

wrong sequence
Reading out 893
THE vol 906

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

OFFICIAL REPORT

[VOLUME 2]

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE SECOND SESSION OF THE FIRST
PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA UNDER THE CONSTITUTION OF E
GUYANA

16th Sitting

Wednesday, 4th October, 1967

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

The Assembly met at 2.00 p.m.

Prayers

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

Present

His Honour the Deputy Speaker, Mr. R. C. Tello.

Members of the Government

Ministers

Dr. the Honourable P. A. Reid,
Minister of Trade.

The Honourable N. J. Bissember,
Minister for Parliamentary Affairs (Leader of the House).

The Honourable R. E. Cheeks,
Minister of Local Government.

The Honourable E. F. Correia,
Minister of Communications.

The Honourable C. M. L. John,
Minister of Home Affairs.

The Honourable R. J. Jordan,
Minister of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

The Honourable C. A. Merriman, J.P.,
Minister of Labour and Social Security.

The Honourable M. F. Singh,
Minister of Works and Hydraulics.

The Honourable H. E. Spence,
Minister of Trade.

Parliamentary Secretaries:

- Mr. D. B. DeGroot,**
Parliamentary Secretary, Prime Minister's Office.
- Mr. G. Bowman,**
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources.
- Mr. O. E. Clarke,**
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Education.
- Mr. P. Duncan,**
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Local Government.
- Mr. J. G. Joaquin, O.B.E., J.P.,**
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Works and Hydraulics.
- Mr. C. V. Too—Chung,**
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Finance.

Other Members:

- Mr. P. S. D'Aguiar**
- Mr. W. A. Blair**
- Mr. J. Budhoo**
- Mr. M. Kasim**
- Mr. W. G. Carrington**
- Mr. R. Field-Ridley**
- Mr. D. Mahraj**
- Mr. H. Prashad**
- Mr. T. A. Sancho**
- Mr. J. H. Thomas**
- Rev. A. B. Trotman**
- Mr. H. M. S. Wharton, J.P.**

Members of the Opposition

- Dr. C. B. Jagan,**
Leader of the Opposition.
- Mr. A. Chase**
- Mr. Ram Karran**
- Mr. R. Chandisingh**
- Dr. Charles Jacob, Jr.**
- Mr. C. V. Nunes**
- Dr. F. H. W. Ramsahoye**
- Mr. M. Hamid, J.P.**
- Mr. J. R. S. Luck**
- Mr. D. C. Jagan**
- Mr. H. Lall**
- Mr. Mooneer Khan, J.P.**
- Mr. Y. Ally**
- Mr. L. Linde**
- Mr. R. D. Persaud, J.P.**
- Mr. M. N. Poonai**
- Dr. S. A. Ramjohn**
- Mr. E. M. Stoby**
- Mr. S. M. Saffee**
- Mr. M. Bhagwan**

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

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

Absent



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

The Honourable Mrs. W. Gaskin,
Minister of Education

– *on leave*

The Honourable W. O. R. Kendall, C.B.E., J.P.,
Minister of Health

The Honourable M. W. Carter,
Minister of Information

– *on leave*

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

– *on leave*

Mr. P. S. d'Aguiar

Mr. B. H. Benn

Mr. H. J. M. Hubbard

Mr. E. M. G. Wilson

– *on leave*

OATHS

The Oath of Allegiance and Oath of Office were made and subscribed by the Honourable Hilbert C. dric Spence, Minister of Trade.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER

LEAVE TO MEMBERS

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Hon Members, I have to announce that the hon. Prime Minister will be absent from today's sitting. The hon. W.O.R. Kendall is on leave with effect from the 1st to the 18th October, 1967, and the hon. M.W. Carter is on leave from the 2nd October to the 15th November, 1967.

QUESTIONS TO MINISTERS

NUMBER OF GUYANESE LIVING ABROAD

Leader of the Opposition (Dr. Jagan): I wish to ask the Minister of Home Affairs Question No. 2 standing in my name on the Order Paper: Will the Government state the number of Guyanese, aged 21 and over living abroad, in each of the following countries:

The United Kingdom, Eire, Canada, the United States of America, India, Pakistan, the People's Republic of China, Hong Kong, Madeira, Portugal, Nigeria, Ghana, Tanzania, Haiti, Jamaica, Trinidad & Tobago, Barbados, Antigua, other British Caribbean Islands, the Netherlands, West Indies, the French West Indies, Surinam, French Guiana, Venezuela, and any other overseas territory in which Guyanese may be resident.

The Minister of Home Affairs: (Mr. John) At this stage it is not possible to say the number of Guyanese aged 21 and over, living abroad in the countries mentioned.

Mr. Chase: Will the Minister be able to supply that information at any time in the near future?

Mr. John: Mr. Speaker. In due course, I take it that we will better be able to know something.

Mr. Luck: Could the hon. Minister say what steps this Government is taking to ascertain the number of persons in the countries that have been named in the Question?

Mr. John: There are no steps at the present time.

Mr. Luck: Mr. Speaker, I should like the hon. Minister to tell this House whether it would ever be possible to say how many Guyanese are presently living in those countries?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The question has already been answered. He said as soon as the answer is available.

Mr. Luck: With the greatest respect to you, sir, I am asking him if, given all the time and trouble in the world, it is possible to ascertain the names of Guyanese living in those countries. If it is not possible he must say so. If it is possible, then he must tell us that he is trying to do so. But, is it possible? That is the question.

Mr. John: In due course it should be possible to get this type of assessment.

Mr. Luck: I should like the hon. Minister to tell us up to what year they have records in the Immigration Department?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Table that question. That is an original question. You cannot call that a supplementary to the original question.

Mr. Luck: Sir, may I say that this is a supplementary. He said that he is going to tell us the number of Guyanese living abroad. I am asking him if he has records.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Do you not see that you are asking a new question? You are asking for records now.

Mr. Luck: Surely, this is a question arising from the original question.

Dr. Jagan: The hon. Minister of Home Affairs, in one of his replies said that in due course the Government will indicate how many Guyanese are living abroad in the countries listed. Then he went on to say that no steps were being taken by the Government to ascertain the number. Will the Minister tell us by what means the Government hopes to get this information?

[DR. JAGAN]

Will a man from Mars be going around to find out?

Mr. John: in reply to the hon. Leader of the Opposition, I said that in due course the Government will be able to have a reasonable assessment of the number of persons abroad, but that is in due course: The machinery is not yet in operation.

**PUBLIC BUSINESS
MOTION
RECRUITMENT TO THE
POLICE FORCE**

“Be it resolved that this National Assembly condemn the Government for its failure to implement the recommendations contained in the report of the International Commission of Jurists with respect to recruitment to the Police Force in 1966.” [Mr. Chase.]

Mr. Chase: I rise to move the Motion which stands in my name on today's Order Paper. The need to correct the imbalances in the Police and Security Forces of this country was keenly and particularly felt in times of political stress and strain; more particularly in 1962, 1963 and 1964 when the police and security forces were tested on the developments which took place in this country in those years. The partiality of the Forces was reflected in their attitude and in their conduct with respect to the disturbances. It was recognised then, and it had been recognised a long time before then, that the police and security forces should reflect a cross-section of the population of this country.

I wish to make it quite clear at the outset that no blame is to be attached to the Coalition Government for the composition of the police and security forces on its assumption to office. But the members of the Coalition Government will be blamed - as blamed they must be - for having the power and the means to correct the imbalances that exist, and for failing within the last two years to take such positive steps as have been

recommended to them, to erase those imbalances. This is really a racial and a sociological question, and it is necessary therefore, to give a very short historical account of the composition of the Force as it existed within recent times.

2.20 p.m.

In 1957 when constitutional government was restored to this country and the People's Progressive Party was elected to the Government the composition of the Police Force then spoke volumes. Out of a total Force of 1,434 there were 140 Indo-Guyanese and 1,180 Afro-Guyanese.

In the officer section of the Force, of 30 officers at that time, 16 of them were Afro-Guyanese and 2 were Indo-Guyanese. In 1961 when the People's Progressive Party returned to office for the second time after the political impasse of 1953 the situation then was not materially changed. The position then was that of the 31 officers on the Force only 2 were Indo-Guyanese. The position had become remarkably worse if anything; 25 were Afro-Guyanese and the rest were made up of Europeans and others. With regard to the general ranks, 197 were Indo-Guyanese and 1,093 were Afro-Guyanese. At the material time when the first series of disturbances took place in 1963, the position then was that of 45 officers in the Force, 4 were Indo-Guyanese and 34 were Afro-Guyanese. In the general ranks of the Force 248 were Indo-Guyanese and 1,099 were Afro-Guyanese.

Put statistically, this is what those figures mean: whereas in 1957 and in 1961 Indo-Guyanese comprised roughly 47.8 per cent of the population of this country, in the Police Force they were represented by 9.7 per cent in 1957 and 16.3 per cent in 1965. Correspondingly whereas Afro-Guyanese comprised 32.8 per cent of the population of this country at the material time, their relative strength in the Police Force was 83.4 per cent in 1957, 77.4 per cent in 1961 and 75.4 per cent in 1963.

These figures reveal that there was at that time a very serious imbalance in the structure of the Police Force. These imbalances have led to a great deal of fear as to the impartiality of the Police Force, a fear which is not conducive to the common weal of this country. This fear has led to the examination of the composition of the Police Force and also of the adequacy of the Police Force to deal with situations as they arise.

The second proposition, that is, the inadequacy of the Police Force to deal with situations as they arise, in some way does support the first, that is, the composition of the Force which has room for considerable improvement and expansion. The inadequacy of the Force was recognised in the Report of the Commission of Inquiry which was set up by the Secretary of State for the Colonies in the United Kingdom to inquire into the disturbances in what was then British Guiana. The report of that Commission dealt fully with the stress that was put on the Police Force in 1962. In paragraph 137 from which I now quote it is stated:

“But the resources of the police were insufficient to meet the situation. The effective strength of the police force in Georgetown on February 16, was 200 subordinate officers and constables, 26 special constabulary, and 25 Mounted Police and three riot squads of 30 men each.”

This was considered inadequate to meet the situation that existed in 1962 and it has been recognised even in the Report of the Commissioner of Police that the numbers in the Force are not sufficient to carry out all the duties which devolve on the policemen in this country. In particular, the Commissioner of Police in referring to what he has described as the “extraneous” duties which the Police Force has to carry out has pointed out that these extraneous duties tell heavily on the limited numbers of personnel in the Police Force. The People’s Progressive Party, in the face of some

opposition by the British Government, in an effort to correct this situation did take steps to redress the imbalance, but the pace was too slow to make any significant impact on the situation. In 1964 the Secretary of State for the Colonies himself had come to recognise that the situation was one which required rectification.

The British Government had virtually given an undertaking that steps would be taken to rectify the imbalance that existed in the police and security forces. However, the British Government took no steps to remedy that situation except that the Special Reserve Unit was set up which was composed, roughly speaking, of half Indo-Guyanese and half Afro-Guyanese. But that was a very small Force indeed and did not really affect the gravamen of the complaint which existed at the time about the serious imbalances that existed in the police and security forces.

Then, sir, along came the General Elections of 1964 and the British Government appeared to renege on its promises, taking up the position that as a new Government was elected in December 1964, the British Government could not impose certain changes which it had accepted previously as being necessary.

2.30 p.m.

Instead, however, we had the appointment of the International Commission of Jurists which came to this country in 1965, which exclaimed the situation and which has put up a Report to the Government on the situation with regard not only to the Police Force, but with regard to the Public Service and other services of this country.

This afternoon we are dealing with the Police Force and not with the public services or with other services of the Government or in the country and, therefore, attention will be directed to what the Commission had to say with respect to the Police Force, having

[MR. CHASE]

reviewed the racial stratification of the population of this country, the Commission came to this conclusion which appears in paragraph 61 of the Report. I quote:

“It is clear from the foregoing that there is a marked preponderance of Africans in the Police Force. It is also clear that, unless there is a crash programme of recruitment of Indians on a very large scale, this situation will continue for some time. In this memorandum to us, the Commissioner of Police stated that if the present policy of recruitment on a 50/50 basis is continued, the proportion of non-Africans in the Force by the end of 1969 should be 35%.”

Then the Commissioner went on in paragraph 62 of its Report to say this - and I should like to quote:

“In a society such as that of British Guiana today, where racial divisions are an important factor in political life, it is essential that the Police Force should broadly reflect the different races of the population, provided of course that adequate material from each racial group is available and willing to offer itself for service in the Force, the reason being that a preponderance of any one racial group in the Police Force may be harmful to the public interest in that members of the racial group or groups which are inadequately represented may have little trust or faith in the impartiality of the Force and may perhaps even fear them. It is thus desirable that the Police Force of British Guiana should broadly reflect the racial composition of the population if it is to command general confidence and support.”

These words speak volumes and they point to the sociological problem which exists in the imbalance in the Police Force, an imbalance which, I will repeat, is due to historical considerations and historical reasons and not to any immediate factors which are before this country today. It is

clear that because of the developments that have taken place, the imbalance has been exposed, and the difficulties that arise from such an imbalance have been thoroughly exposed in the racial and other difficulties that arose in this country in 1964 and earlier.

Having postulated the thesis on which the Police Force should be composed, the I.C.J. went on to make certain specific recommendations with regard to the Police Force of this country and it is these recommendations which, it is being contended this afternoon, are not being fully put into effect by the Government of the day. I shall pause to say that the Government, on the publication of the I.C.J. Report, stated that it had accepted the recommendations of the I.C.J. with regard to the Police Force. The Government hinted, however, that these recommendations would be carried out subject to the limitations imposed on the financial resources of this country.

Everyone expected, therefore, that, having accepted the recommendations of the I.C.J., the Government would have set about energetically to implement the recommendations of the I.C.J. but, alas, it has not done that and these recommendations are being observed very largely in the breach rather than in the observance.

This Government, has not only with regard to this Report but with regard to other matters, expressed the same very high-sounding sentiments which its actions later do not support. The contention on this side of the House this afternoon is that the Government's words, in so far as it accepted the recommendations of the I.C.J., are not being matched by its deeds. They are empty words, and they are not being translated into action which is necessary to put into effect the recommendations of the I.C.J.

At paragraph 68 of the Report of the I.C.J. the Commission has this to say — and I quote:

“We recommend that all possible steps be taken to facilitate Indian entry into the Police Force and to

encourage Indians to apply for acceptance. A substantial increase in applications from suitable qualified Indians would in itself tend to an increased intake of Indian recruits.”

One would have expected that a Government which accepted the recommendations of the I.C.J. would have taken steps to inaugurate a recruitment campaign, a recruitment drive, to recruit into the Police and security forces the necessary numbers of Indo-Guyanese which would correct the situation as existed in 1965.

In 1960 there was a small campaign sponsored by the Government of the day to correct that imbalance. I have said that this campaign mounted even against opposition by the British Government which still, largely through the Governor of this country, had the overall and final control of the police and security forces of this country.

I say that it was the responsibility of this Government to use all the propaganda media that are available to whip up a recruitment campaign to encourage entrance into the Police Force of Indo-Guyanese in order that the situation which the I.C.J. said should be corrected should be speedily remedied. That was not done and I suggest to the Government that it is still not too late for it to take steps to mount a publicity campaign, a publicity drive, to encourage, as the I.C.J. said, Indians to apply for acceptance into the Police Force of this country.

The Commission made seven specific recommendations in paragraph 68 of its Report. It is fair to say that only three and a half of those recommendations have been put into effect and the other three and a half remain unfulfilled. In the first case, the Commission recommended that the requirements with regard to height and chest measurements should be modified and it is understood that the requirements with regard to height and chest measurements have been modified and that the average height for appointment to the Police Force

is now reduced to five feet seven inches from five feet eight inches. Weight 135 pounds and chest expansion 35 inches with possible expansions have been reduced to weight 110 pounds and chest expansion 32½ inches to facilitate an “Indian” intake. With that we have no quarrel.

The other recommendation that has been carried out is with respect to the steps the Commission recommended to ensure that all Indian recruits and members of the Police Force are able to comply with their religious dietary laws. This to some extent, is being fulfilled by the present administration.

The other recommendation on which some progress has been made is that the requirement that recruits be unmarried be abolished. This is so in so far as men are concerned but it has not been abolished as far as women are concerned, unless this has recently been done. These are broadly the recommendations which the Government has put into effect but then there are other recommendations which have not been implemented.

First, the Commission recommended that the recruitment procedure should be rationalised and made more speedy, particularly in regard to producing examination results. The International Commission of Jurists noted that it would take about six months after a person applies before the preliminary procedures were gone through and they felt it was too long a time, and indeed, it is too long a time, for within that time an applicant may have other offers and other aspirations and may cease to be interested. There are so many obstacles put in the way of applicants that people are inclined to waver or withdraw having made the initial application for entry into the Police Force. I hope that the procedure with regard to examinations could be looked into more speedily because the examination papers take four months to be marked and results to be given and this length of time shows that something is seriously wrong with the procedure with regard to examinations and the Ministry of Education should be asked to speed up the procedure so that results

[MR. CHASE]

could be more quickly known than they are at present.

The next recommendation of the Commission is that the interviewing and selection of applicants for recruitment should be entrusted to selection boards which should contain Indian as well as African and other officers. This recommendation is not being observed. What is taking place is that when Indo-Guyanese apply, there is a procedure which is set in motion at the local police stations in the districts and they are weeded out at local level and it is only the very determined who is able to overcome the obstacles which are put in the way of reaching the final selection board in Georgetown.

In regard to the Board which should be set up, the Commission specifically recommended how this should be composed and I say that this is not being faithfully honoured.

The next recommendation of the Commission was that both the living and working conditions should be improved and more married quarters provided. I am not aware that the Government has taken the necessary steps to make the conditions of service as attractive as they could be to stimulate the necessary inflow into the Police Force. As late as 1965, the Commissioner of Police in his Annual Report pointed to the fact that apart from the setting up of a new building to house the Special Branch of the Police, — the Government seems to give special attention to the Special Branch for its own special reasons, — and a new station at Blairmont, no other work on police stations, married quarters or buildings, commenced in that year and that the working conditions at many stations remain most unsatisfactory. Those are the words of the Commissioner of Police himself. To my knowledge, there was no improvement in the year 1966.

It is a distressing circumstance for married persons in the Police Force not to get proper accommodation at the

out-stations and Government must realise that if it is willing to implement the recommendations of the I.C.J., that substantial funds must be provided for the facilities necessary so that the wanted personnel can be attracted into the Police Force.

The other recommendation of the International Commission of Jurists which has not been carried out and appears in paragraph 68 of the I.C.J. Report is that the rates of pay should be reviewed and increased to a level sufficient to attract both Indian and other non-African nationals of sufficient calibre. There has been no revision of rates of pay for constables in the general ranks of the Police Force and it is patent that if Indo-Guyanese are to be attracted to the Police Force at that level, that there has got to be a substantial improvement in the rates of remuneration for constables in general. As far back as 1962, the Commission of Inquiry which was set up to inquire into the disturbances in 1962 reported as follows, and I quote from paragraph 137:

“Also the fact must be recorded that there was an element of discontent among the members of the Force, which stemmed from a feeling that their salaries were inadequate.”

The payment of adequate salaries is an important consideration in regard to recruiting a sufficient number of persons of the right calibre into the Police Force.

2.50 p.m.

May I now proceed with certain other more important recommendations of the International Commission of Jurists. I should like to quote paragraph 69 of the Report, which brings me to the most important recommendation of the I.C.J. Commission:

“We are satisfied that the adoption of these recommendations should lead to a substantial increase in the number of qualified Indian applicants for appointment to the Police Force and to a substantial decrease in the number of Indians

leaving the Force. Nevertheless, we recognize that the present position, which is the result of a combination of factors, is not satisfactory and is one that calls for special treatment. For this reason, we recommend that in each year for a period of 5 years, whenever the number of qualified applicants at Constable or Cadet Officer levels permits, 75% of the applicants accepted should be Indian, and 25 from other races. The full effectiveness of this recommendation will depend on the full implementations of the recommendations in para. 68, on an increase in the size of the Force, and on increased facilities for training, housing and equipping it. Such an increase in the size of the Force appears to us to be necessary in any event.

It is my contention that the recommendation of the I.C.J. with regard to the intake of the Police Force being on the basis of 75 per cent Indo-Guyanese and 25 per cent others, in each year for a period of 5 years, has not been implemented by the Government. This is the kernel of the matter and if the Government does not carry out this recommendation, it means that it is falling down on the recommendations, of the International Commission of Jurists.

This recommendation was made to correct the imbalance in the Police Force, and it seems to me that, based on this recommendation is the consideration that the steps which were implemented in 1964 were considered inadequate. That is the 50-50 basis of recruitment which, by 1969, would have resulted in a 35 per cent non-African Guyanese Police Force. This recommendation was intended to speed up that process so that in five years, that is by 1970, the imbalance would have been completely redressed and the Police Force would have reflected the general population structure of the country.

If one looks at the I.C.J. Report, one will see that they had gone into this thing with some regard for the population structure of the country. At the end of December, 1964, the population of this country — 638,000 — was divided on this basis:

Indo-Guyanese — 50.2 per cent

Afro-Guyanese — 31.3 " "

Mixed Race — 11.9 " "

Portuguese — 11.9 " "

Chinese — 1/6th " "

European — 1/4 " "

Amerindians — 4.6 " "

The Commission made its recommendation on this population classification, and if that recommendation were put into effect in 1965, there would have been a substantial change in the composition of the Police Force in five years. The percentage of the various races in the Police Force would have been radically changed. It is clear that the Government has no intention of fulfilling this recommendation, a recommendation which, I repeat, was aimed at correcting the imbalance by 1970.

If the Government had any intention of implementing this recommendation, the number of recruits into the Police Force for the year 1966, in particular, would have been substantially altered. The Estimates show that the Government only made provision for an intake of about 80 persons into the Police Force for that year. If that continues to be the rate of intake into the Police Force, the imbalance will not be corrected.

If you look at the Estimates for 1966, you will see that no provision was made with respect to a substantial expansion of police training schemes. There is one Police Training School, and I submit that if this recommendation was carried out it would have been necessary to have at least two training schools in this country. In addition to the one which already exists in Georgetown, one should be established in Berbice. But there is not adequate provision even for expansion of the one training school that exists. If the Government was

[MR. CHASE]

genuine and really intended to carry out the recommendations of the I.C.J., provision would have been made for the expansion of training for the additional number of persons to be recruited in the police Force.

When one looks at training equipment in the capital expenditure for 1967, one sees that provision is made for the very meagre expenditure of \$2,000. That is far from adequate to meet the problem which we have at hand. A similar sum was put aside in 1966. Clearly, if the Government intended to expedite the intake of entrants into the Police Force, the sum of \$2,000 for training equipment would have been substantially increased.

The provisions made in the Estimates for 1966 and 1967 with regard to books and uniforms for the Police Force also lends force to the argument that the Government has no intention whatever to implementing the recommendations of the I.C.J. to stimulate the number of entrants into the Police Force. Indeed, it is remarkable that on an examination of those Estimates, whilst the position with regard to general constables — their fringe benefits, their social benefits — remains virtually static, in the case of the maintenance of police dogs the provision has been increased from \$6,300 in 1966 to \$8,300 in 1967. It shows that while they are making provisions to improve on the maintenance of dogs in the Police Force, they are making no provision for expansion or improvement with regard to the recruitment of policemen in the general ranks of the Police Force.

3 p.m.

I repeat that the Government has fallen down, on the intake of 75-25 per cent of recruitment into the Police Force on a substantial enough basis to ensure that over the next five years the imbalances are corrected. So long as the Government

procrastinates on this the imbalance will not be rectified.

In paragraph 70 of the I.C.J. Report this Commission said that in order to ensure the maximum co-operation between the Police and the population, care should be taken to ensure that the police are deployed throughout this country in a manner which is likely to achieve harmonious relations between the different racial groups. The figures as they existed in 1965 and in 1966 speak volumes. If you take Berbice as an example and you look at Albion with a population of 2,940 Afro-Guyanese, you will find 9 in the Police Force, whereas there are 14,362 Indo-Guyanese at Albion and only 4 of them are in the Police Force.

At Whim, of the 3,131 Afro-Guyanese, 15 are in the Police Force and out of 18,066 Indo-Guyanese only 9 are in the Force. At Lesbeholden, for example, out of 74 Afro-Guyanese, 4 are in the Police Force and out of 368 Indo-Guyanese none is in the Force. The position is no different at No. 51 and Springlands. Whereas in both these places there are approximately 3,000 Afro-Guyanese and over 11,000 Indo-Guyanese there are 11 Afro-Guyanese in the Police Force in this area and only 12 Indo-Guyanese.

This is not by any means living up to the recommendations of the I.C.J., nor is it by any means a proper tackling of the sociological problems which exist as a result of the imbalances in the police and security forces. Paragraph 73 of the Commissioner's Report recommended that for promotion within the ranks a selection board should be set up comprised of Indian as well as African and other officers. I consider this a very important recommendation because promotions in the Force is a very important matter. But what is the position today? There is no selection board in operation in the Police Force. There is no such board. Even the recommendations from the Divisional Officers are being thrown overboard. What is operating in the Police

Force today is the party list. The P.N.C. party list is the basis on which promotions are being made. I say that so long as that is the position, so long will this imbalance remain uncorrected.

Why has the Government not set up a selection board as recommended by the Commission and composed as recommended by the Commission? Why is the Government side-tracking such an important recommendation? What we get instead are a number of *ad hoc* appointments being made from time to time from the general ranks by the Commissioner of Police. Some, no doubt, are meritorious; some, no doubt, are praiseworthy, but a large number of them relate to people who in the past could not secure recommendations because of adverse reports which were made against them. It is common knowledge that one of the quarrels with the now retired Commissioner of Police is that he refused to be made a cog in the wheel of promoting people according to a party list against the recommendations which had been made by Divisional Officers and against what was considered to be his best judgment as regards persons who should be promoted.

It seems that if there is to be confidence in the Police Force, that if we are to correct the disparity that exists in the Force, this sort of thing has to be stopped immediately. The members of the Government cannot talk, as they glibly do, about efficiency drives when people are being promoted and catapulted into positions for which they do not have the basic competence and efficiency and when important recommendations like these are being torn up and put in the waste-paper basket.

It is important also that in the matter of promotions we must consider the question of cadet officers. The Government has done absolutely nothing in this sphere. I accuse it of doing nothing to create at the Cadet Officer level the necessary number of

recruits of Indo-Guyanese descent which will correct the very grave imbalance that exists in the number of Officers compared with the population stratification. It is important that Cadet Officers should also be considered generally speaking in the question of promotion.

Then, there is the question of training overseas. This is another important matter. The I.C.J. Commission recommended that in the matter of selection of officers for training overseas a board should be constituted similar to that which they recommended should be set up for interviewing personnel for recruitment into the Forces. In other words, the recommendation was that there should be established a board which should contain Indo-Guyanese [as well as Afro-Guyanese] and other officers who would be responsible for making recommendations for personnel to be trained abroad. This is not being implemented at all. What is happening is that people are being virtually handpicked by the Minister for training overseas. This again is a departure from the recommendations of the I.C.J. Report, as well as a departure from what is good police practice. It is important that even if the Government does not intend to implement what is set out in the I.C.J. Report it should at least establish what is good and what is normal police practice in so far as promotions and selection for training overseas are concerned.

There is considerable disquiet in this country with regard to the non-implementation of the recommendations of the I.C.J. report.

3.10 p.m.

Members on the opposite side have sneered that the P.P.P. boycotted the I.C.J. Commission, but that is not the subject of debate this afternoon. The subject of debate this afternoon is whether this Government which agreed to the setting up of the I.C.J.

[MR. CHASE]

Commission and which said that it will accept the recommendations of the Commission, is putting into force the recommendations of the Commission. The reasons for the boycott have been stated publicly and clearly and I do not intend to engage Members opposite, as they would like to be, with any discourse on the reasons for the boycott by the P.P.P. because that is to take this debate into a side channel, that is to draw a red herring across the trail.

The fact of the matter is that the Government said that it accepted the recommendations of the I.C.J. and will implement them. But the Government is now falling down on the implementations of the I.C.J. Report and it is a matter for condemnation that a Government which announced to the world – not just to this country, this was made a world-wide issue – that it was going to accept the recommendations of the I.C.J., that it will implement the recommendations of the I.C.J., having made such a solemn declaration, should now renege on the declaration and fail to implement the recommendations of the I.C.J. Report.

The Government is causing great fear in the country. There is great fear that there will be disloyalty to the Constitution of this country by the Police Force, that the Police Force, if not properly balanced, will be used with others to suppress the democratic wishes of the electorate of this country. Indeed, it is a major concern of the Opposition that the Government's refusal to implement the recommendations of the I.C.J., along with other things which it is doing, all fit into a pattern that the general scheme of this Government is to thwart, by devious means, the free and expressed views of the people of this country after elections are held.

Indeed, it is common knowledge that the Government is planning not to hold elections in this country, and the longer it takes to implement the recommendations of the I.C.J., the greater will be those fears among the population of this country. I think it is common knowledge that the retirement of the last Commissioner of Police was enforced upon him because, when he went to the U.S.A. and he was put through the test as to what would be his role and the role of the Police in the event that there were elections in this country and in the event that the P.P.P. won those elections, his answers were not satisfactory to his questioners, his answers were not such as to let them feel that the Police would come down and upset the results of the elections freely expressed by the people. Therefore, he had to be hustled out of the office that he held.

We are concerned about these matters. I invite the Government to state clearly – if it has honest intentions with regard to these matters – what, if any, difficulties exist with regard to implementing the major recommendations of the I.C.J. Speaking for myself, I would say that the sooner we can get over this problem of an intake into the Police Force based on racial considerations, the better it would be for the country as a whole. I should like that the sooner the Government faithfully implements the recommendations of the I.C.J. the sooner the day will come when it will be unnecessary for intake into the Police Force to be based on considerations of race.

It is not a palatable consideration; it is not a nice situation, but one has to be realistic and to face the problems which have arisen from a situation for which nobody in this House today is to be blamed. Surely, the Government has the means with which it can correct the situation, and the longer it takes to do so the longer this unpalatable situation of racialism in the Police Force is going to be

dragged out. The earlier it starts implementing these recommendations in full, the better it will be for all concerned.

It is needless for us to hide our heads in the sand like ostriches and pretend that there is no racial problem, for there is, and we must face it clearly and eradicate it. The figures are clear; this is no enlargement upon the situation. What I have quoted are figures which the Government itself produced to the I.C.J. and I urge that it should recognise that, having agreed to implement these recommendations, it should proceed to do so.

I know that the Government was not honest in its intentions when it went to the I.C.J. on the subject of imbalances because it had put forward to the I.C.J. that the position could not be corrected by a substantial intake of one race group in the country, in view of the constitutional impediment which could not be overcome. But the I.C.J. made recommendations to get around the constitutional hurdles which made it impossible for racial considerations to be made on the basis of entry into the Police Force. The Government itself, at the Constitutional Conference in the United Kingdom, accepted this constitutional proposal of the I.C.J. and, therefore, there is no constitutional impediment to its implementing recommendations of the I.C.J.

I hope that this Motion will provide the occasion for the Government to give figures, if it is bold enough, to show that it is following the recommendations of the I.C.J. I hope it will also provide an opportunity for the Government to express publicly if it is facing any difficulties with regard to complying with the recommendations in the Report of the I.C.J. If any difficulties are being experienced, they should be made public so that the public would be made aware of them and would co-operate, if necessary, in regard to overcoming these problems.

It must be clearly understood by the Government that the conditions favourable for an intake of Indo-Guyanese into the Police Force, as set out in the I.C.J. Report, are conditions precedent to the correction of the imbalance that exist in the Police Force. The removal of this imbalance is a serious matter and one is concerned with the levity that appears to be demonstrated on the other side.

I hope that the Government, having itself said that it will implement the recommendations of the I.C.J. will urgently proceed to honour those recommendations.

3.20 p.m.

I hope too, that in the creation of other Forces, care will be taken to prevent a recurrence of these imbalances. I hope that those responsible will take care to prevent them because it is important that we should use the experiences of the past to ensure that they are not repeated in the future in the same sort of way that the disturbances of 1962 and 1964 showed the weaknesses and imbalances in these Forces.

While the Government is setting up and creating other security forces, I hope it will bear in mind the recommendations made by the International Commission of Jurists. Therefore, for the reasons that I have advanced, and because of the failure of the Government to implement the recommendations of the I.C.J., I move the Motion which reads:

“That this National Assembly condemn the Government for its failure to implement the recommendations contained in the report of the International Commission of Jurists with respect to recruitment to the Police Force in 1966.” [Applause.]

Mr. Persaud: I beg to second the Motion and reserve my right to speak later.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: If, in another minute, nobody speaks, I shall put the question.

The Minister for Parliamentary Affairs (Mr. Bissember): The Motion has not been seconded.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Motion has been seconded.

Mr. Ram Karran: I must first of all congratulate the hon. Mover of the Motion for having brought before this Assembly this most important measure. This Motion is not going to have the same sort of acceptance as the one which was before the House last week. *[Interruption.]* One is certain that this measure is going to be met with very strong opposition judging from the behaviour of the hon. Members on the other side. They have a right to act in this way. This question of imbalances in the security forces did not arise from the time the I.C.J. came here. Hon. Members of the past Legislature will recall the repeated protests of the then Government and of all the people in the country. If we cast our minds back to the years 1963 and 1964, we will remember that every man as he walked the streets had only to listen for the explosion which invariably carried one of three people. Members on the other side can laugh today. Their names are prominent on the terrorist list. From their own mouths they convict themselves.

I wish to quote from the 1965 Report of the then Commissioner of Police whose head, unfortunately, has been rolled and I am not talking about Mr. Austin, I mean Mr. Puttock. I am not dealing with honours and awards. I am dealing with that section on Page 3 paragraph 12 — Other Items of Special Interest:

“At the request of the Government of Guyana.”

which was the P.N.C.—U.F. Coalition,

“the International Commission of Jurists appointed a Commission of Inquiry to investigate and make recommendations in regard to certain problems concerning racial balance in the public services of Guyana.

For the Police Force the Commission recommended—” and there followed a list, (a) to (g), of certain recommendations. My hon. Colleague and comrade has mentioned these.

Then the Commission went on to say that each year for a period of five years, whenever the number of qualified applicants at Constable or Cadet Officer levels permits, 75 per cent of the applicants accepted should be Indian and 25 per cent from other races, and in the line immediately after that, in the Report, the Commissioner of Police states:

“The Government accepted the recommendations of the Commission.”

3.30 p.m.

It is shameful for the hon. Members on the opposite side to mock and to laugh after having accepted the recommendations and failing to implement them, or to give us an idea of how they are going to implement them. Something is wrong. One does not need to be a clairvoyant or a magician to know what the Government has up its sleeve. I have the minutes of a meeting which was held at the Ministry of Labour and Social Security. Those present were: The hon. Mr. Claude Merriman, the hon. Mr. Kasim, the hon. Mr. R. Field-Ridley, the hon. Mr. E. Correia —

The Minister for Parliamentary Affairs (Leader of the House) (Mr. Bissember): To a point of order. I should like to object to the reading of the minutes of that meeting unless the hon. Member can give us the source of the document from which he is quoting.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Can you give us the source of the document?

Mr. Ram Karran: This article appeared in one of the newspapers.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Are you reading from the newspaper?

Mr. Ram Karran: No. I am reading from the notes I have made.

Mr. Deputy Speaker:

Mr. Ram Karran: The hon. Members of the Government who were sitting with candidates of the United Force and the People's National Congress made it clear to senior Government officials, who ought to be impartial in the recruitment of labour, that the policy of recruitment must be one that will favour those persons who are drawn from the two parties represented in the Government. Let the hon. Member get up and deny that. Let him stand up and say it is a lie. This racket that the hon. Minister seeks to cover by jumping up to a point of order is prevalent in the country today, and if that is so in the case of senior Government employees, I leave it to the imagination of those who have to find out the rascality that goes on.

The Government proposes to fix its friends. But it cannot provide employment for all its supporters. It can find jobs for Fairbairn and Chippy Graham, but not for all the people who claim to support the People's National Congress and the United Force. Already we see that the so-called second Deputy Prime Minister has run out and he has left us with a little commission to carry. The same thing is going on all around. Let the hon. Minister of Home Affairs get up and tell us whether the policy enunciated by his colleagues, the hon. Mr. Claude Merriman and the hon. Mr. Kasim, is not the same policy that is adopted in the case of the security forces in this country. Let him deny it.

We have often referred to the tyranny which they introduced prior to their

initiation into office, shouting down to people, the merciless persecution of people whom they thought were supporters of the People's Progressive Party. Some of their hacks in the newspaper offices have been referring to the peace and quiet which we have in this country. I have often referred to the peace and quiet which they have in Rhodesia. That sort of tyranny is ever present in our society. But in Rhodesia it is based on race. My hon. Friend Mr. Bowman would not like this to be exposed, although he took every opportunity, when he sat on this side of the House, to shout himself hoarse about the alleged racial practices of the People's Progressive Party. Today, we are seeing racial discrimination in the Police Force and in other institutions.

A week ago, an employee with 6½ years service at the Milk Pasteurisation Plant was sent home. I understand after seven years they are given some sort of gratuity. I also understand from very good information that the policy of the Government is to let them go when they have given nearly seven years service, so that friends of the P.N.C. can be recruited from the office of the P.N.C. — Congress Place — to fill these positions. This is a disgrace.

The other day I referred to a Guyanese who came back from the United Kingdom, and who was employed at the Guyana Development Corporation. The Prime Minister, or one of his men, called the Corporation to say that this person must be removed to make room for another Guyanese. We must repeat these things as often as we can, although they make no difference to those people over there.

3.40 p.m.

The British race riots in India won for a time after a large number of atrocities were committed. It was tried in Cyprus; it was tried here and succeeded for a time. I want to warn these stubborn members who sit on the other side of the House that one of these

[MR. RAM KARRAN]

days the Guyanese people of all races are going to unite and, in doing so, will recognise the role played by these oppressors who have taken on the mantle of comrade Sandys, who incidentally, in unleashing violence against Guyanese people, said that he was seeking to bring about racial unity. In releasing this vicious document he set up another organisation. He said that recruitment to that would be based on a 50-50 membership representing the major races of this country. That was a bit of "eye-wash" for no sooner had these puppets attained office than it was pushed aside and another force, dominated by their supporters and led by their friends, seemed to hold power in this country. They were not satisfied with the G.D.F. and its immense power, with its membership drawn from one major race group. [Mr. Bissember: "And you wanted partition".] I don't believe in partition. I am convinced that all races in Guyana can unite. I am convinced that the working classes in this country will eventually unite. My friend (Mr. Bissember) is at the moment associating with one race group but is that group to accommodate him for ever? Has he seen what they did with Peter? Has he seen what they did with Kasim?

We sincerely believe in a united working class of all races. We are as sure as night follows day that the working-class people in this country will be united. What we fear is that when these working people come into their own, when the theories that are propounded by these harlots in politics are appreciated by the working class people, then the members of the Government will have to scamper into their holes and stay there, History is full of examples of those who misled the people. In some cases history is rich with the blood of the working class and in some cases with the blood of the

prostitutes who graced ministerial seats. When that time comes here, I can assure you that the devastation will be very great. It is unfortunate that when these things occur some innocent persons have to pay. The members of the Government cannot say that they have not been warned. I have heard the Prime Minister boasting, "We are young; we are going to be in the saddle for some time." That will be so as long as the bayonets support you but the bayonets will fail one day and when that day arrives, heaven help you for your refusal to implement recommendations which you yourselves accepted. You ought to be ashamed.

Mr. Persaud: It is the responsibility of the Government to bridge the racial ill-feeling that existed and that still exists today in Guyana. It is a duty and obligation that the Government cannot escape, but if this Government seeks to escape that responsibility then there is no hope for the economic progress in this country.

The belief is that only one particular group or section of people can find high positions in this country. This belief has reached every sector. Today it exists even among those who are charged with the responsibility of dispensing justice. If someone is in line for promotion and that person is not implicitly loyal to the Government then someone will be brought from abroad and appointed to the vacancy. This is a fact. We have been reading in the newspapers of the stand taken by Magistrates. If persons in such high positions feel so strongly about being by-passed and about discrimination, then how will the ordinary man feel? If the Government sits idly by and allows this feeling to grow then the desired unity of the peoples of this land will become impossible.

Shortly after the Report of the International Commission of Jurists was published the Prime Minister made pronouncements which appeared in the

newspapers and which were broadcast. He said, "I recognise the implications in this country; I understand the position in this country and I shall definitely accept the Report of the International Commission of Jurists and correct, above all, the great imbalance that exists in the Police Force."

This imbalance still exists and is getting worse. I examined recent promotions carefully and I found the names of only two Indo-Guyanese among a large number of persons who were promoted to corporals. One was a Singh and one a Persaud. Is it that in the Police Force there are no Indo-Guyanese who ought to be promoted? I have spoken to a number of them and they are dissatisfied.

Recently a sergeant in the Defence Force spoke to me. He said he had been called in and told that he was released from the Defence Force. In other words, he was dismissed. He said he asked for what reason he had been dismissed and he was told that he had requested permission to resign. This sergeant said he had not sent in his resignation and he had told no one that he wanted to resign. This officer was kept out of the Force for several weeks and he was called back about nine days or ten days ago. I have seen the document discharging this officer.

3.50 p.m.

Then we go on to the question of on-the-spot promotions. Can this Government honestly defend the recent promotions given? Again no Indo-Guyanese was promoted. Indo-Guyanese and Amerindians are not qualified for promotion. It is obvious that only persons recommended by the P.N.C. were promoted. This is a fact, we are seeing it in reality. Then those who are in the Force are being pressurised; they feel that they are prisoners. Policemen within the Force who are in good grace with the Government pay more attention to certain members of the Force than to persons who commit choke-and-rob offences on the streets. That is why there are

so many incidents of larceny and robbery on the streets.

I have been told — I am speaking subject to correction — that the food that is prepared is keeping a large number of Indo-Guyanese out of the Force and when representation is made nothing is done. It is clear that the members of the I.C.J. went into this matter because they recommended in paragraph 63 (d) that Indians should not be forced to eat what they do not want to eat and they should not be compelled to move away from their customs and practices. But the Government has done nothing about this.

There is discrimination at every level in this country — racial and political discrimination. This is not a question that the Opposition is speaking only for Indo-Guyanese but it is speaking generally on this question of promotion and appointments. There are a number of qualified non-Indians who are not promoted, who are being bypassed because they are not in good grace. Some people believe that they must discharge their duties according to their consciences and for this they are being suppressed in the Force.

The Government talks about efficiency campaign. How can you get efficiency in this country when there is so much dissatisfaction all round, in the Government and outside of the Government? There is dissatisfaction even in the Cabinet. The previous Minister of Finance (Mr. d'Aguiar) said he had very good reasons for walking out. He is not in agreement with the appointment of the Commissioner of Inland Revenue. Before the former Commissioner of Inland Revenue left this country he told a large number of people that he left because of pressures. He must not collect tax from certain people and he was not prepared to do this.

In the Ministry of Health a very able Guyanese was in line for promotion to the post of Deputy Director of Medical Services but, apparently, this Guyanese is not in good grace with the Government and, as a result, the position has been abolished. Who would

[MR. PERSAUD]

want to stay in a job if there is no room for promotion and improvement? We see that the Government is giving absolutely no consideration to this question of creating an atmosphere so that all can feel they have a right to contribute to all sectors in this country.

I come now to the question of transfers. I am told that there is discrimination in transferring policemen. Recently, a minor incident occurred at Mahaica Police Station and, as a result, an Indo-Guyanese policeman was chased away from Mahaica and he is now at Beterverwagting. Another policeman from the same station was thrown in another area. How can these people remain in the Police Force? I am not prepared to call names but I have been investigating a number of cases in the Police Force and I have seen how deplorable the conditions are. I have seen discrimination, the iron hand pressing people who do not support the Government of the day politically.

Unless the population of this country can have confidence in the security forces we would be stagnant because virtually everyone who does not sympathise with this Government feels that he is a prisoner — whether he is Indian, African, Chinese or else — because, at any time, the security forces would be switched to take him. It is for this reason that we are seeing the indecency of the removal of the Commissioner of Police.

I therefore strongly support this Motion condemning the Government for not implementing anything in the I.C.J. Report. It has not implemented anything. We have a Prime Minister of words and promises; he takes no action whatsoever and people are conscious of this. You cannot depend upon a Government when the head of that Government makes promises, uses fancy words, and does nothing at all to improve the position of the country. The hon. Prime Minister has said that the recommendations in this Report will be implemented and that

efforts will be made to correct the grave imbalance, but there is imbalance in the Police Service Commission, much less the Police Force.

The hon. Mover of the Motion suggested — as was recommended by the I.C.J. — that a board should be set up to recruit officers so that people will feel that they have been given a fair chance to enter the Police Force. But this has not been done.

Some time ago it was mentioned in this House that there is one set of examinations for one section of the community and another set of examinations for another section of the community — one set for the urban areas and one set for the rural areas. As a result of this, some persons cannot pass the examinations. I hope that the Government will start paying serious attention to matters of this type. If the Government is not serious and if it does not try to become aware of the problems in this country, no efficiency campaign can ever be successful.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I think it is time to take the suspension. This sitting is suspended until 4.30 p.m.

Sitting suspended at 4 p.m.

On resumption.

Mr. Persaud: I should like the hon. Minister of Home Affairs to tell us when Government will implement the I.C.J. Report. The question as to whether the People's Progressive Party Government participated in this is not relevant. What is relevant is that the Commission submitted its report to the Government and the Government accepted it, and since this Report has been accepted by the Government, I should like the hon. Minister to say what steps, if any, have been taken to implement this Report.

If this country is to make progress, if this efficiency campaign is to bear any fruit, unity and harmony of the people are the basic prerequisites. Unless there is unity and harmony, there can be no efficiency or progress and it is time that this Government recognises this. These Ministers seem to be

interested only in staying in office and receiving salaries and as the Government breaks up today, one Minister walks out, another remains to receive salary. This new nation and all of us who are concerned generally with Guyana would wish to see something tangible done to bring about improvement in this country. There is too much dissatisfaction; too many people are unemployed and nothing is being done by the Government to correct these things. Unless they are corrected as I said, we cannot succeed.

In conclusion, I ask the hon. Minister of Home Affairs — he was taking notes of what the hon. Mover of the Motion and the other speakers were saying — not to evade the questions put to him this afternoon. We are satisfied that the Force is worse off. It is no use burdening us with figures. I know that many of them joined the Force but I also know that many of them have left as a result of pressure. There were people drawn from the Police Force and put into the Guyana Defence Force and those vacancies have not been filled by the Government and the situation remains the same.

Surely, when the nation looks at promotion lists of policemen and sees only two Indo-Guyanese promoted, one wants to know what has happened. Is it that these people are not doing their work properly, or is it that the Government does not trust them? I hope that the hon. Minister will tell us something positive this afternoon so that we can breathe the air of some hope for the Police Force because as it is, there is little or no confidence in the manner in which security is being carried out by the Government.

Mr. Luck: This Motion has been a statement of fact, that is to say, the Government has failed to implement the recommendations of the International Commission of Jurists and for this we seek to condemn the Government. One would have thought that with so many speakers on that side of the House, if the defence of this Government were that it had followed the I.C.J. Report, a spokesman on behalf of the

Government would have said so by now, therefore, it is assumed that the Government agrees that it has failed to implement the I.C.J. Report with respect to recruitment into the Police Force.

We must remember that the International Commission of Jurists was put forward by this Government as a body of the highest repute. It was invited by the Government to investigate imbalances in various sectors of our national life and when it issued its recommendations, this Government promised to implement them promptly without equivocation; but the recommendations have been made and this Government has failed to implement them. If only because Government's statements of policy ought to be honoured, Government's failure without explanation to implement a Report whose recommendations it publicly accepted, is not only note-worthy but it is blame-worthy.

Let us examine for a moment the nature of this Report and the matters with which this Report deals. In my humble submission, lack of confidence in the Police Force, lack of confidence in its impartiality and effectiveness, strikes at the root of any society and where there is no such confidence and where large sections of the community rightly apprehend that the security and police forces are not as impartial as they ought to be, I fear that the basis of the existence of the State is challenged, for the first function of the State is to ensure that citizens are safe in their homes from molestation and deprivation by "choke and rob" gangsters. That is the first function of the State, to provide security.

4.40 p.m.

All states in the exercise or in pursuance of their duties create police and security forces. If a large section of the country has no confidence in the Police Force, then the very existence of the State is in question.

The Government, in recognition of this trite proposition invited the International Commission of Jurists — Jurists of undoubted eminence — to send representatives to inquire into our police and

[MR. LUCK]

other imbalances in our national life, and it charged them with the responsibility of making recommendations. These Jurists started off with the assumption that public confidence in our Police and Security Forces must be restored, and this must be the assumption of all right-thinking people. A large section of our population apprehends, and quite rightly, that there is no security under the present Police and Security Forces. The International Commission of Jurists took as its starting point that this unfortunate state of affairs must be remedied.

May I say that this is not a joke; it is not a laughing matter that people living in a country are constrained to believe that the security forces are being developed with the intention of suppressing them. If a large section of this country continues to feel this way, I have no doubt that, just as Mr. Sydney King some years ago made a very interesting proposal, irrespective of the wishes of the leaders of all parties in this country, Mr. Sydney King's proposal will have to come out again, only this time under new auspices. Let us not quibble about this matter. This is true. No self-respecting group of people will continue to live under the perpetual dominance of another group of people only because those people have absolute control over the security forces. Such a situation would clearly be intolerable and only those who dream fallacious dreams can entertain the hope that, with the connivance of a complacent Commissioner of Police Force, they can do what they like in this country. The Government recognises this. I am not talking about the nonentities who fill up and warm Government Benches.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: You cannot refer to hon. Members as nonentities. You have to withdraw it.

Mr. Luck: I withdraw it. The Government, in recognition of this clear fact invited those people to come and they said

exactly what I am saying. Page 41 of their Report states;

“It is clear from the foregoing that there is a marked preponderance of Africans in the Police Force.”

It is also stated in paragraph 62 of the same Report that:

“In a society such as that of British Guiana today, where racial divisions are an important factor in political life, it is essential that the Police Force should broadly reflect the different races of the population...”

The reason for this is that a preponderance of any one racial group in the Police Force may be harmful to the public interest in that members of the racial group or groups who are inadequately represented may have little trust or faith in the impartiality of the Force.

Some people believe that these are mere words; but these are words of profound meaning. It is true that unless we create a Police Force in this country, in which every man, regardless of his race, may have confidence, we will be creating in our society a ticking time-bomb, and when it goes off some of us may feel that we will do less badly than others. But no one should be confident that he would do well. I defy anybody here to say that he will do well out of this. What they may be confident about is that they will do less badly than the other fellows. Surely, the exercise we are embarked upon in this House is one of progress; and the sine qua non of progress in this country is that all the people living here, regardless of their colour, must be confident that the State is not designed for their suppression or their intimidation, but that the existence of the State is dependent on their support and their co-operation.

If the repressive or coercive arm of the Government is to remain the exclusive prerogative of a small section of the community, then one does not need to be a profound student of politics to know that certain results will ensue. In such a society there cannot be politics by general agreement. The State would rapidly decline

and become a police State. One bad thing will lead to another. We will have repression and more repression. Since the people will be repressed on the ground of race, they cannot change. They will either submit or fight. Those who base their policies on the belief that there will be submission, are making a terrible mistake, and it will be the disaster of this country when the logical conclusions of those policies are borne out. I have no doubt that at that time men will only be able to boast that we did not suffer as much as others.

4.50 p.m.

Let us study the history of this I.C.J. Report. The Commissioners came at the invitation of this Government because the Government wanted, as it said then, to create a situation in this country in which all the diverse elements in our society could have confidence in the Police Force and confidence in the economy. We on this side of the House pressed for the imbalance in the Police Force to be remedied. The hon. Members on that side pressed with equal force. When they yielded, one would have thought that the imbalance in the security forces would have been remedied. They broadened the terms of reference to include an investigation into the imbalance in many sectors of our national life. No literate spokesman on that side — I am not speaking of the illiterates — would urge that the political philosophy which underpins this statement of political fact, based on long experience in human history, is that the Police Force must be impartial and must manifestly be seen to be so. Nobody could quibble about that.

The Commissioners went on to consider the various measures that could be taken to remedy the serious imbalance in a crucial sector of our national life. There is no sector more crucial in our national life than the security forces. It is true that for hundreds of years — in many other countries and, indeed, in this country itself, the security forces were manipulated. They were used as an instrument of racial oppression.

It might well be asked — and I think it is asked by some of my friends opposite — if white people could do this against us why can't we do it against others! That question is not without some logic, but I urge my friends opposite to consider that the rights of all of us depend on our personal recognition of the rights of others. That is my personal philosophy. I believe that my own rights are contingent on my respect for the rights of others. The fact that the police and security forces in the United States of America, in Southern Rhodesia and in South Africa are racially biased and instruments of racial oppression would never justify our action in Guyana in this way.

Let us put aside the question as to whether this form of conduct, this basic belief that there will be submission, is correct. It is my contention that if this unhappy situation continues in this country where the majority of people live in fear and trembling, that a new political alignment will take place, new alliances will be born and, irrespective of our wishes, irrespective of our own personal commitments to whatever we believe in, there will be new alignments, new alliances and, indeed, a new Government.

Don't let this Government fool itself. In the recent crisis which the P.N.C. precipitated, it was known what would be the reaction of the coalition. They precipitated it, and when it came to the crux, they had to withdraw; they could not break up the coalition. I challenge the Government to deny it. Everybody saw that the coalition was about to break. The Government was unbending; they carried the fight and when it came the P.N.C. had to back down. This is not because of the love of the P.N.C. for the U.F. Far from it! If the P.N.C. despises any political opponents in this country it is the U.F. It has good reason historically and otherwise for that.

In this matter political good sense, political, social and international realities prevailed, and so I say the failure to implement the I.C.J. report is no light matter. Members of the Government have

[MR. LUCK]

remarked jocularly that we on this side of the House have in times past referred to the International Commission of Jurists of Geneva, Switzerland, as a body in receipt of a subvention from the Central Intelligence Agency of the United States. That is true; it is an unchallengeable fact. The I.C.J., or whatever it can be called, came to this country and examined the problems at the Government's request. The Government led extensive evidence before the Commission. Its viewpoint was heard. The Commission submitted its Report. The Government promptly accepted the Report and to this day it has done nothing. What did the Report say? This is said in paragraph 64:

“ . . . there are not sufficient Indians in the Police Force for it to command the general support of the population as a whole. There is a need to increase the recruitment of Indians, and this should be done at the two normal levels of recruitment, i.e. Constable and Cadet Officer level.”

My understanding of this matter in relation to the Cadet Officers, is that rather than appoint a fair proportion of Indians as Cadet Officers this Government has refused to appoint cadets. It abolished the class. I want the hon. Minister of Home Affairs to answer that charge. The Cadet Officer level is higher than the normal recruitment level, and this Government has not, in 1966 or in 1967, recruited the same number of cadets as it would normally have recruited if we took for example the five-year period which has just passed and divided it by five. The recommendation having been made in this Report that more Indians should be recruited in the Cadet Officer class, the Government dropped the class entirely.

The I.C.J. Report went on to say that 75 Indians or others should be recruited to the Force for every 25 Africans, the reason being that within a short period we would have a fair number of all sections of the community represented. We say that if the

Government does not intend to implement this Report it ought to say so.

5.00 p.m.

So long as it remains the Government's policy — and the Government publicly announced that it has accepted the recommendations in this Report — then it ought to implement those recommendations, and its failure to implement them is blameworthy.

May I say that the very existence of this state is in peril so long as people of different races have no confidence in the Police Force. This is a trite proposition. Those who have reason to believe that the Police Force is biased in their favour may see this matter in a different light, but as I see it, no self-respecting person will accept any situation where the organs of the Government are manifestly designed for their suppression, coercion and intimidation.

Those of us who read history know that the oppression of human beings has a long history and it will not cease today. I appeal to Members opposite not to be responsible for this unfortunate state of affairs — supporting things they know to be wrong. If the Government was at variance with the analysis of this Report it would have said so. [Mr. Singh: “You like that Report.”]

The hon. Minister of Works and Hydraulics (Mr. Singh) who is not an Indian but an Anglo-Saxon by marriage would regard this matter with levity, because when the matter comes to a finality — as it will come; for history moves on irrespective of the wishes of a few people, — [Mr. Bowman: “Veiled threats.”] This is not a threat, this is a positive statement of fact, he will run. Unfortunately, I was trying to make arrangements but I am not an Anglo-Saxon by marriage, I am totally Guyanese by marriage.

I want to ask the Members opposite to explain why the Government has not wholly accepted a Report such as this, where a series of recommendations were drawn up and the reasons for the recommendations were clearly put forward. May I say that this is a total breach of faith, not only with the

men who drafted this Report but with the people of this country. It matters not who constructed this Report because what is contained there is elementary political science.

In conclusion let me say this: Any Government that publicly announces its acceptance of important recommendations will find itself — if it is a Government based on principle — bound to act on the recommendations which it has publicly accepted, and it will follow those recommendations in good faith. This Government is clearly guilty of a remarkable breach of faith in this matter.

Secondly, the recommendations themselves are not without merit, and the purpose of the recommendations is for the evening-up or the liquidation of the imbalance in the Police Force. No reasonable Guyanese patriot can disagree with that purpose. Not only are these recommendations on a matter crucial to our national existence but they are wise and good. If the Government has come to a different view of the recommendations, frankness and honesty demand that it should say so. It should say too why it has come to a different conclusion and why it is now adopting a policy at variance with the one previously announced.

For all these reasons I support this Motion standing in the name of my friend the hon. Member Mr. Chase. *[Interruption by Dr. Reid.]* The gentleman who is disturbing the tranquillity of this House knows better than most people, and has to be thankful for his liberty, to the partiality of the Police Force — 500 detonators — for were it not so partial he would have been in prison.

Mr. John: The hon. Member Mr. Chase, speaking on this debate, made certain admissions at a very early stage of his contribution and even though hon. Members who spoke after him tried to contradict what he had said, I think that I ought to refer to those admissions so that a little more can be said on them than had been said before.

5.10 p.m.

The hon. Member referred to the fact that in his estimation, the Government had carried out a number of recommendations which were contained in the Report of the Commission which came here under the auspices of the International Commission of Jurists and he went on to set out, according to him, what the Government had carried out. He also did not fail to refer to the fact that after the Report of the I.C.J. was made public, the Government, while pointing out that it was willing to carry out the recommendations of the Commission, made it quite clear that such steps to be taken must be taken within the context of the Government's financial provision and the implications of the several steps which had been recommended in so far as their practicability was concerned.

It must be noted that the International Commission of Jurists was not a group of technical men going into every detail as to the pros and cons of one or other type of police operation of formality relating to recruitment, but the I.C.J. was giving us an opinion after investigation, and their view on the situation and the method of remedying it. Surely, one would not deny that the nature and operations would be dependent on the considerations as they existed when that particular recommendation was being offered.

At a very early stage, one sees very clearly that the Government in its approach to the question of getting the I.C.J. here, was making an honest attempt to meet what were the complaints, though it was felt they were unjustified, of certain sections of the community including the People's Progressive Party at whose behest this Motion is moved, even though they did not take part in the deliberations or give evidence before the Commission.

I realise that the hon. Member was at least kind to make certain admissions which were inescapable, that the factors which had some bearing on what may be described as differential participation, were factors which are based on historical and sociological

[MR. JOHN]

reasons rather than on any other cause. And no one dares to suggest that the participation in one percentage or another of one or group is something created by any one group in country. I think therein lies an important aspect of the matter where the hon. Mr. Chase said it was one of history and not one of personal decision, but in a multiracial society, the differential participation in various activities is inevitable and that is confirmed by his colleague. I do not think that anyone can reasonably argue against that.

Although the hon. Member at a very early stage of the debate sought to give a history dating back to a number of years as to the number of persons recruited in 1957 and 1958 in one or other group, I think that he omitted to give some indication of what their attitude to recruitment in those days was. It was a question as to whether one or other particular group wanted to take some part in the security forces and history will show this. At a later stage, there will be a comparison of the position showing wastage, or persons who have left. We have nothing against them but we ought to make the position clear.

There is one unusual element which has crept into the debate. Mr. Luck was behaving in a manner that gave the impression that the Report of the i.C.J. had dealt with the participation in the security forces of Indians as against Africans, but if one were to examine the Report, it is not so. It is a question of participation by Indians against the rest and that is a very important distinction, a distinction which should not be missed.

If one examines the structure of the security forces, one would find that it is not so much in the lower ranks but in the upper planes that arguments on the question of balance arise. This is nothing new because it is only in recent times that there has been a change in the structure. Formerly, all the officers were European officers but those are

situations which change, which must take their form and content according to what is going on in the society. I do not think a short historical examination such as that made by Mr. Chase into the participation of the Africans against Indians in the security forces would be sufficient for the purpose except for the purpose of a theoretical examination of actual participation in the security forces dating back to the period in question, that is, 1961.

It is true that the hon. Member sought to make reference to complaints made by the hon. Leader of the Opposition, Dr. Jagan, from time to time and perhaps, even in a few references in an infamous document which he once published. We hold no responsibility for the falsity of figures which Dr. Jagan cares to give outside this country. I think whatever he does must be related to the true facts of the circumstances, and the true facts of the situation will show that it is not the action of any one group to put itself into the position of having such members in the security forces as it has, but that in the early days it was a matter of personal choice as to what occupation they should follow. For that reason we cannot condemn members of the security forces because they are not Indians. An argument relating to differential participation or how it happens to be present in the upper ranks may be started, because that arises from the fact that for a number of years these members of the group comprising these ranks have been there, and they were otherwise likely to be promoted, and I do not think they should blame the people or condemn them in any way, because they could not be denied promotion if they merited it, because the extent of their participation was not what is now desired.

No one should feel that his rights are to be affected, that his rights are to be prejudiced because of some new concept which has been raised.

5.20 p.m.

Now, the Government, in asking the International Commission of Jurists to look

into this matter, was anxious to give the members of the Opposition who were spearheading this complaint, an opportunity of expressing their views before the Commission so that there could have been some form of public debate on the reasons for the situation that they were complaining about. Unfortunately, the hon. Members did not take the opportunity, although they sought to speak outside of the Commission.

I am sure that a look at the list of persons who gave evidence before the Commission will indeed be interesting. A number of hon. Members who belong to organisations gave evidence before the Commission, and even among the members of the Opposition are persons who gave evidence before that Commission. I noticed that Dr. Ramsahoye was one of the individuals who submitted memoranda to the Commission. I do not know what was the reason for the reference to the fact that we had invited the Commission. But I think that they ought to be satisfied that they had every opportunity to express their views before that Commission even though they failed to do so. Therefore, I do not think that they can afford to complain at this stage.

One hon. Member made reference to the Report of the Commission of Inquiry, and he tried to say that the Report dealt at length with the stress under which the Police Force had been working. But the hon. Member should have referred to the commendation which had been given to the Police Force. I think that hon. Members would do well to read later Reports which praised the sterling qualities of the Guyana Police Force; that we have been able to pass through those days of stress and strain is something which must go to the credit of the Force. Another Member went on to say that, if our Police Force is to progress, it is very necessary for it to have cohesion. We are also of the opinion that it is necessary to have cohesion and peace and tranquillity in the country for our society to progress. I am sure that hon. Members will agree that we have been able to attain peace and

tranquillity in this country, and so set the pace for the nation to move on.

Now, sir, it is not without some interest to note that hon. Members referred to the fact that more policemen are needed. I do not know what was their attitude of mind during, say, 1964; but whatever one does, has to be done in relation to the necessity and to the means at one's command.

Great play has been made about the extraneous duties performed by policemen. I want to deal with this matter immediately because it is a matter on which there has been some misunderstanding. There is no specific formula as to the extent of duties policemen must perform in any country. It is true that policemen are normally concerned with their basic duty of crime prevention. But the other duties which policemen perform vary considerably from country to country. The type of duty that a policeman may perform in a country that has a very large population will be entirely different to the duty which a policeman will perform in a country like ours. In the interior areas a policeman may find himself doing the job of a warden, the job of a customs agent and a number of other jobs. In some countries, immigration work is done by completely different sections. Therefore, the whole question of policemen performing extraneous duties must be examined in relation to the nature of the country and its population. It is true that in the course of time one may find that certain duties now performed by policemen can be dealt with by other agents. But that is something which has to be carefully examined. Those duties cannot be taken over by other agents of the Government. Perhaps they can be taken over by voluntary organisations.

The point was made that an undertaking was given by the British Government that steps will be taken to make improvements, but now that this Government is in office, the British Government said that it cannot, in fact, put them into effect. I do not know if this Opposition is saying that the British Government should dictate to this

[MR. JOHN]

Government. We recognise that an acceleration of the programme is necessary to help to bring about a change for the participation of the various groups, and the Government is always willing to try to assist the people to participate. However, it must be admitted that a number of difficulties will arise. We are not unmindful of them but we are prepared to meet the recommendations which were made in the Report, as far as finances and other relevant circumstances permit.

5.30 p.m.

One might reduce height. It is well known that in affecting arrests, the resistance that is offered to a member of the Police Force whose stature is substantial is much different to that offered to one of a diminutive stature. If you go to arrest a criminal or a law-breaker one would expect that consideration of the physical stature of the person would always come into play. It is found not only in this country, but all over the world. We tried to keep in line with what has been propounded.

When hon. Members speak of the responsibility of the Government to publicise the action which will be taken in respect of getting more Indians to join the Force, I do not think they can deny the fact that the recommendation of the International Commission of Jurists and the Government's statement that it proposes to implement the recommendation subject to its financial capacity were made very public in this country. All hon. Members are fully aware of the steps that have been taken to publicise that fact. I do not think there could be any doubt about it. I think the fact that the Government was endeavouring to fall in line with the intake which has been recommended is very well known. Indeed, reference was made to it many times publicly by hon. Members of the

Opposition. I do not see why they now seek to blame the Government.

As regards compliance with various factors, the hon. Members have had to admit that there are no obstacles in relation to religious and dietary laws. On such occasions as diet has to come into play, when, for instance, in the mess officers have to meet, there is the menu, which is very varied and has all the various types of dishes. In some cases there are Indian dishes. Apart from that, one is not normally prevented from asking for another dish when he does not partake of a particular dish. If a man does not eat beef, for instance, he can ask for fish. On the menu he will see that cheese, dried fish, dhol, soup or callaloo are all served. There are many other types of dishes. This is arranged so that anyone can partake of the food desired. In fact, many Indians do partake of other dishes which they did not partake of formerly and many kinds of dishes which at one time were thought of as being peculiarly Indian are now fully integrated into the Guyanese cultural pattern. Roti and curry are not necessarily specific to Indians and neither are dhol and pilouri. I think it must be emphasised that there has been full compliance here.

The recommendation relating to the entry into the Force of applicants who are not married has presented no difficulty. That requirement has been removed. The requirement was relaxed some time before, but it has been completely removed now, so that there is nothing there that one can quarrel about.

When one goes on to the other recommendations, one finds that a number of questions have been raised. One hon. Member questioned the recommendation regarding marriage in relation to women. That is very different from the question which arises in the case of men. I do not think it was realised by hon. Members that the International Commission of Jurists was not making a technical assessment into all the things that would arise in recruitment.

The point has been made that the recruitment procedure should be speeded up and that it used to take six months for results of examinations to be known. I do not know that it took as long as that. What I do know is that all examinations are now set by the Ministry of Education and within a period of a month or six weeks the results are available and those who have succeeded are aware of that fact. The procedure for examination has been completely improved. We are agreed that it is important that that procedure should have been improved.

It is important to all persons. The Ministry of Education has indeed done quite a lot to speed up the results of those examinations. The action is far quicker than in cases where people take examinations and have to wait for the markings done by people out of the country.

The recruitment of people in rural areas is a procedure that is satisfactory because people do not have to come into Georgetown for this purpose. An opportunity is given to them to take examinations in their districts. Thus it is made more simple for them.

Great play was made of the fact that the conditions of service should be so improved as to make it attractive for more Indians to enter the security force. I think one has to examine this proposition very carefully. The hon. Member Mr. Chase suggested that in order to stimulate the flow of Indians we ought to pay more salaries, build more quarters and so on. I think Mr. Chase was very careful to make the point that the implementation of the recommendation would be dependent on the Government's financial capacity. His suggestion is that salaries in the Police Force should be raised in order to attract Indians who will not come into the Force for the small salaries that are now paid. — [Dr. Jagan: "He never made that point."] — You will have your chance to reply. That point must be considered in relation to the Government's attitude towards remuneration. If we are to say that salaries of policemen must be

increased in order that Indians, who do not want to work for such salaries, can come into the Police Force, then I am afraid a similar argument is likely to be raised in a number of other instances and one does not know where we go from here.

5.40 p.m.

The question of remuneration in any field has got to be dealt with by a Government according to its resources, what it has, and according to how far remuneration can be carried in the country as a whole. We have nothing against members of the security forces being given the best remuneration that the Government can afford but, surely, I do not think that hon. Members would consider it fair to suggest that, in relation to the Police Force alone, we should, even though our financial resources do not permit it, raise the salaries in certain sections because some Indians will not come in for the present salaries.

I think this is wrong and when, at a later stage, I give the figures of Indians who have come into the security forces, you will see that they have come into the Force having regard to the remuneration and the salaries as they exist in relation to everyone. I do not think that hon. Members ought to ask this Assembly to condemn this Government because it did not raise the salaries so that the other Indians who might have wanted to come into the Police Force but who did not come in because they could not work for the salaries as they are, might then be given an opportunity to come in. This question therefore has got to be carefully looked at.

A similar difficulty arises in the conditions of work. This Government is quite willing and it has always shown every effort to try and improve conditions of pay, service and work not only for members of the security forces but for members in the Government services, and these things have got to be done within our financial capacity. It will be wrong for any Government to try

[MR. JOHN]

to do otherwise and I do not see how we can do otherwise.

As regards conditions of services, this Government has in fact taken all steps possible to make conditions of service as attractive as possible, having regard to what is practicable, reasonable and what can be borne by the financial position of the country. The hon. Member Mr. Chase said that facilities must be provided so that those persons who want to come in can be attracted into the Police Force. I wish to say that there is no lack of attraction to the Police Force but we have tried, as far as possible, to make the conditions good.

One hon. Member made reference to the building programme. The building programme has also got to be related to our financial and other limitations. We do what can possibly be done every year. Right now we are building flats and we have been trying to rehabilitate a number of areas which have deteriorated because of long years of neglect. That is very obvious indeed when one goes through a number of stations. It is not a new problem. When you go to the station at Mahaicony you recognise that, for a long number of years, nothing had in fact been done. We are now seeking to rehabilitate a number of those areas to which reference has been made. It is going to take time. I do not think, however, that it is fair for hon. Members to say that we should be condemned for not improving conditions so that people can be attracted into the Force.

Hon. Members on the other side spoke of substantial revision in rates of pay in order to allow Indians to get in. When he was referring to 1962 the hon. Member Mr. Chase said that we should meet the requirements of Indians and then he spoke of an element of discontent which stemmed from a feeling that salaries were inadequate.

That is what the hon. Member said; I do not think he is going to deny it now.

As I said before, one could hardly look at it on that basis. One has got to recognise that the Commissioner was in fact endeavouring to meet the demands of those who felt that there should be more participation of Indians. But all of those recommendations have got to be looked at in the light of their practicability.

As regards the implementation of the recommendation that recruitment should be on the basis of 75 per cent Indians as against 25 per cent other races, I think that we ought to look very carefully at what the members of the Commission said. Although hon. Members made some passing reference to the fact, the members of the Commission, in analysing the position before it reached paragraph 69 in which they made this recommendation, pointed out that, in certain instances, there are likely to be difficulties which will arise in the implementation of what they had in mind. I have not doubt that these hon. Members skimmed over this paragraph because this is what the Commission said:

“For this reason, we recommend that in each year for a period of five years . . .”

- and these are the operative words-

“ . . . whenever the number of qualified applicants at Constable or Cadet Officer levels permits, 75% of the applicants accepted should be Indian, and 25% from other races.”

The Commission was not unaware of the fact that there are certain difficulties that are obviously likely to arise in all its recommendations, not difficulties which are going to be created now but difficulties which exist, as I said before, having regard to the historical and sociological reasons. Many people who are now in the security forces came in at an early stage and, therefore, the composition of Indians at the top is not as high. For instance, the recommendation for

fixing the Promotions Board is a very difficult one to carry out indeed because, normally, selection is entrusted to senior officers - an Assistant Commissioner or at least a Senior Superintendent. One would have thought that, since by the very nature, for historical and sociological reasons, Indians were not in those ranks which are comprised mainly of Africans and other races, there were bound to be certain difficulties.

In the case of the Police Service Commission, there is an Indian member on the Board so I do not see that any question could arise there. That part has been fulfilled and I notice that hon. Members had no complaints to make on that. But there are certain circumstances in which those difficulties are bound to arise by virtue of the very nature of things, as I have pointed out before.

If one bears that in mind and then proceeds to look at the actual figures which have been created by the intake, one will get a very interesting position for 1966. In that year, 177 probationers enlisted in the Force, 117 were East Indians and 60 were other races. I think hon. Members would see that the position is much better than what they sought to project.

5.50 p.m.

One has to look at the operative clause in that recommendation and there are many circumstances which arise in relation to the number of qualified applicants. There is a thing like suitability that has to be taken into consideration when it arises, when one has to deal with the general build-up of the Force. Hon. Members tried to refer to the money which had been provided in the estimates on one item or another but I think that is a matter which ought better be debated at estimates time even though an hon. Member went on to say some increase was made for the police dog. I do not see

how that is germane to the question at hand, because he has not tried to give us how any increase in any other field compares with corresponding increases within the Police Force. Indeed, if it is only a talking point, \$2,000 in a vote which is so substantial makes his argument very unreasonable.

There was an insufficient number of qualified East Indian applicants with all-round suitability but we have sought to make it possible even in cases where some difficulty arose. In one instance, there was only one qualified East Indian woman applicant and that one was given the appointment. I do not know we could have done otherwise. There are difficulties of all natures.

An obvious difficulty would arise even though the I.C.J. sought to find a recommendation, but then this recommendation had some difficulty in its actual carrying out. The hon. Members tried to tell us about the population figures, and they felt there ought to be two training schools and things of that sort. I do not know if the Opposition Members want to tell the Government how to carry on its business. The Government has to make its own decision. In so far as we are able to build up, training has something to do with money. We do not think we could listen to Opposition members if they are going to indicate to us how many training schools we ought to have.

Hon. Members sought to give some detailed recommendations with regard to the deployment of members of the Police Force which ought to assist in keeping good relations between the Force and the population. It would be most unreasonable for Members to interpret that to mean that if there are 14,000 Indians as against 4,000 Africans at Albion, there should be so many police stations and so many Indian policemen as against so many African police stations and policemen. I do not think that

[MR. JOHN]

hon. Members have examined the practicability of trying to engrave such a racial stamp upon the security forces. They cannot be serious because, if one were to put such an absurd proposition into operation, one would have to start to allocate officers and policemen racially, so many Indian policemen and so many African policemen to an area with so many Indians and so many Africans.

One will have to decide whether in a particular area, a man will be denied promotion because a particular area has more people of another race and it is not possible to transfer him to that area. Then people in one area may be quiet and in another area they may be restless. What must we do then? We must not be in the position where a policeman cannot be sent to a particular area because he is restricted by a racial quota. This is one recommendation where we have to use our reason in deploying the entire Police Force and further, it is the belief of the Government that, whether he is an Indian in an African district or an African in an Indian area, once a policeman is wearing the badge of the Guyana Police Force, he must be respected as a member of the Police Force. [Applause.] We must have a new concept — [Interruption.] Why is it that so many people have returned to Wismar? I do not think that hon. Members on the other side would have thought it possible that there could have been this assimilation. There are a few who try to exacerbate grievances for their own political ends and there are those who instigated violence — members of the Opposition — who tried to dissuade people from returning. The facts are there against them. [Laughter.] As far as we are concerned, those who want to be law-breakers must respect a policeman whether he is an Indian in Georgetown or an African at Albion.

6.00 p.m.

The hon. Members are saying that we should try to adjust the number of

policemen in every area according to the numbers of Indians and "others", but even if that were a logical conclusion, in a place like Georgetown it would be a very difficult thing to do. It was a case of Indians in relation to the rest. In other words, a case was made out in relation to the Indians. But if their case were correct, it would mean that one would have to examine how many Portuguese, Indians and Chinese are in Georgetown. [Mr. Luck: "We don't want the work."] I am trying to relate the position. I do not think that hon. Members can be very serious about that very absurd proposition which was put forward.

What I said on the question of training applies to training whether it is local or overseas. Promotion depends, to a great extent, on the number of senior officers who were available. The position is improving and will continue to improve from stage to stage. A number of hon. Members on that side, who should be listed among the more irresponsible — and I know that the hon. Mr. Luck heads that list — have said that the Police Force will be used to suppress the wishes of the people; that people will not be able to express their wishes freely. At first he said that no Elections will be held. That was the nature of his ridiculous allegations. Then he went on to say that Elections will be held but the Police Force will be used to suppress the people. I wish to repeat what has been said time and again. The Government believes in free Elections and hon. Members must have no fear of Elections not being held in this country. I do not know why they do not want to lose a second time. But Elections will be held in this country. The question of holding Elections is not something that one can do according to one's ideas. We are prepared, as we have said before, to follow the Constitution.

As regards the role of the Police Force, they do not have to worry. The Police Force

has always played its role of maintaining stability. I am sure they must realise that many members of the Police Force were there during the last Elections, and that a Commission which came to this country to report on the manner in which Elections were conducted said that the Elections were conducted fairly.

The expression “unfair and phoney Elections” has always been used by members of the Opposition, whether it refers to General Elections or elections in their own party. Only today I came upon an old magazine, *The Great Betrayal* where members of their own party were referred to *[interruption.]* They were condemning their own elections as being “phoney” so it is nothing new.

References have been made to a number of side issues. Mr. Reepu Deman Persaud referred to the question of jobs. He said that people got employment because they were friends of the P.N.C. The institutions which have to give employment are there. I do not think that the hon. Member can really support that argument. Hon. Members in the Opposition went so far as to say that even the Magistrates have been complaining about recruitment. But if the Constitution provides for a particular Commission to deal with a particular kind of recruitment, it is absurd for any group of people, Magistrates or otherwise, to say — *[interruption.]* The Constitution provides for certain institutions to deal with certain positions so far as promotions are concerned. We cannot subscribe to such absurdity and, as I said before, it is not done anywhere nor is it related to recruitments to other fields.

6.10 p.m.

If what is wanted is technical knowledge in any specific field then the Commission can always ask for technical advice. An assessment can be done by a n^y person who has a reasonable concept of the requisites for a job and the qualifications called for. There is, therefore, the possibility of getting

technical advice on any questions. Indeed, that ought not to come into play in the case of the Police Force at all, because one can always call for the advice of the Commissioner, or for advice from any person who has served in that capacity.

Turning to other arguments which have been made, we find that quite a number of references have been made to posts which have been created from time to time. I do not see that those are very important here. Mr. Reepu Deman Persaud said that he believes in the unity of the working classes. The members of the Government share that belief. We do, in fact, believe in the unity of the working classes: we believe in the ascendancy of the working classes.

The hon. Member Mr. Reepu Deman Persaud went on to make a statement which I thought was rather unusual, that is, that the Government should bridge the racial gap that exists. I think that statement is significant for what it did not say and not for what it said. We agree that the Government should do that, and we say that the Government is taking steps to bridge the gap that exists, but we want it to be clearly understood by hon. Members of the Opposition that they, like all other members of the community, have to make their contribution to bridging the gap. I think the quicker Mr. Reepu Deman Persaud understands that the better. He belongs to an organisation that gave evidence before the International Commission of Jurists. I want him to understand this: it has to be the whole society which must get the collective consciousness which is necessary to bridge whatever gap may still remain between anyone race and another. It is not only necessary as between the races, but it is necessary to get the whole society moving on. A better form of living for all the races must be emphasised.

One Member said that there had been on-the-spot promotions and he went on to

[MR. JOHN]

criticise that. I don't know that this should really be a criticism, because on-the-spot promotions are operative in a number of forces. Members of a force have their own form of work; they have their own benefits and there are reasons for these things. By and large, one goes through the normal forms. On-the-spot promotions have their own purpose. They create an alertness on all occasions because no person knows when he might be next or when again he will be promoted. That is something which normally operates in security forces not only in this country and not only at the present time. It has been done several times before. I do not think hon. Members ought to criticise that.

One hon. Member said that no Amerindian had been promoted. I do not think it is recognised that for the first time an Amerindian was promoted to the rank of corporal. It would be a good thing if that were brought to the attention of hon. Members.

With reference to the incidents of larceny and robbery, I think by now hon. Members must be aware of the very serious campaign which the Government has mounted in this respect, but I think we ought to remind them that the attainment of a decrease in crime is not only a police responsibility; the attitude of the public can help quite a lot. Those who have tried to blow this matter up in the Press must have seen one case where the police were praised. Members of the Police Force were praised for their promptness of action in the matter, but criticism was made that the people who saw the incident did not give chase.

I think that all those who have sought to criticise unjustly and to raise a number of misgivings against the members of the Police Force, people who are working under great stress and strain and trying to do their best

in difficult circumstances to help in crime prevention. It is the duty not only of the Police, it is the duty of the public to assist in this respect and I have no doubt that, with an effective campaign, in course of time this whole situation will be remedied. Indeed, when the Press sought to blow up one incident, it was very clearly made out that incidents of robbery could take place anywhere. Every now and then there is a sudden robbery that takes place in Guyana, or a train robbery that takes place in the United Kingdom, or a very large robbery of hundreds of thousands of diamonds, as happened the other day outside this country.

Many persons like to say that the police ought to do this and do that. Mr. Chase said that we are dealing with a peculiar society, a multi-racial society, a society which has grown accustomed to a radical approach to problems which arise in its midst. I want to tell the hon. Members who have allowed themselves to fall into the dilemma, into which a number of people have fallen, that it is not unusual when some sudden incident occurs in most societies for people to seek to give themselves some quick justification by saying that the police ought to do this and ought to do that. I say that such persons in this society ought to wait a little and allow the police to take such steps as are necessary.

I am not for one moment seeking to justify any difficulty in trying to bring any particular criminal to justice. I would not do that, but I want to caution hon. Members again and advise them not to follow the time of those who are caught in hysteria every now and then when some offence seems to be committed. I think that they ought to recognise that, as the position stands at the moment, the Government is in fact mounting a campaign which is designed to combat these offences. I think it ought to be made clear that much more can be done by

the public and much less publicity can be given by those who do much more harm than good by giving unnecessary publication to incidents which in some cases do not deserve such publication.

We know that many people like sensationalism and like to listen to it. It does attract interest in one way or another. I do think that the time has come when some limitation ought to be put on that. We have in the crime prevention squad 50 persons, and in the emergency squad 93 persons, who have been taking some part in this campaign and I have no doubt it will have its effects as time goes on.

Having dealt with that, I should like to come to questions of a more general nature which I think ought to be borne in mind in dealing with this matter.

6.20 p.m.

One hon. Member referred to what he calls the creation of the ticking of a time bomb, and he was making some inference about difficulties being created again because of the nature of the security forces. I think he ought to give credit to us for improving the security situation for we have been able not only to end the emergency but the situation has been improving more and more until it has reached a point where people have come to recognise that, but for a few instigators and ringleaders who would like to exacerbate some feeling of disturbance, the general masses of the Guyanese populace know what it is to live in peace and tranquillity.

When one looks at the Prime Minister's tours one recognises the people's expressions of willingness to live with one another in peace and harmony. Hon. Members like the like the hon. Member Mr.

Luck, in wishful thinking that there will be people who will try to excite some disturbance, will indeed be disappointed, but they must accept their disappointments because 1,300 persons have returned to Mackenzie, are reintegrated and are earning a living. They have turned a deaf ear to those persons who were telling them not to go back. I think that the time has come when hon. Members must remove from their minds any belief that, by virtue of the points which they raised, in one way or another they are going to dissuade people from being reintegrated. So this question of the ticking of a time bomb is quite out of consideration.

The hon. Member Mr. Luck, despite the fact that he now refers to the Report of the I.C.J. and he advocates that we should follow that Report — and indeed we have accepted the recommendations and we say that we are following them having regard to our financial position — went on to criticise the I.C.J., and accused it of being an arm of the C.I.A. He said that the I.C.J. was receiving a subvention from the C.I.A. I do not know whether a similar allegation can be made as regards a number of members from his own group. What I know is that the Commission was there and the Opposition had an opportunity to go before it.

In dealing with the question of recruits reference was made to the Cadet Scheme. I think that I ought to deal with that question in some detail because hon. Members tried to use the arguments one way or another. A Cadet Scheme is used to supplement a situation which would arise where it is felt that there are not a sufficient number of men from the ranks to take positions of top command. Therefore, the operation of a Cadet Scheme is a matter of necessity.

Strange enough, although the hon. Member referred to the Cadet Scheme in 1966, he was careful not to refer to the fact

[MR. JOHN]

that the two Cadets were appointed in 1965 — one Indian and one African. Cadets have got to come from a reasonable number of persons who are considered competent and who apply for cadetship. The Cadet System depends upon the requirements which you have for members from the ranks filling positions of top command. Therefore, one has got to look at it in that light. The Cadet Scheme has not been abolished and, indeed, there is no intention to abolish it because it is a Scheme which can be operative as the necessity of the occasion demands.

It is always desirable to have men from the ranks promoted to positions of command. But there might be circumstances in which you might find it difficult to get a sufficient number of men from the ranks to take positions of command. Where we can find such men — and indeed we have found a number of men from the ranks, as hon. Members must have seen from the numbers who have held important positions who have come from the ranks — we intend to give them the opportunity to take positions of command.

I should like to deal with the question of filling posts of Cadet Officers where, for instance, a speciality might be required in which we do not have sufficient men from the ranks or where, in some cases, one would not find sufficient men from the ranks to take up positions of top command. I hope that it is very very clear to hon. Members that the basis upon which a Cadet Scheme is or is not put into operation, is something which is dependent upon the number of members who may or may not be available to fill certain positions of command.

Hon. Members have not made out a case although they sought to condemn the Government. At a later stage I am going to show why we must ask that this Motion be

rejected out of hand. They have not sought to make very many more suggestions as to how any better could have been done. I think we are satisfied that we have been doing the best that was practicable in the circumstances, having regard to the considerations of finance and the operative conditions to which I referred before.

We in the Government are going to continue to try and fulfil those conditions so far as is reasonably practicable. In a society such as ours there is likely to be some difficulty in making adjustments because adjustments can only be made from the people that we have.

We are satisfied, however, that the progress of assimilation, so far as the different ethnic groups are concerned, is a continuous one. It has been accelerated even after the set-back of the years of disturbances, 1962 to 1964. We are, of course, conscious that there can always be unscrupulous forces, unscrupulous persons who will try to prevent that assimilation, even though they see that that assimilation is in fact worthwhile. We are satisfied with that assimilation which is manifested by the attitude which has been shown, as I said, not only in the Prime Minister's tours but by the return of many persons — Indians as well as of other origins — to the places from which they have come during the disturbances. They will continue so long as we get the support. This support not only has to come from Government orientated concerns but also from the Opposition.

6.30 p.m.

Motions of this nature will not help to bring that support but the Government always believes in the exercise of the democratic processes in order to get the fullest debate upon issues, such as these, which are raised, and made a bit thorny when they are thrown into the open by members of the Opposition. After we shall have had a very exhaustive discussion of it,

because I am sure that hon. Members must agree that all the issues upon which reference was made have been dealt with, their attitude will, I hope, be different. I should say that the Government can do no other than throw out this Motion because

we feel it is unjustified and unnecessary and no case has in fact been made. [Applause.]

ADJOURNMENT

Resolved, "That this Assembly do now adjourn until Thursday, 5th October, 1967, at 2 p.m."