carried out at \$345,709.

Agreed to.

Head passed.

#### TRANSPORT AND HARBOURS

**Mr. Jackson :** Mr. Chairman, I knew we would not have the opportunity to touch this Head as we do other Heads, but I crave your indulgence for this opportunity to move the reduction by \$1 of the total to get some information from the Government with respect to—

**The Chairman :** No one has touched any Head.

**Mr. Jackson :** We were under the impression when we come to this Department we would not get the scope to inquire as we do of other departments. That is why I have taken this course of action. We have been reading in our newspapers a great deal about the workers threaten-

[Mr. JACKSON]

ing to take action against Government. A settlement has not been arrived at with respect to the Factories Ordinance, and one is left with the impression that somewhere along the line, something is wrong. The workers are saying that they are entitled to money under the Factories Ordinance and the Government is, perhaps, still uncertain.

**The Chairman :** I just want to say that under this Head in the Estimates, I am not going to allow any long debate on trade union matters or whatever it is. If it is a general reference, yes; otherwise, I am not going to allow it, because when one Member starts off with one thing, another Member starts off with something else. If you want to make a general remark and it ends there, it is all right.

**Mr. Jackson :** I know for a fact that there is some amount of uncertainty between Government and the workers concerned on a particular issue, and I am trying to find out whether that issue has been resolved; if not, how soon will it be resolved.

**Mr. Campbell:** Mr. Chairman, I am wondering whether you will permit me to ask a general question as it applies to the North West steamer service. Some-time—

**The Chairman :** There is an Appendix here—Appendix A — in which there are, I think, Heads. If each person is going to talk all the time like that, we will never conclude this business under a month. Let us keep to the particular Head.

**The Chief Secretary:** I am aware that there is a claim—I think the hon. Member knows — by the clerks on the stellings. It is being examined by the Law Officers, and Government will endeavour to see that the matter is resolved as quickly as possible—I hope, by the end of the month.

**Mr. Jackson :** I, therefore, beg to withdraw my Motion.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

**The Chairman :** What are you inquiring about, Member for North Western District?

**Mr. Campbell:** Sometime ago there was a promise, I think, on the part of Government to provide a new steamer for the North West District as the *Tarpon* was getting old. At that time—I think it was in 1959—the promise was that in 18 months' time a new steamer would have been made available. I think the time has almost elapsed and we are still awaiting this steamer. The old *Tarpon*, very often, is overload and the passengers, who are put to great inconvenience and punishment, are continually asking when the new steamer is going to be made available. I want to know whether the new steamer is still in the blueprint stage or there would be no steamer at all. Is the *Tarpon* going to be used until the bottom drops off?

**The Minister of Communications and Works (Mr. Ram Karran):** If the hon. Member wishes to have a reply in relation to months or years, it will be difficult for me to give him that reply. We have, only recently, completed construction of two vessels for the most important section of the services—the Demerara and Berbice ferries—and it is contemplated to replace, rather, to build a third ship with specifications somewhat similar or as close as possible to the existing vessels to be used on one of the services nearer Georgetown. This vessel would be able to relieve either of these two vessels whenever it is docked. It is desirable that that should be done because it is the only way we could have the construction done in British Guiana.

If you are going to change your specifications in very great detail, obviously, the vessel will have to be built in the United Kingdom or in some other coun-

try outside. The changes that would be desirable on the existing specifications of one of these vessels would have to be very limited in order to allow that ship to be constructed in British Guiana. I am sure the "Opposition" would urge and would support the Government in such a scheme—that is, building the third ship in British Guiana. For the North West vessel, you will have to build something quite different, for the reason that it will have to sail on rough seas; and that can only come after the third vessel is completed.

It is necessary that we should build a third ship because we ought to steer clear of the mistakes made before where a vessel runs for a number of years and no proper docking programme is pursued. For that reason, I would like to advise my friend that none of the other ships would replace the *Tarpon*, now. It is the only suitable vessel for the North West District as it carries far more cabin accommodation than any other vessel. I am just as anxious as the hon. Member to have another vessel replace the *Tarpon*.

**Mr. Campbell:** Do I understand that you have a third vessel in view to be built? I did not quite follow the Minister of Communications and Works.

**Mr. Ram Karran:** I said that we wish to build a third vessel locally, with very little changes to the deck arrangement, to be used, possibly, for the Essequibo Islands because of the need and the traffic in that area; which vessel can also operate on the Demerara or Berbice ferry when either of the ferry vessels is in dock. The vessel to replace the *Tarpon* would be built after this third vessel. It takes about a year to complete the building of a vessel.

**The Chairman:** The Question is, that Head 48—Transport and Harbours—be carried out at \$1,900,000.

Agreed to.

Head passed.

## VOLUNTEER FORCE

**The Chairman:** The Question is, that Head 49—Volunteer Force—be carried out at \$110,404.

Agreed to.

Head passed.

## LOANS FROM PUBLIC FUNDS

### TEMPORARY LOANS TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES

**Mr. Jackson:** I beg to move the reduction by \$1 of Sub-Head 3—Temporary Loans to Local Authorities—\$15,000, so as to inquire whether it is possible for the Government to reduce the rate of interest they charge when local authorities are forced to make loans from the Government. I make this comment because under existing circumstances, these local authorities are finding it very difficult to meet the rates which are charged on the loans to them, as well as to repay these loans as they should be repaid. I have the impression that because of the high rate of interest the local authorities are made to pay, they are unwilling to borrow. I wondered whether some consideration could be given to the reduction of the rate of interest charged on these loans.

**Mr. Rai:** It is true that interest is charged on loans to Local Authorities, but the interest charged is not greater than that paid by Government who has to borrow the money to lend the Local Authorities.

**Mr. Jackson:** I admit that Government borrows money and lends it to the Local Authorities, but there is no reason why Government could not lend them the money at a lower rate of interest in view of the circumstances under which the Authorities operate. I am sure the Minister knows that several of these villages are

[MR. JACKSON]

unable to improve their condition because they cannot get money to borrow at a cheap rate of interest.

**Mr. Burnham:** May I inquire at what rate these loans are made to Village and Local Authorities?

**Mr. Rai:** At 6 per cent. per annum. It is the complaint of the Central Government itself that the rate at which it has to borrow money from overseas is too high. There are other places where we can get money at a cheaper rate of interest.

**Mr. Burnham:** Whatever the hon. Minister may have in mind about getting money from other countries at a cheaper rate of interest is not really relevant here. The amount provided in the Estimates is \$15,000; 6 per cent. of that would be \$900. This is not a considerable sum in terms of a Government Budget and the funds available to the Government, but in terms of what is available to the Local Authorities who have to repay loans it may be a considerable sum. If Government subsidized them by giving the loans at a cheaper rate of interest, it would be of great assistance to the Local Authorities.

I recall that \$123,000 has been spent on joy trips over the past few years. This does not seem to be a platform where the Minister can say certain things. This matter can be dealt with in the Development Estimates, and it appears to be the right slant at the moment.

**Mr. Rai:** I think my hon. and learned Friend has disregarded the figure of \$15,000 loaned to the Local Authorities.

**Mr. Burnham:** \$900 interest? What is that to quarrel about? Sir, \$900 to subsidize village administration is hardly as much as a fleabite. This Government cannot undertake the reorganization of Local Government if it is going to adopt this attitude. Government will

not admit that it is behaving like a set of moneylenders. When the 5 per cent. was put on rates and taxes and I objected to it, this Government said that the people could go to moneylenders. The Government is now trying to replace the moneylenders in this respect.

**Mr. Rai:** Government offers to Local Authorities loans which they would not have been able to borrow otherwise on the money market. Loans have been made to the Georgetown Town Council, and they have to pay a higher rate of interest.

**Mr. Burnham:** The villages are not in the same financial position as the Georgetown Town Council. The Georgetown Town Council can afford to pay a higher rate of interest, but the villages are poor.

**Mr. Jackson:** I beg to withdraw my Motion.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

**The Chairman:** The Question is, that Head 50—Loans from Public Funds—be carried out at \$290,000.

Agreed to.

Head passed.

## COMMODITY CONTROL

### MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES

**Mr. Burnham:** I beg to move the reduction by \$1 of Sub-Head 1—Miscellaneous Expenses—\$115,733, in order to ask the hon. Minister of Trade and Industry or the hon. the Financial Secretary, why has there been an increase in view of the fact that there has been a re-trenchment of staff in this Department?

**The Financial Secretary:** The head relates largely not to staff, but to the subsidy on coconut oil.

**Mr. Burnham:** I beg to withdraw my Motion.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

**The Chairman:** The Question is, that Head 51—Commodity Control—be carried out at \$115,733.

Agreed to.

Head passed.

#### MISCELLANEOUS — SUBVENTIONS OTHER THAN MUNICIPAL

##### GRANT TOWARDS RUNNING EXPENSES OF GEORGETOWN MARINERS CLUB

**Mr. Burnham:** Mr. Chairman, I beg to move the suspension of the relevant Standing Order so as to move the recom-mittal of Head 34, Sub-Head 1—36—Grant towards running expenses of Georgetown Mariners Club—\$3,100.

**The Chairman:** On what grounds? Because you were absent?

**Mr. Burnham:** Certain facts have come to my knowledge since this Head was passed.

**The Chairman:** I want to know why, because, if Members are absent when a matter is discussed, it would not be sufficient ground to allow a Motion for the suspension of the Standing Order to go back to it.

**Mr. Burnham:** I have pointed out that it is the result of certain information that has come to me subsequent to the passing of this Head, and not because I was absent.

**The Chairman:** Do you want to make a general observation? Are you moving a Motion to strike it out?

**Mr. Burnham:** I want to bring certain facts to the attention of the Govern-ment. In 1958 the vote provided for this Club was \$5,000, and through my instru-mentality it was reduced to \$3,100. On the basis of information which I have re-ceived coupled with the observation I have made, it seems to me that the Club is per-forming a useful service today and the money available at the moment is inade-quate for it to carry on properly. I was just seeking an opportunity to attract that to Government's attention, and to ask that the additional sum of \$1,900 be reinstated in the Estimates—the amount which was formerly allocated for this purpose. This matter is under the portfolio of the hon. the Financial Secretary.

**The Chairman:** I will give you per-mission to mention it.

**Mr. Burnham:** The vote was \$5,000 in 1958, but I was instrumental in reduc-ing it to \$3,100. I think the hon. Mem-ber for Georgetown North was also in-strumental in having the amount reduced to \$3,100. From certain facts which I have discovered as late as today, and which have also been brought to my attention, it seems that this sum of \$3,100 is inadequate to keep the premises, equip-ment and furniture in a proper state of repair, and I wonder whether Govern-ment would reinstate the \$1,900 which it started to deduct from 1959?

**The Financial Secretary:** I have had no representation on the subject. I do not know what are the facts. I know nothing of the reduction.

**Mr. Cojraj:** I want to support the hon. Member in his plea to the Govern-ment because I remember well when the question was raised in Finance Committee in the year mentioned, and it was felt at that time that money was being spent on the Mariners' Club but local seamen were not enjoying their full share of the

[MR. GAJRAJ]

use of the Club. I, too, made inquiry subsequent to that and found the allegation of discrimination was untrue, and indeed as a member of the Board of the Club I can also say that the reduction of the vote to \$3,100 has seriously affected the services which the Club has been offering to mariners generally, and has made it necessary for the Club to make charges for the use of the building in order to recover some of its expenses. I remember the year the reduction was made, when the amount voted for the British Guiana Legion was increased by the amount which was deducted from the vote for the Mariners' Club. So that it would be a very good thing if Government would consider the matter.

**The Chairman :** I allowed the hon. Member to make his observations. If the Government is inclined to do anything at the moment there will be a formal Motion for the recommittal of the Head.

**The Financial Secretary :** I can assure the hon. Member that I will consider any representations from the Club on the subject.

**Mr. Gajraj :** Possibly representations were not made this year but the very year the reduction took place. I can assure the Financial Secretary that a letter on the subject will come from the Board of Trustees.

**Mr. Burnham :** I am grateful for the indulgence and the courtesy shown by the Financial Secretary.

Clause 2.

**The Financial Secretary :** I beg to move that Clause 2 be amended by the substitution of the words "forty-nine million, two hundred and sixty-seven thousand, six hundred and eleven" for the words "forty-eight million, three hundred

and fifty-five thousand, seven hundred and one" in the fourth, fifth and sixth lines. The total of the Schedule will therefore be amended to \$49,267,611.

Amendment agreed to

*Preamble* —

**The Financial Secretary :** I move that the Preamble be amended as follows:

- (i) the words "fifty-four million, nine hundred and forty-eight thousand, seven hundred and ninety-seven" to be substituted for the words "fifty-four million, thirty-six thousand, eight hundred and eighty-seven" in the first and second lines.
- (ii) the words "forty-nine million, two hundred and sixty-seven thousand, six hundred and eleven" to be substituted for the words "forty-eight million, three hundred and fifty-five thousand, seven hundred and one" in the ninth and tenth lines.

Preamble, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 1.

**The Financial Secretary :** I move that Clause 1 be recommitted.

Question put, and agreed to.

**The Financial Secretary :** I move that Clause 1 be amended by the removal of the brackets enclosing the figures 1961.

Clause 1, as amended, agreed to.

**The Chairman :** The Schedule is already amended. The Question is, that the Schedule, as amended, shall stand part of the Bill.

Question put, and agreed to.

Council resumed.

**The Financial Secretary :** I beg to report that the Appropriation (1961) Bill, 1960, was considered in Committee and approved as amended. As a result of

the Amendments, the expenditure has been increased by a net amount of \$911,910 — from \$54,036,887 to \$54,948,797. In the result, the surplus has been reduced from \$2,581,938 to \$1,670,028. I beg to move that the Bill be read the Third time.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read the Third time and passed.

## DEVELOPMENT BUDGET

**Mr. Speaker:** The Financial Secretary is to move the following Motion:

“Be it resolved: That this Council approves of the Estimates of Development Expenditure for the year 1961 which have been laid on the Table and recommended in the Report of the Finance Committee of the Legislative Council dated 23rd December, 1960, totalling twenty-three million, nine hundred and eighty-eight thousand, four hundred and one dollars, as detailed by Heads in the undermentioned Schedule and of the projects therein being financed from the Development Fund established under the Development Fund Ordinance, 1954”.

**The Financial Secretary:** Sir, I beg to move that Council approves the Resolution. These Estimates have been discussed in my Budget Statement. They have been considered in Finance Committee and approved without Amendments.

**Mr. Speaker:** If Members wish we can proceed to the Heads. [*Pause.*] Shall I put the Motion?

**Mr. Bowman:** Mr. Speaker, I noticed from the Budget Speech of the Financial Secretary that \$24 million is to be spent this year for the development of the Colony. I noticed, also, that out of this \$24 million—in fact, I noticed that of the moneys to be got from the various sources, the greatest amount is to come from C.D. & W. grants. I raise this point especially because, not very long ago, in this Council, I heard one of these Ministers, when we were debating a certain Bill, mentioned that C.D. & W. grants can be

considered as blood money. I felt, and still feel so, now, that in spite of what happened yester-year, we ought to be grateful for the grants we get from time to time. Here, \$9.5 million out of the \$24 million is to be given free for the Development Programme; yet, some people are not grateful for that. They are still abusing the British Government and calling such grants blood money.

I heard, still further, the Financial Secretary said that \$4 million is yet to be borrowed and that the loan, which I understood the Minister of Trade and Industry was actually negotiating with the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development while he was in America, was not primarily negotiated. I am wondering whether there is any guarantee that the \$4 million will be secured?

**Mr. Speaker:** I cannot hear you distinctly from here. It is very difficult for me to hear you. I do not know if you are referring to a Statement in the Budget Speech, so that I can look at it.

**Mr. Bowman:** I am referring to the Budget Speech.

**Mr. Speaker:** Well, let us have the page.

**Mr. Bowman:** I made notes and I am reading from them.

**Mr. Speaker:** If you are speaking on the Budget and the Speaker asks you for information, do you not think you should give it? I must be able to follow you; but if you do not wish me to, I would not worry you.

**Mr. Bowman:** I said that I am reading from my notes, but if you want me to mention the page I will do so. [*Pause.*] I am reading from page 14 of the Financial Secretary's Budget Speech. He said that the Development Expenditure called for \$24 million. I am making the point that out of this, \$9.5 million is to

[MR. BOWMAN]

come from C.D. & W. grants. I also made the point that a Minister of the Government, not so long ago, said that the C.D. & W. grants are blood money; and I feel we should be grateful for whatever grants we get from C.D. & W. grants, for if we consider the grants as blood money, it is recrimination and such recriminations are based on hatred. I said that we should, instead, work hard and plan for tomorrow; that the past should be buried with the past. Where I am concerned, the only value I have for the past is its intellectual value. If I am to go back to the past and foster hatred, then that is bad. I feel that we should be grateful.

I know the Majority Party does not like people who make profits out of their investments. Those people came here and invested money, but we are not dealing with those days. We are dealing with today; and if they feel like giving us certain grants, then we should be grateful for them. Instead, we are talking about blood money. This whole Development Programme depends upon money we have to borrow. We have not one cent. The Financial Secretary said that we are not sure we are going to get anything from the revenue.

Another source from which the Government expects a certain part of this Development money is from Government-controlled funds. Whatever funds Government controls in this Colony, it is going to borrow so as to make up the \$4 million. I know that Government intends to get some of the loans from moneys which it controls—

**Mr. Speaker:** Page 14, paragraph 36 of the Budget Speech says:

"The 1961 Estimates of Development Expenditure as now presented to Council call for provision of \$24m. The funds immediately in sight for financing this expenditure are \$9.5m. from Colonial Development and Welfare Grants, \$2.5m.

from a local loan to be raised early next year, most of which will be taken up from Government-controlled funds, and \$8m. from the Exchequer Loan—a total of \$20m".

—most of which will be taken up from Government-controlled funds.

**Mr. Bowman:** That is the point I am making. I do not have the Budget Statement with me, and I do not have certain information. If they had no control of such funds, what would have been the position regarding the Development Programme? Could they go into the streets and appeal to the populace to get money? Could they go and ask the people in the country to lend them money for the development of this country? Would the people have any confidence in them? I would like the Minister to tell me if they could do that.

**Mr. Ram Karrau:** Yes.

**Mr. Bowman:** I do not believe that. The whole Development Programme depends on the money to be borrowed. When the Minister of Trade and Industry came back to this country he gave us the impression that he had already negotiated for such a loan.

However, we find in the Financial Secretary's Statement that negotiations have not been finalised. The Statement reads:

"These funds together with the programmed revenue contribution of \$3M and, say, \$1M in prospect from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development for the Credit Corporation would support a total provision of \$24M. While for the reasons given in my discussion of the 1961 revenue surplus, there is virtually no 1961 revenue contribution to the Development Fund in sight and the I.B.R.D. Loan has not yet been negotiated to finality..."

Suppose the authorities of the International Bank for Reconstruction change their minds, especially now that we are so

closely associated with Castro? The International Bank for Reconstruction is very closely connected with the U.S.A. Government; if the American Government uses its influence with the Bank and the Authorities refuse to loan this Government the money, what would be the position of our Development Programme? These things must be taken into consideration. If such a thing were to happen to this country the attitude of the Minister would be responsible for it.

We belong to the Western World and we prefer to deal with the West. Despite the fact that the Minister says that he can get loans at a cheaper rate of interest, I would like to see him getting the money without any strings attached. Which moneylender would lend a man money without attaching strings to it? The people who say that they can get money without strings attached are merely trying to throw dust in our eyes. If I were in the British Government, I would give them enough rope to break their necks.

**Mr. Speaker :** Is that relevant?

**Mr. Bowman :** We are dealing with loans for the Development Programme. I am asking what would be the position of our Development Programme, if the authorities of the International Bank for Reconstruction change their minds? We are dependent upon the pittance from the British Government and other International sources, yet the Ministers of the Government are saying that it is blood money. In the Development Estimates I see that several things will be done from Colonial Development and Welfare grants. I see allocations for: "Parika-Bartica Road—\$441,673; Bartica-Potaro Road—\$427,105; Potaro-Lethem Road \$90,000" and so on. If they regard this as blood money, they should refuse it and see what will happen to our Development Programme.

I regard the Ministers—especially the one who is accustomed to associating with certain people—as ingrates. He is not only ungrateful in one direction but in general. Some people say that I am ungrateful. but I know that—

**Mr. Speaker :** I wish to tell the hon. Member that he has repeated a certain remark. He said that a particular Minister is ungrateful. If he imputes anything improper to any Member of this Council I shall stop him from speaking without any more notice. I warn him now.

**Mr. Bowman :** All right, Sir, The last item I propose to speak on is education. I asked the Minister during a recent debate, how much money this Colony received from C. D. & W. grants from the time the C. D. & W came into existence? I am still awaiting an answer. I would also like to know how much money the Colony spent for repairs to those buildings during the same period? I see that the sum of \$768,045 will be spent on Education. I know that from the time these grants were inaugurated in 1941 this Colony has been receiving money from C. D. & W. to build and repair schools. Today I find that the Government is trying to take away schools, because it believes that the money was spent purely from local Government funds. I have a lot more to say, but if I generalize I will be ruled out of order.

**Mr. Tello:** I had hoped to come tomorrow to participate in this debate. I had anticipated that the hon. Member for Demerara River would have spoken at greater length. Like him, I am very conscious of the fact that our Development Programme has been made possible by substantial contributions from C. D. & W. grants. It is the feeling in British Guiana, like people in other parts of the world, that some day we will become economically independent and will be making grants to other places rather than seeking grants. We must recognize where we belong, and take full cognizance of our position. It

[MR. TELLO]

is dangerous to shout when your hands are in the lion's mouth, and it is no use quarrelling with people when it is not in your own interest.

I notice that the hon. the Financial Secretary gave in detail the sources from which he expected to obtain money to finance the Development Programme. He expected to get three million from general revenue. We have just completed the Estimates, and we do not have \$3 million in hand. I observe that last year the Government was spending money on Development as if it were not quite certain that the money would be made available. I propose to develop this point and it will take me more than a minute to do so, Sir. I notice that it is now one minute to five. I suggest that we take the adjournment at this stage.

## ADJOURNMENT

**The Chief Secretary:** I am afraid that the progress of this debate has been delayed. I said yesterday that I hoped there would be no more night sessions. It is important that we finish this debate not later than Friday, and if it is necessary we will have to have night sessions tomorrow night and Friday night.

**Mr. Speaker :** I am not available.

**Mr. Burnham :** Thank you, Sir.

**The Chief Secretary:** I beg to move the adjournment of this Council until 2 p.m. tomorrow.

**Mr. Speaker :** Council is adjourned until 2 p.m. on Thursday, 5th January, 1961.

*Council adjourned accordingly, at 5.03 p.m.*