

SECOND LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

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

Wednesday, 18th February, 1959

The Council met at 2 p.m.

PRESENT :

Speaker, His Honour Sir Donald Jackson

Chief Secretary, Hon. M. S. Porcher (acting)

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

ex officio

Financial Secretary, Hon. W. P. D'Andrade (acting).

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

Member for Eastern Berbice
(Minister of Trade and Industry)

B. H. Benn

Member for Essequibo River
(Minister of Community Development and Education)

„ **E. B. Beharry**

Member for Eastern Demerara
(Minister of Natural Resources)

„ **Janet Jagan**

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

„ „ **Ram Karran**

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

Mr. **R. B. Gajraj**

Nominated Member

„ **W. O. R. Kendall**

Member for New Amsterdam

R. C. Tello

Nominated Member

„ **F. Bowman**

Member for Demerara River

„ **L. F. S. Burnham**

Member for Georgetown Central

„ **S. Campbell**

Member for North Western District

A. L. Jackson

Member for Georgetown North

„ **B. S. Rai**

Member for Central Demerara

„ **S. M. Saffee**

Member for Western Berbice

„ **Ajodha Singh**

Member for Berbice River

„ **R. E. Davis**

Nominated Member

A. M. Fredericks

Nominated Member

„ **H. J. M. Hubbard**

Nominated Member.

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

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

ABSENT

Mr. **Jai Narine Singh**.

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

The Clerk read prayers.

OATH OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. W. P. D'Andrade, Financial Secretary (acting), took and subscribed to the Oath of Allegiance *vice* Mr. F. W. Essex who had left the Colony to attend a meeting of the Currency Board in Trinidad.

MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Tuesday, 17th February, 1959, as printed and circulated, were taken as read and confirmed.

ORDER OF THE DAY

APPROPRIATION BILL

BUDGET DEBATE

The Financial Secretary (Mr. D'Andrade, acting): I beg to move that the Council resolve itself into Committee to resume consideration of the Bill intitled,

"An Ordinance to appropriate the supplies granted in the current session of the Legislative Council."

The Attorney-General (Mr. Austin): I beg to second the motion.

COUNCIL IN COMMITTEE

GOVERNMENT INFORMATION SERVICES

The Chairman: Yesterday we were dealing with Head 7B — "Information Services" — when a Motion was moved by the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Tello, for a reduction by \$1 of sub-head 1, item (1) — "Chief Information Officer", \$7,200.

Mr. Tello (*resuming*): Yesterday I was trying to impress on the Committee that there had been a considerable change in the administration and activities of the Government Information Services, and I drew attention to the matter in the best interests of the country and with the best intentions. Whilst speaking yesterday there was some cross talk which, unfortunately, introduced into the debate language of which the Chair disapproved, but I would like to have it recorded that

I feel that the heated argument across the Table was with the best intentions, and there was no hard feeling either way. When I made the statement yesterday that in my opinion too much emphasis was being placed by the G.I.S. in publicizing the activities of Members of the Majority Party, it was challenged. In the circumstances I feel that I should attempt in a small way to prove that I had some degree of justification for that expression of opinion.

The G.I.S. broadcasts over Radio Demerara and, more recently, over the new station, B.G.B.S., and it also publishes the "British Guiana Bulletin". In view of the challenge of the truth of my statement I have gone out of my way to bring into this Chamber today a copy of the most recent issue of the Bulletin, and I am going to ask your permission, Sir, to quote certain parts of it and to make general reference to it. This is a publication of the 15th January, 1959, an 8-page Bulletin. I have every reason to be anxious about the present policy of the G.I.S. On the front page of this 8-page Bulletin there is an article dealing with a \$20 million Water Control Scheme for West Berbice, and much prominence is given to members of the Majority Party, and reference is made to the Hon. Edward Beharry, Minister of Natural Resources.

Also on this front page appears a photograph of the Hon. F. W. Essex, Financial Secretary, which apparently appears in the Bulletin once a year. On the second page nothing is mentioned about any member of the Majority Party, but on page 3 there is a report of a statement made by the Hon. Minister of Community Development and Education, and reference to the Hon. Ram Karran, Minister of Communications and Works. On page 4 there is a G.I.S. Newsletter in which reference is made to a New Year Message from the hon. Minister of Trade and Industry, Dr. Cheddi Jagan, whose New Year Message as President of the Rice Producers' Association is published in a column headed "R.P.A. Newsletter" on page 5. On page 7 there is a photograph of the hon.

Minister of Labour, Health and Housing (Mrs. Jagan), and there is also reference to a speech made by Mr. Wilson, a very strong supporter of the Majority Party.

In an 8-page Bulletin seven pages are almost set aside for giving some sort of publicity to the Ministers. There is nothing wrong in showing what the Government is doing, but is there any necessity for these nauseating references to what the Ministers are doing or propose to do, and why they have done certain things?

I feel that this Government should use this Department to inform the public of the activities of Government as a whole. The proper way to inform the public of Government matters is by giving the people the decisions made by Government as a body, because this Government is now charged with collective responsibility. The technique now employed is to have certain information passed on to the public heavily loaded with propaganda.

I see in this small newspaper that six out of eight pages are used to give publicity and to assist in the propaganda machinery of the P.P.P. I think it is time that people take notice of such things.

What is the position with the radio? We more or less wake up in the morning to receive the G.I.S. news, and five out of seven days we are told of an hon. Minister going to inspect some site or returning from inspecting a site and things of that sort. This sort of news is repeated in the afternoon and it goes on with nauseating repetition throughout the day. For seven days you can hear the same story of Ministers going this way and that way. If you attempt to have a change in programme and you listen to the Woman's Programme you will hear the wife of the Hon. Brindley Benn speaking. The whole thing spells of cheap propaganda; it spells of propaganda coverage, and I feel that these facilities are improperly used.

I feel that if in the early days the G.I.S. was used for services of this sort, then those who were advocating its abolition was quite correct in doing so. I am not

going to advocate that it should be abolished. It is far too useful to this community to make such a request.

I am certain that the hon. Minister in charge of the Department does not listen to these programmes — probably he has been fed up with them a long time ago. I am certain he does not listen to them as often as other people do. I make this statement not as a rebuke to the officers of the Department because they have served in the same capacity before with wonderful admiration by people high and low. I say that the coincidence of this sudden departure from an admirable course set must be associated with the Ministers of the Government whose names you read and listen to almost with disgust. I raise this question in the hope that the hon. Minister in charge will look into the matter and see what can be done to stop this practice.

Mr. Hubbard: I understand the hon. Member to say last night that the GIS had deteriorated to become the propaganda organ of the Majority Party. The hon. Nominated Member who makes the charge is not just an individual without any status in the community. He is the Secretary of the British Guiana Trades Union Council, and when he makes the charge that the Government Information Services through its Radio broadcasts and its bulletin have become the propaganda organ of any political party it is a very serious charge indeed.

Mr. Tello: I rise to a point of correction. I want to inform the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Hubbard, that when I am mandated by the T.U.C. to do anything in this Council I always make it clear that I am mandated by the T.U.C. to do it. The Secretary of the T.U.C. has no seat in this Council.

Mr. Hubbard: I am glad that the hon. Nominated Member has not found that I have paraphrased or quoted him incorrectly. As far as I recall the Government Information Services provided free of charge to the Trades Union Council a programme which is called "Union Call". I myself have heard the hon. Nominated Member on one occasion.

[MR. HUBBARD]

Unfortunately he did not seem to be very familiar with his subject. He was talking about trade unionism, but he gave us a talk on co-operatives.

I would like to know if the hon. Member would still like, in spite of the continuance of the programme "Union Call", to maintain his contention that the G.I.S. through its radio broadcast and its bulletin has become the organ of the Majority Party? It is a very serious charge, and I would like to hear the truth of it.

The Minister of Labour, Health and Housing (Mrs. Jagan): I have listened with great interest to the comments made by the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Tello. Last night he raised the question about the G.I.S. being used as an instrument of the Majority Party. I gathered that he meant more than the Majority Party in the Government but the Majority Party as a political party. I took time off this morning to examine with my eyes some of the G.I.S. News Broadcast, because what one hears with the ears cannot be as fully regarded as what one sees.

I have before me a number of scripts from the G.I.S. News Broadcast which, I think, will be of interest for us to examine and see whether the allegations made by the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Tello, are correct. Let me take at random the G.I.S. Newscast of Thursday, January 29, 1959. The first item concerns Dr. Frank Dixey, Director of Overseas Geological Surveys and Geological Adviser to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. That does not mention any Member of the Majority Party, except to say that he conferred with the Director of Geological Surveys, Dr. R. B. McConnell, the hon. Dr. Cheddi Jagan, Minister of Trade and Industry and the hon. Edward Beharry, Minister of Natural Resources, etc.

Then the Newscast mentioned that world exports of fresh fruit in 1957 amounted to well over eight million tons.

The next item refers to the new Resi-

dent Tutor in British Guiana for the University College of the West Indies, Mr. Harold Blackmore, who was expected to arrive in the Colony on February 14.

The next item concerns the General Manager of B.G. Airways who was leaving the Colony on a business trip. The Minister of Communications and Works is not mentioned here.

The next item deals with British Guiana's trade, industry and general economic development, and mentions that there was a discussion between Dr. Cheddi Jagan and two members of the Canadian Trade Mission to British Guiana. It mentions that Mr. C. R. Stollmeyer, and Mr. James A. Roberts were there. It also mentions that Mr. Roberts expressed the view that Canada did not know enough about the trade and economic problems of British Guiana and stressed the need for a Commissioner for Canada here. I think it is, perhaps, unfortunate that the hon. Minister of Trade and Industry happened to be at the conference and his name was mentioned!

Now we come to an item which, I believe, must have raised the hon. Member's anger. This Newscast states:

"The Minister of Trade and Industry, the Hon'ble Dr. Cheddi Jagan, will attend a meeting of the East Berbice Union of Local Authorities tomorrow morning. The meeting will be held at the Sheet Anchor Anglican School, East Canje. It begins at 9.30 a.m.

Before returning to Georgetown on Monday, the Minister will meet members of the Berbice Chamber of Commerce at their request."

This item is one of the topics to which the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Tello, refers. He seems to be annoyed with the frequency with which the G.I.S. uses the names of Ministers. I know much more about this item, so I can speak on it from the point of view of the political party to which I belong. If the G.I.S. was acting as a propaganda weapon for the

Majority Party it would have mentioned also that Dr. Cheddi Jagan was holding ten public meetings, and it could have assisted the Majority Party by mentioning that there would be a meeting at Rose Hall Village at 4.30 p.m., one at another village at 6.30 p.m., and one at Cumberland at 8.00 p.m. Unfortunately, the G.I.S. did not assist the party in that direction. It merely mentioned the appointments of the hon. Minister of Trade and Industry in his capacity as a Minister, and pointed out that he would be attending a meeting of the East Berbice Union of Local Authorities to discuss problems, perhaps, affecting his Ministry and other Ministries, as well as his appointment with the members of the Berbice Chamber of Commerce. Surely that cannot be called a News Broadcast in the interest of the Majority Party.

The next item deals with the Third Caribbean Fisheries Conference sponsored by the Caribbean Commission scheduled to be held during July this year in St. Martin. The name of an hon. Minister has not been mentioned. We have not seen the name of the hon. Minister of Natural Resources in this.

The next item states :

"A United Kingdom Information Office is shortly to be established in Kampala, Uganda on the lines of the U.K. Information Office set up in the West Indies. . . ."

Let me give you a few more examples from the G.I.S. Newscast for Wednesday, January 28, 1959. It states:

"The Local Authorities at La Grange and Bagotville on the West Bank of Demerara have decided to pool their resources to provide a better potable water supply for both districts. . . ."

No mention has been made of the hon. Minister of Natural Resources.

The next item :

"Fourteen-year-old George Culley won the first prize in the 1958 Garden Competition at Buxton. . . ."

The next item :

"One hundred and seventy-four candidates have been nominated to contest the seventy-two seats in the Trinidad County Council Elections to be held on the sixteenth of next month."

The next item :

"A lecture will be delivered at the Lodge Community Centre by two officials of the Credit Union League."

The next item :

"St. Stanislaus College will be holding its Speech Day celebrations on Friday evening at 6.30. The Speech Day event which is the first of its kind to be held since the end of the last war will be attended by His Excellency the Governor, Sir Patrick Renison."

The next item :

"The newly appointed Law Reform Committee is holding its first meeting tomorrow afternoon at 5.30. The Committee which comprises the Chief Justice, the Attorney-General, Barrister H. A. Fraser, Solicitor Edward de Freitas and the Legal Draftsman will convene at the Chief Justice's Chambers. The Chief Justice, Sir Frank Holder, will preside at the meeting."

Now we come to an item which concerns me. It states :

"The Minister of Labour, Health and Housing, the Hon'ble Janet Jagan will declare open the new Post Office at Queens-town on the Essequibo Coast during her three-day visit to that area over the coming week-end. The Minister will leave Georgetown for the Essequibo Coast on Saturday morning. On Sunday she will visit residents at Airy Hall and Sands-Golden Fleece. On Monday morning she will interview persons at Colony House. She will return to the City later the same day."

If the G.I.S. was working in the interest of the P.P.P., it could have assisted me in my other activities outside of my Ministerial responsibilities as the Member in this Legislative Council representing Western Essequibo.

I also held a political meeting on Saturday evening. The G.I.S. did not help me with that. I also held a meeting to form a group in a particular area where my Party did not have a group. Those were activities which were entirely divorced from my activities as Minister, and the G.I.S. made no effort to include them in the G.I.S. news broadcast, because those concerned are fully aware that they have no place in a G.I.S. broadcast.

Legislators who are Ministers, in any political party, have a dual personality.

[MRS. JAGAN]

At certain times we have to perform functions in an official or Ministerial capacity, and at other times, as the representative in a constituency or as a party member. It is correct that these activities are divorced from each other. I would not want to make the mistake of using the Information Services incorrectly. If the G.I.S. wanted to be the propaganda arm of the Party, it has had many occasions to do so. For example, it could have reported that the P.P.P. donated scientific instruments to Central High School.

As I am quite anxious that the hon. Member should be a little convinced, I will make available a few facts. From 1st November, 1958 to the present date, we find that the names of Ministers are mentioned in 72 out of 696 news broadcast items, and in newspaper releases the Ministers, mentioned either by name or by office, are in 32 out of 448.

If we now come to the question of Ministers speaking on the radio, we will find that Ministerial broadcasts are slightly over one per cent. of Government broadcasting time. Certainly this is not a very high percentage to be used by Ministers over the radio.

The hon. Member said that every time he turned on the radio he heard the names of Ministers referred to. Perhaps he is objecting to the fact that Ministers do go here and there and take an active interest in the work they are doing. Am I to be condemned as Minister of Labour, Health and Housing for showing so much interest in the health programme as to visit cottage hospitals or health centres in the country? Is it incorrect to say that the Minister of Health visited Nabaclis the other day to see the sites for health centres? I wanted to see these sites myself, because if there is anything wrong with them later on I will have to take the blame. Ministers do not travel here and there to enjoy themselves, but to see conditions for themselves and to examine, for example, water supplies at first hand, to see Infant Welfare and Maternity Clinics in session, to see

farmers working in their fields, to see factories in operation, to see hospitals without being announced, to visit schools and see what is happening, to see chicken farms, to see farms raising coconuts and to do all the various things required.

Are we to be criticized for being so terribly interested in the problems of British Guiana that we take time which can be spent at the desk to visit places and then turn afternoons or evenings into desk time, while most people are enjoying themselves? If the hon. Member is suggesting that this type of publicity was not on the air during the time of the Interim Government, then he is saying that the Members of the Interim Government did not move about as we do. Perhaps, if they did move about as we do, they would not have made so many mistakes. Many of the housing sites were chosen incorrectly. There is one, for example, at Springlands, which we are having a devil of a time putting right. The wrong type of house was chosen, water supply question was not gone into properly, and so on. We are now correcting the mistakes made by previous Governments.

We move around quite a bit in order to do many official acts that should be done. If the G.I.S. were to say that the Minister of Education would on Wednesday next pay a visit to, say, Cornelia Ida School to see the condition of the school buildings, what would be wrong about that? Is that offensive? Is it offensive for the people of Cornelia Ida to know that the Minister is so interested in their problems that he should come to visit the district to see things at first-hand? Or is it that Members of this Legislative Council, who may not agree with the Majority Party feel a bit irritated that we are getting ahead with the job, despite attacks by Members or, perhaps, the Press?

If the hon. Nominated Member feels offended and feels that the G.I.S. is being used as a tool of the Majority Party, let him cast his mind back to the time when the Majority Party was not the Majority Party, and let him see if he can recall that not only were the policies and activities

of the Government of that time highlighted, but the G.I.S. used its time to attack the P.P.P., which was not in favour with the Government. If he does not realize it, I would remind him that the G.I.S., to my mind, has not used its position to attack the "Opposition" Parties; it has not slandered or attacked or used any sort of means to put the "Opposition" parties at a disadvantage. It has merely used its position to discuss the policy of the Government and the activities of the Government as well. Certainly that is a great difference. Certainly we have more to be discontented about than the other side. But we take our licks, and we are accustomed to doing so. Our skin is tough. The hon. Nominated Member is so thin skinned that he cannot take a factual examination and discussion of the achievements and activities of the present Government — they seem to hurt him more than anything else. It surprises me that he should become so petulant over such a trivial thing.

Let me remind him that in all 72 instances out of 696, mention was made of the Ministers as such. To refresh his memory, I will read from another series of broadcasts of the G.I.S. Wednesday, January 7; the G.I.S. newscast tells that "A posting box has been erected at a central spot at Annandale on the East Coast, Demerara" . . . "The Lower East Demerara office of the Drainage and Irrigation has been removed from Triumph" . . . the Financial Secretary, Mr. Essex, to deliver a broadcast on the Budget, over Radio Demerara . . . "The British Council will start another course on parliamentary Government next week at Manchester, Corentyne" . . . "Two streets built by Aided Self-Help were opened yesterday afternoon at Hopetown on the West Coast, Berbice" . . . "The long dry season has given the people of Tearn Village on the Berbice River a chance to begin work to bring into use one hundred and twenty-five acres of land which has long been lying idle" . . . In each of those there is no mention of the Majority Party Ministers. "A new telephone directory is now being prepared for 1959 . . ."

We have here the only item in the

whole newscast that mentions a P.P.P. Minister — "The Minister of Natural Resources agreed today with the proposals to provide rationed supply of water to Rice Farmers in West Demerara. The plans agreed upon are intended generally to prevent rice and sugar production in West Demerara from being adversely affected by the present water shortage."

We go on to the next item — "The Government Technical Institute will be conducting a 'Building Today' course as from the thirteenth of this month." Finally, "An Order in Council published in an Extraordinary issue of the Official Gazette today declares the danger of Paralytic Rabies spreading is over."

There you have another broadcast with only one mention of a Minister, the Minister of Natural Resources. It does not even call his name. How offensive could that be to the listening public?

The hon. Nominated Member drew our attention to the "B.G. Bulletin". He said the Bulletin is only a weapon of the P.P.P. I have here a copy of the Bulletin of 14th February, 1959 — I am sure hon. Members know how well it is now printed, more attractively than the old one. Look at the first page. There is a huge picture with the words, "Villagers Hail Inspiring Self-Help Leadership". I am afraid I cannot see any Minister there. "Better Potable Water Supply for two West Bank Demerara, Villages" but no mention of the Minister of Communications and Works. "Loans for Village Improvement Works", the money to be used for Drainage and Irrigation projects, road building and Community Centre project" but no mention of the Minister of Community Development and Education. "Cottage Hospital for Mahaicony" — this comes within my Portfolio, and there is no mention of that. In the article below this, the story is told that self-helpers in the Beteverwagting section of the Beterverwagting-Triumph housing scheme completed their houses and these were handed over to the house-builders by the Hon. Mrs. Janet Jagan, Minister of Labour, Health and Housing.

[MRS. JAGAN]

I am so sorry I was there. Then there is — “450,000 lbs. of Corn for Trinidad”, and this item tells how the Minister of Natural Resources, Hon. Edward Beharry, was able to negotiate this, while he was in Trinidad. I wonder how one could have told this story of the sale of our corn without mentioning that the Minister assisted in it.

Page 2 deals with foreign items of news, and the biggest is one about “The Intangible Bond that Binds the British Commonwealth of Nations together.” Turning to page 3, we find that “Rose Hall Local Authority is developing a new Housing site with a \$25,000 Government Loan”, and there is no mention of any Minister. “14-Year-Old wins top Prize in Gardening Competition”, and again, there is no name of any Minister. In fact, on the second and third pages there is no mention of any Minister. Also on page 3 is the item “Fertilizer Increases Rice Production” and the Minister of Natural Resources is not mentioned.

We come now to the centre pages, which perhaps offend, because in a circle in the centre is the picture of the Minister of Natural Resources, and the picture of the Director of Agriculture is below this. The pictures around the circle tell of the work of the Department of Agriculture—pig and cattle rearing, development of citrus, tobacco and other crops, and a few other things. Also mentioned is the fact that the Minister of Natural Resources praised the work of the Director of Agriculture, in an address to the Senior Officers of the Department of Agriculture at their Annual Staff Conference. It is a means of giving those people who read the Bulletin, mostly people in the rural areas, an idea of the activities of the Department of Agriculture.

Page 6 has no mention whatsoever of any Minister, but here is a R.P.A. Newsletter which sets out some of the recommendations of the Governor's Rice Committee concerning milling, and a news paragraph about the registration of the Lower Demerara River Cocoa Producers' Co-operative Society. But on

page 7 there is an item concerning a broadcast on the Government's Health Programme for 1959, and the G.I.S. committed the terrible error of publishing my photograph. I shall have to ask them not to use my photograph in future. I agree that it was unnecessary.

Does the hon. Member say that the publication of a broadcast on an important aspect of the health of the community should be left out because it happened that the Minister of Health spoke on a subject within her portfolio? I think it is important that people should have an idea of our Health Programme for 1959. In the Health Programme we do not find fabulous plans which cannot be implemented, but concrete down-to-earth plans which are being implemented within this year. Some aspects of the plan are already moving, and it can hardly be said that such things as the establishment of Health Centres and an anti-filaria campaign are not matters to be publicized.

On the back page of the Bulletin there is the comic strip, “Life With Sweet Sago”, but no picture of any Minister. In fact there is no mention of any minister, but there is an article headed “Oils and Fats Contract Extended to end of 1959”, “Copra Price up: Fry oil Price stable”. It is a report of a Press conference held at the office of Dr. Jagan, Minister of Trade and Industry, who explained that at the recent Oils and Fats Conference in Trinidad the price of copra went up and he succeeded in keeping the price of Fry Oil at the present level, which means that copra producers who could not make a decent living with present prices will get an incentive for better and more production, but the consumer will not pay more. Is it wrong to say that these things happen?

I have not found a single item in this Bulletin in which Ministers say they are going to do this or that, but merely announcements of facts. I have not explained these things because I love the G.I.S. Bulletin. I have merely done so because I think it is worthy of examination and explanation. I think the hon. Member has caused our Legislative Council debates to degenerate into silly

and petty complaints by Members. I thought this Legislative Council was a body in which important matters of policy would be discussed. I have heard Members grumble that they are being rushed into passing an item if someone has the temerity to rise and request that the matter be put to the vote. I have listened to Members discussing a minor item for an hour and a half, and no one has complained, but I would suggest that we spend more time on solid matters which can help our country. Whether we sit on that side of the Table or on this side I must assume that all Members have the same burning desire to see our country go forward.

Will our country go forward if we spend countless hours of Legislative Council time in tearing little bits of paper and grumbling about all sorts of inconsequential items? Let's get down to the things that count. Let the other side of the Council criticize; that is their right, and if they criticize well the country will benefit. I do not think there is anyone in this Chamber, particularly on this side of the Table, who would in any way object to criticisms, but we hope that such criticisms are kept on a high level which all of us can understand and appreciate, and which we can utilize for the betterment of our country.

The Minister of Trade and Industry (Dr. Jagan): I too would like to make a few observations because it seems to me that of all the people who have criticized the G.I.S. the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Tello, was the least competent so to do. What is the position with regard to the G.I.S.? We have been critical of the G.I.S. for a long time. If the hon. Member takes up his Estimate he will note that in 1953 the expenditure on the G.I.S. was \$26,556, but it suddenly shot up in 1954 to \$142,000, and it has been steadily increasing from then until 1957 when it reached the sum of \$224,000. Perhaps he will tell us that this was not done deliberately so that the G.I.S. might be the mouthpiece of the Interim Government which he so faithfully served when the people's representatives were thrown out.

He has the cheek to come here and say now that the G.I.S. is serving the Majority Party when it was created to divide the Party. We all know that the previous Information Officer was sacked because he dared to be neutral. I refer to the late Mr. Harewood. Why didn't the hon. Member get up then and speak? He was then a Member of the Government. Is it because at that time Mr. Harewood was replaced by someone who was more amenable, I suppose, to the wishes of the Government, or rather I should put it the other way, was it because Mr. Harewood was not going to toe the line which was wanted, or possibly because he was neutral?—I do not know what was the reason—but the facts are very clear.

We do not control the G.I.S. It is within the Portfolio of the Chief Secretary, and it is from the Chief Secretary that it gets its directions. The P.P.P. Ministers do not hire and fire. Incidentally, most of the officers of the G.I.S. were appointed during the period of the Interim Government, so that the hon. Member should certainly have thought carefully before he accused those who praised him and the Interim Government in which he played a big part.

The hon. Member referred to the B.B.C. and compared it with the G.I.S. That is the most puerile comparison one could ever listen to from a Member of this Council. The B.B.C. is not the Government Information Service of H.M. Government; it is a broadcasting corporation. It is true that it enjoys a Government monopoly, but it is not the mouthpiece of the British Government. In the same way as we have the G.I.S. the British Government has its own Information Service.

I do not wish to dwell at any length on this point. The hon. Nominated Member has referred to the number of times the Ministers of the present Government are referred to and have their photographs appearing in the G.I.S. Bulletin. Surely he knows that this Government cut down the Bulletin from a weekly to a fortnightly publication. The hon. Member knows that. If the photographs of the present Ministers adorn the Bulletin

[DR. JAGAN]

tin there may be some journalistic reason for it, because when the hon. Member's photograph and those of other Members of the Interim Government used to appear in the Bulletin, we know where most of those Bulletins went. Some of them were used for wrapping salt fish, and others for more unsavoury purposes. There is a member of the journalistic profession here who publishes a magazine. Ask him and he will tell you why he features the names of certain Members of the Majority Party in his magazine. He admits that they sell his magazine, and he is out to make money.

Maybe the G.I.S. has learnt that the photographs of the Ministers in the paper will encourage the masses to read it. I think the officers in this Department will no doubt ask the hon. Member to restrict his field of activity to that in which he is most competent rather than to criticize in the field in which he knows very little.

I would be the last person to apologize for the G.I.S. There is no doubt that very much could be done for this country, if things are done in the proper manner. I am sure that useful information could be disseminated, and very much could be gained by way of aiding techniques and advertising know-how in order to explain to the people how things should be done. This service could be used for the benefit of the country as a whole.

However much I may criticize the G.I.S., I certainly do not think, and no one will agree, that it is the mouthpiece of the People's Progressive Party. I regret that the hon. Member has taken an opportunity at this time to raise this criticism. I do not know whether he is personally peeved. I understand that he had a little fracas with the G.I.S. Be that as it may, we should not allow our personal feelings to enter into a matter like this.

Mr. Jackson: If the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Tello, had been in my place he may not have raised the question. If the G.I.S. is now the instrument of propaganda for the P.P.P. who is now in office, the P.P.P. will not be in office all

of the time. Some other political party will take its place some day, and that party will also use the G.I.S. as its propaganda machine.

Perhaps that is one of the reasons why the P.N.C. has not found any fault with the G.I.S. and its propaganda value to the P.P.P. The P.P.P. and I have no quarrel over this matter. What is sauce for the goose will be sauce for the gander, and when the time comes we may do even better than using the G.I.S. as a propaganda machine.

I remember after the Second World War and the Labour Party had won the 1945 General Elections, Sir Winston Churchill said that the Labour Party was using the Ministry of Information as its propaganda machine. Mr. Atlee asked him what he was doing with it when he was in office. These things will happen from time to time.

I disagree with the view expressed by the hon. Minister of Trade and Industry that the late Mr. Harewood was sacked because he appeared to be neutral. I did not understand that Mr. Harewood was sacked. If he held another post higher than the one in the G.I.S., I would not have called that being sacked. As a matter of fact Mr. Harewood held an office which hardly any other person could fill when he took over the job of preparing for the 1957 Elections. I cannot believe that it was a case of sacking.

Perhaps that is the view which the hon. Minister of Trade and Industry held at the time. I thought the Minister would have referred to the sacking of somebody else. It was said that one of his familiar friends was sacked, and that would have been a more obvious case to which reference could have been made.

I cannot agree with the hon. Minister of Trade and Industry when he says that Mr. Harewood's successor was someone more amenable to the will of the Government. That is an indictment on the present officer who is a man of good quality and behaviour.

Can it be said that Mr. Harewood's successor is a stooge, as intimated by the

Minister of Trade and Industry? The Bulletin is now being used to advantage by the Minister of Trade and Industry, and those remarks are not fair to the person in charge of the G.I.S. I do not think it is fair to that officer for the Minister to refer to him in such terms because he happens to be the successor of the late Mr. Harewood.

The Ministers admit that they have no control over the G.I.S. Therefore the publication of the Bulletin must be the result of the work of the man who succeeded the late Mr. Harewood and who has been referred to by the Minister of Trade and Industry as the stooge of somebody.

From my own knowledge I recollect that years ago the G.I.S. attacked the People's Progressive Party; it attacked their ideological faiths and persuasions. I, myself, have wondered at the sudden change in the G.I.S.'s approach to these problems. The Department is no longer attacking the ideological faiths and persuasions of the P.P.P., and it is no longer educating people along certain lines. Very seldom do you have the Department giving ideas about democracy nowadays. During the year 1957, just before the Elections, the G.I.S. spoke against certain ideologies and praised democracy, but we hear nothing about that today.

I am not quarrelling with the G.I.S. for bringing the work of the Ministers to the notice of the public, even though we understand from the Minister of Labour, Health and Housing that when she goes on official business she does her private Party business as well. She says that you can kill two birds with one stone. We have not complained about that, although some people say that the Ministers spend their time doing Party work when they should be doing Ministerial work. I am merely saying that the Minister of Trade and Industry should not have attacked the G.I.S. in this manner even if he agreed with the views expressed by the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Tello. A Minister of the Government should never do that. It reminds me of the time when Members walked out of

this House in 1953 — the Government walked out against the Government.

Mrs. Jagan: Who led the walk out?

Mr. Jackson: I am talking about the principle of the matter. If the G.I.S. is working on a principle and the Minister is attacking the Department, perhaps, reducing the provision in the Estimates for that Department is part of a plan. Why have they removed so many posts in the G.I.S.? While they get the advantage of the G.I.S., they still stab it in the back. Look in the Estimates and you will see how many posts have been abolished or the provision reduced. In sub-head 1, item (17) — "Information Officer, Field" — you will see a big decrease in expenditure. The provision for District Information Officers has also reduced. Is it that those people who have been retrenched have not served their purposes? What the Minister of Trade and Industry said about Mr. Harewood's successor is not fair. It is not fair to the man, and it is not fair to the Department. The Minister has done worse than Mr. Tello whom he damns.

If the men in the G.I.S. are not working satisfactorily, then the attention of the hon. the Chief Secretary should have been drawn to the matter. I know one of their Senior Officers who, because of his attack on Government's policy with respect to the appointment of the Director of Civil Aviation in last year's Estimates, asked the hon. Member for Georgetown Central whether he would have said certain things if the person whose cause was being championed was not a negro. That was said in my presence, and yet no attack upon him was made. I can tell you something more. That officer held a post in a Dramatic Society and it is known he has accused another person of being connected with racial activities which resulted in his defeat. The Minister of Trade and Industry should not be so childish; he should show depth of mind, and refrain from attacking people in the Service who are unable to defend themselves here.

Dr. Jagan: I have just heard a mass

[DR. JAGAN]

of contradiction. On the one hand we are told that we are using this organisation for our own benefit, and on the other hand it is intimated that we are cutting down the Estimates of the Department because it is not helping us.

Mr. Jackson: I said that I would not quarrel with the Minister for using the G.I.S. as their propaganda machine, because our Party will do the same thing when we take over.

Dr. Jagan: The hon. Member is obviously contradicting himself. If he wants to use the G.I.S. he can go ahead and do so. When his time comes that will be all right. That kind of argument and reasoning certainly shows the intentions of the hon. Member. We have said that this Party is not using the G.I.S. as a vehicle for propaganda, but the hon. Member for Georgetown North tells us to go ahead and use it and his Party will use it when it takes over. Nothing can be plainer than the intentions of the hon. Member. He says that we are using it for our purposes and yet we are stabbing people in the back.

I mentioned before that we were cutting down the Bulletin from a Weekly to a Fortnightly Bulletin. Why have we done this? To follow the hon. Members' argument, if the G.I.S. was used as the propaganda machine of the P.P.P. we would have made it into a Daily. I do not think it is necessary for me to continue to waste time on this matter, in the light of the stupidity I have heard, except to say this: when we are out to run the Government in the most efficient and the most economical manner possible, if it is found necessary to wipe out certain sections of whatever Department it may be, we will do so. When people were sacked —

Mr. Jackson: Harewood was sacked?

Dr. Jagan: If the hon. Member would refresh his memory he might recall that both his Leader and myself objected to this strenuously. Actually, the man was not sacked, but promoted

technically, and I will not go into that. The gentleman who now edits "Booker News", Mr. R. B. O. Hart, wrote reams and reams of paper on this point. Of course, we were told that it was done in the best interest of the people. The hon. Member should try to be consistent.

Mr. Burnham: Hear, hear — and speak on the Second Reading.

Dr. Jagan: But I do hope he will not raise the question of race. We are not concerned with the racial identity of persons.

Mr. Jackson: If the gentleman referred to wrote reams and reams of paper it does not affect us, because he has never been a member of the Peoples National Congress, and if the Leader wrote that Mr. Harewood's removal was shocking, he is here and he can defend himself.

Let me tell the Minister of Trade and Industry: I did not accuse them of using the G.I.S. I said that if that was the intention, then we, too, will have the opportunity as the Party now in power has, and we will do the same thing. I purposely referred to what Sir Winston Churchill said about the Labour Party, but it seems that the hon. Minister of Trade and Industry is confused in his mind as to what I said.

I am not going to say that the Ministers are deliberately asking the G.I.S. to do things — let no one fool himself about this. What I say is, it was wrong to condemn people who cannot defend themselves when you condemn or accuse them. The fact that the successor to Mr. Harewood was somebody who could be used by somebody is one thing, but that officer cannot defend himself here. That is what the Minister of Trade and Industry does to people who very often cannot defend themselves.

Dr. Jagan: Nonsense.

Mr. Jackson: It is not nonsense to people who know. No Government official can defend himself here, or elsewhere. I am speaking of an attack on the person-

ality of the person concerned. They cannot go to the street corners and talk.

The Minister of Community Development and Education (Mr. Benn): Sir, I wish to quote from the *Hansard* of the debate on the last Appropriation Bill, on the 3rd of February, 1958, at col. 660. The hon. Member for Georgetown Central had criticized the G.I.S. He said that the G.I.S. had picked up cheap propaganda from "The Sunday Argosy", and I quote:

"It seems that this cheap type of propaganda copied from the 'Argosy' is an insult to the intelligence of Members of this Council and the taxpayers of this country who have to pay for such service. The present Government has reduced the vote by \$28,587. The hon. the Chief Secretary will, I hope, appreciate my dilemma in moving this reduction. I am in fact recommending an increase instead. I will not state the sum but leave it to the hon. the Chief Secretary, in whose portfolio the Department falls, for investigation of the Department with a view to increasing its efficiency and also to see that there are employed in that Department persons who are specialists, persons who have studied their jobs and will not pick up the Sunday 'Argosy' to repeat what is there in the Department's broadcast. We want an information Service, but the public wants reliable and good information."

The hon. Member, Mr. Tello also spoke, and I want to quote from a part of his speech. He said, at col. 661:

"I agree with most of what the hon. Member has said about cheap propaganda taken from the 'Argosy', but I would like to defend the Government Information Services especially that branch to which the hon. Member referred. I know they find it rather difficult to put over a programme to meet the tastes of all, because of the difference of intelligence and education. The point is, I understand, that they may have one specialist in this branch of the Department at the moment fully occupied in the training of people to fill positions in the broadcasting division. The Interim Government was a caretaker non-elected Government."

Of course, Sir, we have a number of Bulletins in which the previous Member for Communications and Works was very much featured, as well as the hon. Member, Mr. Tello, himself, but the Member for Labour, Health and Housing took the

cake for being in the Bulletin. I end the quotation from Mr. Tello's remarks:

"But this is a People's Government, and the Ministers especially must have some publicity, and must be in the news."

[*Laughter and noises.*]

The Chairman: Order, order.

Mr. Tello: That was my opinion in 1958 and it still is my opinion. I said last night that the officers are doing a fine job, and I say it again. What is responsible for this sudden change? I said I personally believed, and I still believe, that there has been brought to bear undue influence.

In her lengthy speech the hon. the Minister of Labour, Health and Housing was simply being technical. "We have had only 72 out of 696 news items." Why did she not tell us 72 out of how many broadcasts? I am certain that the percentage would have been higher. I did not say that the news of Government's activities monopolized the entire newscasts. I said that the frequency of their appearance in the Bulletin and over the air leads one to believe that the G.I.S. had become a mere arm of the propaganda machine of the Party.

I say this in sincerity: I believe there is a degree of publicity due to the Ministers, but there should be some discretion in its use. You cannot use these Services so that it becomes blatantly obvious that the G.I.S. is working parallel with the Party machine. When a Minister is going to Essequibo, for instance, and it is so announced, the timing is correct with other announcements. It seems to suggest, "I am also going there for Party propaganda, so don't worry, boys and girls."

Mrs. Jagan: To a point of correction! I did not say that. I went out of my way to point out that the news carried nothing about Party activities.

Mr. Tello: Yes, Sir; I am saying that. I agree that the news did not mention Party activities, but the official fact that a Minister would be there, and the fact

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that the visit is announced elsewhere in connection with Party activities shows that the G.I.S. has become a powerful arm of the propaganda machinery. The same thing applied when the Minister of Trade and Industry went up to Berbice, and this was made public through the G.I.S. "Read what is in the Party propaganda machinery — I shall be there."

Mr. Rai: "Thunder"?

Mr. Tello: "Thunder", and other means, possibly. We have heard in other discussions here that one Ministry had its machinery well developed and well geared, and all the promises about increased production were made, while the dove-tailing necessary in regard to distribution was not prepared, but the information between the P.P.P. propaganda machinery and the G.I.S. synchronised.

The hon. Member for Georgetown North was speaking as a Party member. I am speaking as an ordinary Nominated Member of the Legislative Council, and I want to say that no Party should make use of the taxpayers' money by using an organization for Party purposes and calling it the G.I.S. And to say that the Interim Government organized the G.I.S. for the purpose of propagandizing is erroneous, childish and stupid. It was not very long ago that it was the pleasure of the hon. Minister, Dr. Jagan, in this very Chamber, to carry out the worst attacks on this Department. The Hansard reports can prove that the B.P.I. as it was then known, came in for criticism during the period of the Interim Government, and that it was during the term of that Government that its name was changed to G.I.S.

I feel strongly about this matter, and the attempt to defend the Party's connection with the G.I.S. has been very weak. Instead it has strengthened my argument that there is some invisible link between the Party and the G.I.S. It has been said that the Majority Party cut down the publication of the Bulletin. The truth is that after the election in late 1957 they came into the Council with the intention to abolish the G.I.S., but more recently

they have discovered that its service to them is too useful and too immense to abolish it. Quite recently the hon. Minister of Community Development and Education (Mr. Benn) said that it was doing a very useful service. What is responsible for the change? He also referred to me as a very faithful servant of the Interim Government. I am very proud of it. I said it at public meetings, and my words have come true, that the Interim Government was laying down the basis for development which any elected Government can build upon. If we examine all the progressive measures which the present Ministers are claiming as wonderful achievements we will find that their origin dates back to the period of the Interim Government. Most, if not all, of the progressive measures which the present Ministers are taking credit for were initiated by the Interim Government.

I make no apology for what I have said. I have made it quite clear that I have the greatest respect for those officers, and I say it because I really mean it, but I repeat that the strange change is something that must be looked into. Some politicians feel — and let them go on shouting it — that when our time comes we will use it, but even that point of view I do not accept. I feel that every Party should meet its own expenses and provide its own propaganda machinery, and should not rely on the taxpayers to meet that cost. Possibly, for all we know, the present trend is responsible for the new taxation proposals.

The Chief Secretary.: I do not want to prolong this debate which I think has gone on long enough, but I would like to correct one point of fact which the hon. Member for Georgetown North (Mr. Jackson) raised when he referred to the cutting down of the staff of the G.I.S. In actual fact the staff this year is exactly the same as it was last year, but what has happened is that the four District Information Officers who were formerly on the Unfixed Establishment have been put on the Pensionable Establishment. One Information Officer has also been put on the Fixed Establishment. In actual fact we have increased the staff of Assistant Broadcasting Officers by one.

The Chairman: Does the hon. Member wish me to put the Question?

Mr. Tello: No, Sir. I beg to withdraw my Amendment.

The Chairman: The Question is "That Head 7B — Information Services — be carried out at \$173,059."

Agreed to.

CIVIL AVIATION

FIRE PROTECTION AND AMBULANCE SERVICES

Mr. Burnham: I beg to move a reduction by \$1 of item 8 — "Fire Protection and Ambulance services — maintenance and operating costs", \$49,000. My object is to direct Government's attention to a matter which I think should be seriously considered. I am reliably informed that quite recently Government has reduced the salaries of the men employed in the Fire Protection division at Atkinson Field. I understand that they have been told that some error had been made in the calculation of their salaries, and that they had been enjoying more pay than they were entitled to. My further information is that Government has been quite unsympathetic with respect to what I consider a legitimate and good case of those men. It is perhaps unfortunate that a miscalculation had been made some months or years before, but it seems to me unpardonable on the part of Government to reduce salaries which these men had been earning, for after all they had adjusted their budgets to what they had been receiving.

The last reduction of public officers' or Government employees' salaries that I know of took place many years ago in the regime of Sir Gordon Guggisberg. That was the only time we had a Government deliberately reducing public officers' salaries, and it seems to me that it is not for Government to stick to the letter of the law, and personally I am not so sure they are completely safe so far as the letter of the law is concerned. But be that as it may, I think it is wrong and unmoral on the part of Government after paying these men salaries for a long time.

It seems to me that perhaps out of its desire to run an economy government, Government has decided to reduce these men's salaries. I think it is something which might have been taken care of, and the officers responsible for the miscalculation censured. It seems to me that this is the wrong way to get about it and certainly will not be conducive to the smooth running of this Department.

With respect also to the employees in that division, there is another unsatisfactory condition existing. It would appear that Government cannot make up its mind whether this Fire Protection Service will come within the ken of the Chief Fire Officer or remain within the Civil Aviation Department, and I feel that it is about time that Government comes to a firm decision and the employees be informed as to what the decision is.

The Chief Secretary: Dealing with the hon. Member's first point I should say that the facts, as he narrated them, are correct as far as I can remember. It is, of course, an Establishment matter. What happened was that those employees' salaries were wrongly converted during the last Salaries Revision, or rather they should have stopped at the bar of the scale but were allowed to go beyond. They should have had longer service. The error was not observed for two or three years, and when it was spotted the decision taken was that they should be put back to the salary which they were entitled to, but they were not asked to refund the extra money which they had drawn in error during the period. I fully appreciate the hon. Member's concern but Establishment matters are very difficult to decide. There are a number of other officers who come under the same Regulations and conditions, and naturally they would be very upset if they saw one branch of the Service drawing higher salaries while they could not. So that after most careful consideration it was decided that the only thing to do was to put the men back to their right salaries, but they would not be asked to refund the extra money which they had drawn.

As regards the other point raised by

[THE CHIEF SECRETARY]

the hon. Member, there was an expert in the Colony recently who examined our airport fire service, but we are still awaiting his report. An aircraft fire service is a very specialized service. An airport fireman needs to know exactly where to go in case of fire in an aircraft. On the other hand an airport fire brigade may not be called into service for a long time, and it must be a very difficult job for firemen to be on the alert all day waiting for something to happen and nothing happens day after day and month after month. It was therefore thought that the firemen at Atkinson Field might be integrated with the main Fire Brigade in Georgetown so that they could serve part of the time with the main Brigade where they would have some action. But there are difficulties on the other side, because an airport fire service is a specialised job for which men have to be trained how to tackle a fire in an aircraft, for they only have seconds in which to act. As I have said, we are awaiting the recommendations of the expert who came down here, and when we have got them we shall make a decision one way or another.

Mr. Burnham: I ask leave to withdraw my Amendment after making one comment. I really do not understand the methods of the Establishment, and I doubt whether the action taken by Government is legal, but it will be a matter for the men to decide what they will do.

I am very happy to hear that Government should be in receipt of recommendations from an expert with respect to the fire service, and I express the pious hope that those recommendations will not be long in being forthcoming, and that the period between their receipt by Government and the implementation of them will not be too long.

The Chairman: The Question is "That Head 8 — Civil Aviation — be carried out at \$172,241."

Agreed to.

CO-OPERATIVE

The Chairman: The Question is, "That Head 9 — Co-operative" — be carried out at \$167,402."

Agreed to.

Head passed.

CUSTOMS AND EXCISE

The Chairman: The Question is, "That Head 10 — Customs and Excise — be carried out at \$596,970."

Agreed to.

Head passed.

DRAINAGE AND IRRIGATION

The Chairman: The Question is, "That Head 11 — Drainage and Irrigation — be carried out at \$582,847."

Agreed to.

Head passed.

DRAINAGE AND IRRIGATION — ANNUALLY RECURRENT

The Chairman: The Question is, "That Head 11A. — Drainage and Irrigation — Annually Recurrent — be carried out at \$337,776."

Agreed to.

Head passed.

EDUCATION

Mr. Burnham: I beg to move that sub-head 1, item (2) — "Deputy Director of Education" — \$7,200 — be reduced by \$1. I do so for many reasons, to make many comments, and to ask many questions.

The Chairman: Director of Education ?

Mr. Burnham: Yes. He deals with policy, Sir. The first comment I desire to make is that, in a country like ours where education is such an important service, we have not yet had from the good Minister within whose portfolio the sub-

ject of Education falls a decent or any statement of policy.

The Chairman: What!

Mr. Burnham: I withdraw that remark, Sir.

We had expected that, having enjoyed the fruits of office for 19 months, the Government would now have been in a position to make clear its policy. For instance, there is this important question of denominational control of schools. It is for the Government to tell us exactly what its policy is. If it is in favour of having denominational control, then that should be clearly stated. If it is against denominational control we should expect, with equal frankness and forthrightness, an announcement to that effect.

It would appear to me that this Government either has no policy with respect to education or its policy is no good. The Government Training College has to be built, we have been told. A large area of land just outside of the city was offered to Government at a very cheap price.

Mr. Benn: On a point of order: The hon. Member is not speaking under the correct Head. There is a Head in the Estimates which deals with the Government Training College. We are not speaking on the Second Reading of the Bill at this stage; we are in Committee.

Mr. Burnham: I await your ruling, Sir.

The Chairman: I am waiting to hear the hon. Member. I asked him a question and he told me that the Director of Education is the person who advises on policy. I do not know whether that is so or not. I was listening to see how far he would go before I stop him.

Mr. Burnham: I do not like what you have said, Sir, but I cannot object. You said that you are waiting to hear what I have to say before you stop me.

The Chairman: I am listening to you.

Mr. Burnham: I may observe that the absence of policy in this Department is palpable. There seems to be no policy with respect to whether Government is going to build a Training College. Government has thrown away a good offer and there is no site now. I should have expected that this Government would have been very clear on the point.

The Chairman: I want to avoid repetition by hon. Members on any particular Head. If any Member moves the reduction of any vote under a particular Head, and he speaks on the same matter under another Head I will have to stop him.

Mr. Burnham: I will not discuss the Government Training College at the moment.

The Chairman: If there is a Head for the Government Training College you should speak under that Head.

Mr. Burnham: The only comment I desire to make on this point is that there is no policy, and I should like to hear from the absent Minister. He reminds me of the soldiers of General Montcalm who ran. I am asking whether the Minister can tell us about any policy in respect to Education and what are his Government's plans for 1959.

Dr. Jagan: The hon. Member asks what is Government's policy, and I am going to reply to him.

Mr. Burnham: I had forgotten that the hon. Member is Minister for all subjects!

Dr. Jagan: For the hon. Member's information, it does not matter which Minister replies. We work as a team and the Ministers keep themselves informed of what each Minister is doing. If the Minister of Community Development and Education goes into the lobby for a moment, there is nothing wrong in another Minister replying for him. The hon. Minister has returned and I shall take my seat.

Mr. Burnham: May I congratulate the hon. Minister of Trade and Industry

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for the efficiency with which he held the breach.

Mr. Benn: I meant no disrespect to this Council when I left the Chamber just now. The hon. Member for Georgetown Central spoke about a decent policy for education.

The Chairman: He withdrew the remark about a decent policy. Perhaps you did not hear him.

Mr. Burnham: That is correct; I withdrew the remark.

The Chairman: Perhaps you do not accept that statement.

Mr. Benn: Not that I do not accept it, but I do not know what I have to answer.

Mr. Burnham: I am not surprised; he proves my point that the Government has no policy.

Mr. Benn: He asked about a policy, and you said that he had withdrawn that.

The Chairman: Do not misunderstand me. The hon. Minister said that the hon. Member for Georgetown Central said that he had no "decent policy", so I pointed out that the hon. Member had withdrawn the word "decent". That is all I have said. I never said that he did anything about policy. He withdrew the word "decent" immediately after I questioned it. He said that no policy statement has been made with regard to education.

Mr. Benn: I am happy to say that the present Government has been doing quite a lot in the field of Education over the past year.

It was either the hon. Member himself or some one else who last year raised the question of dual control, and I spoke on what Government was doing.

I want to let hon. Members know that the question of dual control of schools and control in itself is not an easy

one. The religious bodies who have been controlling the schools for all the years have done a job of it, and the hon. Member for Georgetown Central, when he was Minister of Education, also tried to tackle this problem; he knows it is not a very easy one to overcome.

All I have to say, and all I will say now, is that the question of the control of schools, the control of school buildings, and so on, are under active consideration, and that Government is very seriously considering that all new school buildings and all new schools built by Government and out of Government funds should be controlled by Government.

What else should I mention? This is not to be a dissertation on the policy of Government, but I am able to say that because Government realizes that people in British Guiana are very keen on education, Government has decided there is no need for as many attendance officers as there had been last year. Attendance officers are those people who go to other people's houses to inquire whether their children went to school, and if not, why not.

As far as teachers' salaries are concerned, the hon. Member would be interested to know that the Committee set up during the time of the present Government to go into the anomalies which arose after the Potter Report had been published, has reported. The Education Department and the B.G. Teachers' Association have looked into the matter; it was put up to me a week or two ago, and I am now studying it. I do hope, and I have no doubt otherwise, that everything will be finalized in time for the 75th anniversary of the British Guiana Teachers' Association.

Hon. Members will notice under "Examinations" that the vote has gone up. It will be recalled that several weeks ago there were considerable complaints about the lateness of the Primary School Leaving Examination results. This has come about because of the fact that the number of persons taking that examination and other examinations is more than

double what it was a few years ago. Staff has been increased slightly, and everything is being done to expedite the marking of papers. As a result of the delay which had been caused, the Pupil Teachers Appointment Examination and one or two other examinations which are dependent upon this have been postponed until later in the year. The hon. Member perhaps will be interested to know that the grant to aided secondary schools, which is \$200,000, has been increased to \$274,000.

If hon. Members wish information on any specific point, I would be quite happy to answer.

Mr. Burnham: Mr. Chairman, my heart is heavy to hear the Minister of Education, when asked about his policy, tell us "we are working out a plan — and so forth and so on". He tells of the marking of papers. What has that got to do with policy? What is important as far as we are concerned is, what reforms have been introduced and with what aim? With what in view? Those are the things we want to hear — not "so forth and so on". We do not expect to hear that type of thing from our learned and distinguished Minister of Education. That supports the point I made earlier, that this Government has no policy with respect to Education.

You do not tell of educational policy like that — decisions to mark examination papers or the provision of \$274,000 for private secondary schools. Those are not the things that go to make up policy. A certain breadth of vision is expected, the ability to paint the whole picture and bring out the whole pattern, and to see where the little details fit in.

I am happy to hear that he is willing to give the details. I am asking now for the big things — breadth. I was expecting that he would have given some policy at the Second Reading, and I am giving him an opportunity now. Perhaps now he has heard me, he will tell us about a policy, as distinct from the marking of papers—

Mr. Benn: This is not the Second Reading. We are now in Committee stage, and I am not prepared to discuss the whole policy in Committee stage.

Mr. Burnham: I am very grateful to the Minister. He makes wisdom of necessity. He cannot discuss policy because he has not got any.

Mr. Rai: I think the hon. Member, Mr. Burnham, should really confine himself—

Mr. Burnham: On a point of order, Sir! An Elected Member is not referred to by his name in this Council.

Mr. Rai: The authorized procedure for describing a Member is "the hon. Mr. So-and-So".

Mr. Burnham: Not an Elected Member.

Mr. Rai: Yes, and I think the hon. Member should withdraw his objection.

Mr. Burnham: On my hon. and learned Friend's advice, I withdraw it.

Mr. Rai: The point I am trying to make is that the hon. Member may quite properly ask what is his policy on a particular aspect of the Portfolio he holds. For example, there may be matters of policy regarding denominational or dual control of schools, primary school teachers, the salary of teachers at Bishop's High School or Queen's College, or the creation of handicrafts schools or contributions to the University College of the West Indies. These are all facets of educational policy, and the Minister cannot be expected to give a roving explanation over the whole thing as a result of being asked, what is his educational policy.

Does one ask, "What is your Agricultural policy"? There must be some particular aspect of the Department on which a policy statement is required. I understand the Minister of Education to say that if Mr. Burnham should ask him a question on the working of any section of the Department, he would be quite prepared to answer him.

Mr. Tello: I wonder if the hon. Member, Mr. Rai is correct in his interpretation of the intention of the hon. Minister. Because I thought the hon. Minister said that this is not the Second Reading — an opportunity which he wilfully refused to make use of — and he is not prepared to make a statement of policy.

If what the hon. Member, Mr. Rai, says is true, that is, about questions relating to various aspects, we might do it that way and get a more detailed picture.

Mr. Burnham: The hon. Member for Central Demerara, brilliant advocate that he is, has certainly attempted to defend the Minister, but one thing is patent; he is saying what the Minister did not say. The Minister did not say that it was impossible to give an over-all picture of policy — he said he was not prepared to do it because this is not the Second Reading.

I have heard the "Opposition" being accused of confusion, but one explanation is that not all Members of the "Opposition" belong to the same Party; whereas all Members on that side, from number one right down to number 12 belong to the same Party. If the Minister of Education is prepared to accept Mr. Rai's interpretation of what he said, I shall be very grateful, and I will then ask questions on specific points as we go from head to head. But even then it will be inadequate, because it will be merely getting his point of view on various heads. I want to see the picture as a whole.

It was unfortunate—and I hope it is not evidence of discord — that the Member alluded to Agriculture. The story is that the Agricultural policy is, grow more food, produce more milk, make more rice lands available — we know that!

The Chairman: Do not let us go back to that.

Mr. Burnham: And there is the policy of making British Guiana agriculturally self-sufficient. This is not merely, Mr. Speaker, an opportunity to embarrass

the Minister of Education. It is an opportunity I am giving the Minister of Education to let the public know, to let the taxpayers know what is the policy, so that they can follow the policy more closely, and give him the praise he justly deserves, — if it were possible for him to adumbrate a policy.

The Chairman: The Minister has given his answer in plain English and you have heard from the Member for Central Demerara (Mr. Rai) his interpretation of the language employed by the Minister. I therefore do not think there is any useful purpose in going any further with that under this Head.

ASSISTANT DIRECTORS OF EDUCATION

Mr. Burnham: I ask leave to withdraw my Amendment and I beg to move now a reduction by \$1 of item (3) sub-head 1—2 Assistant Directors of Education, \$13,440 — for the purpose of inquiring from the Minister what are the duties of the Assistant Directors of Education.

Mr. Benn: There are two Assistant Directors of Education. One is in charge of secondary education while the other is attached to the Ministry of Education and works between the Permanent Secretary and the Minister. Most of the matters dealing with educational policy, which have to go through the Ministry, pass through the other Assistant Director of Education who was the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education in 1953.

Mr. Burnham: What does the hon. Minister mean when he says that one Assistant Director of Education is "between the Permanent Secretary and the Minister"? I do not understand this between position. Would the Minister be kind enough to explain what he means?

Mr. Benn: In 1953 there was a Ministry of Education. In 1957 the Director of Education became Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Education. The other Assistant Director of Education is therefore Assistant to the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education. In other words he assists the Director of

Education in his Ministerial functions.

Mr. Burnham: What Ministerial functions can the Director of Education have?

The Chief Secretary: Perhaps I can clarify this. The Director of Education operates in a dual capacity. He is both Director of Education and Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Education.

Mr. Burnham: One thing I admire in the hon. the Chief Secretary is his love to be a Sir Galahad for other Ministers, but he refuses to answer questions directed to himself. Let us assume that the answer is correct. Government sets apart an officer to deal with matters concerning secondary schools. Why isn't there an officer set part to deal with matters relating to elementary schools? It hardly seems fair to set apart an officer for what appears to be the smaller sector of our educational system, and leave the larger sector unprotected or unaided.

Mr. Benn: It is the duty of the Deputy Director of Education to look after matters relating to primary schools.

Mr. Burnham: If that answer is correct it stands to reason that the Deputy Director is not Deputy Director but an Assistant Director. I understand that the Director of Education is Director of all Education — the Civil Service Head of Education. He is the adviser to the Minister on all matters of education, and I would have thought that his Deputy would have been his Deputy — that is the man within whose responsibility come questions relating both to secondary and primary education. If this type of confusion exists no wonder one hears so many complaints. The Deputy Director must have a lot of administrative duties. I know that the Minister will tell us that he has nothing to do with Establishment, but I feel that a Ministry that is alive would recommend a much more satisfactory system than the one which the Minister himself confesses exists at the moment.

The Chairman: I shall put the Amendment.

SUPERVISOR OF HANDICRAFTS

Mr. Burnham: I ask leave to withdraw. I now beg to move a reduction by \$1 of item (7), subhead 1— Supervisor of Handicrafts, \$4,560 — to inquire from the hon. Minister, taking my cue from the hon. Member for Central Demerara (Mr. Rai), what is Government's policy with respect to handicrafts in schools.

Mr. Benn: The policy with regard to handicrafts is that every effort is being made now, where a new school is built to accommodate more than 300 children with a large number of boys, to set up a Handicrafts Department. In the past Handicrafts Centres were established. It is now the policy of the Government, wherever a new school is to be built, and the enrolment requires it, to attach a Handicrafts Department to the school. In addition to that teachers are taken from schools in the remote areas and brought to the Handicrafts Centre in Georgetown for a one-year course. During that course the teachers also have an opportunity to go to the Technical Institute for additional education in their field. I wish to say that education in handicrafts has made considerable strides over the past year, and with the assistance of those teachers we are now training in this field—and they are quite a few—and the Technical Institute, considerable progress is being made. There are three main centres—one at Mackenzie and one in New Amsterdam, in addition to the Technical Institute in Georgetown — and efforts are being made to have an additional centre set up in Essequibo.

Mr. Burnham: I am happy to hear about those centres, but what I really wanted to know was what are the particular skills that are being taught, and what is the relation of those skills to the vocations or occupations to be followed by those who leave school?

Mr. Benn: The particular skills are woodwork, metal work, and what I would call a little bit of elementary science. The Department has not yet been able to relate the chosen boys for the train-

[MR. BENN]

ing centre according to the occupations which they believe they will follow, but teachers are encouraged, wherever possible, to choose those children who show aptitude for the particular course they will be trained in.

Mr. Campbell: Under this item I would like to ask the hon. Minister a certain question. He has referred to woodwork, metal work and elementary science, but I would like to know what is being done with regard to Amerindian handicrafts. Is there any plan to continue or expand such handicrafts. In certain schools some time ago there was a teacher, poorly paid by the way, to teach native Indian crafts, to make things like packalls, letter-boxes and a variety of intricate handicrafts which were very much in demand by tourists. Nowadays tourists always want to get Amerindian curios, things like matapees, but they are difficult to get. I think it would be a good thing to make provision for the teaching of Amerindian crafts in the schools in the rural areas. We are supposed to emphasize Guianese culture which I understand embraces artistic productions, pottery and decorative articles. All those things help to advance culture. Wherever I go in the country districts I find that that phase of art is not emphasized at all, and I would ask the hon. Minister to look into it. I want to remind the Minister of Community Development and Education that a promise was made to bring up the Amerindians according to Guianese culture. I would like to ask the Minister if he proposes to implement that promise in the Amerindian Schools.

Mr. Benn: I do not think any school is particularly doing Indian craft in keeping with the hon. Member for the North West District's request. I know that some of the schools are teaching hammock-weaving, but I do not know of any other Indian art. I assure the hon. Member that I will take up the matter with the people concerned.

Mr. Jackson: Will the hon. Minister of Community Development and Education tell us at what stage the schoolboys

go for handicraft-training, how long is the period of training and the object of the training?

Mr. Benn: The boys are taken from the primary school at about the age of eleven and sent to the Woodwork Centre. The position is that every possible encouragement is given to them, if they qualify at the Woodwork Centre and other examinations, to go over to the Technical Institute for further training to qualify themselves in the particular course in which they are found to be proficient.

I want the hon. Member to understand that boys are not taken out of school from their usual work and sent to the Woodwork Centre to do woodwork alone. The work at the Woodwork Centre is in addition to other educational subjects. We are not yet able to take all of the boys out of the primary schools and put them in the Woodwork Centres. They have to receive a certain amount of basic education before they can be sent to the Technical Institute. When they qualify and show aptitude in the Woodwork Centre they are then sent to the Technical Institute. Before a boy is sent to the Technical Institute, his parents are approached to find out whether it is their desire that he should continue with the job. Handicraft is a new affair in this country, and the Department is watching the situation.

The Chairman: I think hon. Members have decided to adjourn at this time. If they have not changed their view, I will be grateful if someone will move that the Council resume.

The Financial Secretary: I beg to move that the Council resume.

Question put, and agreed to.

Council resumed.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Mr. Speaker: Honourable Members, this sitting is suspended until five o'clock.

The sitting was suspended at 4.35 p.m.

RESUMPTION

Council resumed at 5.05 p.m.

APPROPRIATION BILL

BUDGET DEBATE

Council resolved itself into Committee and resumed consideration of the Bill, intitled,

“An Ordinance to appropriate the Supplies granted in the current Session of the Legislative Council.”

Schedule

EDUCATION

SUPERVISOR OF HANDICRAFTS

The Chairman: We will continue with the Motion for the reduction of sub-head 1, item (7) — “1 Supervisor of Handicrafts” — by \$1.

Mr. Jackson: Mr. Chairman, the Minister of Education said that woodwork in schools is a new idea. I did not know what he meant by “new”.

Mr. Benn: I did not say so.

The Chairman: I do not think the Minister said that woodwork in schools is something new; but he mentioned three stages right up to the technical school.

Mr. Jackson: Sir, you are very helpful in interpreting what the Minister said.

The Chairman: I am telling you what I understood him to say.

Mr. Jackson: I am trying to believe that what he said was that there is now a process of thinking that a child should be introduced to woodwork in school when he is 11 years old, and be trained up to a stage where, if he has the aptitude, he would be chosen to go to the Technical Institute; and later he would earn his livelihood as a craftsman.

It is a rather commendable intention, this being part of the policy of the Department and the Ministry. But one is forced to ask, how extensive is that programme, and how much does it cover the number of lads who attend schools in various parts of the Colony? We have not yet heard from the Minister what is the percentage of eligible lads who have been sent to the Institute — 2,000, or 10, or 20?

And if there is a wide field from which the lads can be chosen, what is the policy of the Minister or the Ministry surrounding those lads who are qualified and eligible but who, because of lack of space or facility, could not be admitted into the Institute. I assume there are many.

I have my doubts whether these lads can be admitted at this time or in the future, if my assessment is correct. I mean those who, though qualified and though possessed of an aptitude, cannot be sent to the Institute.

Mr. Benn: I said that the scheme is a new one, and I said also that the centre, besides other centres in Georgetown, was trying wherever possible to build departments in primary schools where there is a large enrolment. It is not possible at the present moment to estimate how many young people who have been in regular training will be able to go to the Technical Institute and pass out. I said that there are advanced centres at Mackenzie and New Amsterdam and they are being used. I do not know how many primary schools in Georgetown send boys to the centre for instruction in handicrafts, but what I do know is that the Technical Institute has not been able to take all the boys who are qualified.

Mr. Jackson: We were not dealing with Georgetown. If there are centres in Georgetown and New Amsterdam to take in the people who are qualified, what is the policy in respect of those parts of the Colony where there are no centres, but where there are people with enough aptitude? Are those being also catered for so that later on they can make a living from these acquired skills?

Mr. Benn: I said departments are being built up wherever possible in the rural areas, and the Institute started some time ago a course for students in the rural areas, but very few of them have been able to take a primary course in the country districts because there have not been these departments in the schools in rural areas. If they are able to establish these departments in rural schools, the students would not have to spend so much time doing a primary training course. It is not possible to train as many students as can be trained because there are not yet enough departments and centres.

Mr. Jackson: Nevertheless, Mr. Chairman, may I get from the Minister whether it is the intention of his Ministry or the Government to contribute to the financial requirements of lads who happen to be qualified but are living in the rural areas where there are no centres, but who on their own cannot attend the Technical Institute?

Mr. Benn: Wherever possible, scholarships and assistance will be given. I have made special arrangements for scholarships. The Princess Margaret Scholarships were given but Government is not yet able to make arrangements otherwise, because Government has not got the necessary funds to do that.

Mr. Burnham: I am a little alarmed to hear the Minister say that the Government has not got the necessary funds to assist students to go to Georgetown to get courses in Technical Education. I do not know that it will cost more than a few thousand dollars. Is this Government so poor it cannot afford to spend a few thousand dollars to assist students from the rural areas to get a better education in the crafts and skills to fit them for the type of life they will have to follow? It would seem that the Government has borrowed a cliché from earlier, unrepresentative Governments—"we have no money! We have no money!" You have no money for a thing like that? You have cut out \$18,000 for the cattle trail! Give \$10,000 or \$8,000 to these students!

Mr. Tello: It would appear that the hon. Minister is very reluctantly stating policy, because he is now telling us in detail that his educational policy is primarily to cater for those who can take care of themselves. Those who belong to the category of working class people cannot afford subsistence allowances.

Mr. Benn: I did not say that the education policy is only to assist those who can help themselves. I was speaking in relation to handicrafts.

Mr. Tello: You have not said that that is the policy, but in practice that is what you are doing.

Mr. Benn: We have increased the number of scholarships and the loans to university students.

Mr. Tello: Those who wish to participate in it must have the wherewithal in their pockets. That is the policy of the present Government. I propose to refer to another Head when the same system will be exposed. I am very sorry that the Minister has not had the courage to tell us about his policy, because this would have become apparent before, and I am very pleased that the hon. Member for Georgetown Central (Mr. Burnham) has discovered this point and has exposed it. Throughout the debate on Education we are going to see it raising its head.

Mr. Jackson: The hon. Minister is admitting that his policy with respect to these handicraft centres in the country districts is not one which is going to enable lads to qualify to take their places in the normal life of our community, for he says that the policy is that if a lad shows ability and aptitude he would be chosen from the preliminary course and sent to the Technical Institute. In the circumstances it is clear that the lad who goes to one of the centres in the country districts will be at a great disadvantage, for even if he is qualified to go there and his parents are too poor he would not be able to take up a course at the Technical Institute which may last two or three years. Therefore the policy is not as ob-

jective as it should be. It is to my mind unwise for the scheme to embrace so large a number of pupils from the age of 11 years when Government does not intend to give them financial assistance to take them to the point at which they could become experts. We do not want half-baked carpenters or technical officers. We want young people who are fully able to take care of the tasks which will be theirs when they become men and women. Unless the policy of the Government embraces financial assistance it seems to be a waste of time to embark on what the hon. Minister considers a very good scheme.

Mr. Burnham: The hon. Minister says that Government has not the money to offer assistance. May I ask what he thinks the necessary assistance would cost Government?

Mr. Benn: I cannot give an answer to that question.

Mr. Burnham: Exactly! That is the point I am making—that without considering how much it would cost, the Minister says that Government cannot afford it. It shows that he wants some bucking up like the rest of his Government. It clearly shows that he never contemplated the giving of assistance to students coming from the rural areas to the Technical Institute. I would describe that as palpable incompetence.

The Chairman: Do you withdraw your Amendment?

Mr. Burnham: Yes, Sir.

SENIOR EDUCATION OFFICER

Mr. Campbell: I would like, if you will permit me, Sir, to go back to item (4) subhead 1—Senior Education Officer, \$6,000. My friend on my right (Mr. Burnham) moved so fast that I did not have an opportunity to rise at that point.

The Chairman: I will grant you that indulgence this once. You were not here yesterday as you were not well, but you must be a little more alert in future.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you, Sir. As far as I can gather this is the time for questions and answers. (*Laughter*). I shall avail myself of that privilege by moving a reduction by \$1 of item (4) subhead 1, to inquire whether it refers to the Senior Education Officer stationed at Mabaruma in the North West District. I met him there last year when he complained about the lack of transportation. He said he had to beg for transportation here and there, and could not get about his job properly. I would like to know what are the officer's duties, and what are the aims to be accomplished by stationing a Senior Education Officer in that district. I would like to know so that when I return to the district I may be able to talk things over with him. The explanatory note at the bottom of the page with respect to item 4—Other Charges—Land and Water Transport, \$2,000, says:

“Provision formerly shown under Head 12A increased to cover travelling of Education Officer appointed for the North West District and Rupununi.”

I am interested to know what are the aims and objects in sending this officer to the North West District, and I would like the hon. Minister to give me an outline of his duties so that I may know what to expect when I go there and have discussions with him. The officer has been provided with a wonderful house but no transportation. The district is a very difficult one, as he has to travel 150 miles from one point to the other.

Mr. Benn: This Education Officer, like every other Education Officer, superintends educational work in the district. He visits the schools and examines the registers and the work of the teachers. He also does training of teachers at week-end courses. He examines the teachers daily or weekly Work Book to see how their work is going on. The work of the Education Officer for the North West District and the Rupununi is extremely difficult because it is difficult country, and it is not possible for him to visit all the areas as regularly as he should. The hon. Member who represents the North West District and knows the Rupununi, will know how difficult it is. With the

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assistance of one of the Roman Catholic priests the Education Officer started educational classes for teachers and pupils. It is very difficult to get teachers to go into these remote areas, so that the training of persons who live in those areas is extremely important. That is the work of the officer.

Mr. Campbell: I beg to withdraw my Amendment.

Mr. Jackson: I beg to move a reduction by \$1 of item (12) — Clerk-in-Charge, School Feeding Scheme, \$3,508 — in order to see whether we can get from the hon. Minister some indication as to the policy with respect to the feeding of children in schools. I remember that some time ago a hot meal was provided for those pupils who could not go home at midday, or whose parents were not able to provide them with the means for doing so. That provision has been abolished, and we now have powdered milk which, I think, has been given us by the U.S. Government. We did hear that a good deal of this milk was spoilt, for reasons which the hon. Minister may be able to explain, and that the children do not take very kindly to the milk and biscuits which have been substituted for the hot meal. We know that the children in schools are being encouraged to obtain money from their homes to purchase the supply of milk sent to schools by the Pasteurisation Plant. Will the hon. Minister tell us what is the situation with respect to the School Feeding Scheme — whether the supply of milk we got is finished, whether we are going to get more, or whether a supply of milk will now come from the Pasteurisation Plant?

Mr. Benn: I am happy to say that only today I received a savingram from the Secretary of State for the Colonies agreeing to increase the supply of milk, biscuits and capsules for the benefit of the school children of this country. So that the question of the continuance of the scheme is answered there. I should also mention that the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour, Health and Housing made application for an exten-

sion of this scheme to include pregnant mothers and pre-school age children, and the Secretary of State for the Colonies and U.N.I.C.E.F. have agreed to give us the necessary amount of milk. The system of providing warm meals for school children was abolished some time in 1955 or 1956. It is not possible at the present time to start that system all over again. I was one of the most enthusiastic persons to have the warm meal system started again, but I want the hon. Member to know that it did not cater for as many children as this new school feeding scheme. The cost of a warm meal to a child was 32 cents. This Government is not in a position to resuscitate the warm school feeding scheme.

The hon. Member spoke of the amount of milk spoilt. I am not aware that milk was spoilt during 1958. I know that a quantity of milk was spoilt during 1957. Hon. Members will remember that some time ago we voted a sum of money in Finance Committee to build a new bond for the storage of milk for school children.

Mr. Jackson: It is gratifying to hear that Government is carrying on this scheme outside of the school feeding scheme to provide for the pre-natal stage and after to mothers. It seems to be a very laudable programme because it will involve the expenditure of a lot of money to cover the cost of supplying milk to hundreds of children who have not yet reached school age.

On the other hand, the question is whether the present system is satisfactory? We know that in addition to the milk which has been supplied by the Department there are schools in the city which have to supplement the issue by encouraging school children to purchase milk daily.

I am sure the hon. Minister of Natural Resources is aware of the fact that in certain schools milk is distributed at a reduced price. There seems to be something wrong in this matter. Apparently the Department does not have the full amount of powdered milk to be dis-

tributed in the schools, and it has become necessary for the Department of Agriculture to send milk to the schools daily to be sold to the children at 10c. per pint. In some schools there is milk from the Pasteurisation Plant, but there seems to be little or no co-ordination between the Departments. It is either that the milk from the Pasteurisation Plant be abandoned, in favour of a full supply of powdered milk or that pasteurised milk should be in adequate supply to all. There must be some clear-cut policy in this matter.

I would like to inform the hon. Minister that there are a number of children who cannot swallow capsules. In the circumstances, several children are not getting the benefits of the school feeding scheme.

Mr. Benn: The scheme whereby the schools distribute milk from the Agricultural Department is an entirely different scheme and does not impinge on the distribution of powdered milk to school children. This was done because there was a surplus of milk. All of the children in the various schools do not get milk. School Nurses are asked to examine the children and make recommendations.

In accordance with an agreement with UNICEF 25% of the children in the Government-aided primary schools is entitled to free milk. We have been trying to send milk to as many schools as possible. Regulation 95 schools do not get Government assistance at the moment. All of the children in Amerindian schools get powdered milk.

Mr. Jackson: This is a new thing. Only 25% of the children in some schools get milk which is given by UNICEF. What has Government done to augment that on its own behalf? We have been given milk by UNICEF on the condition that 25% of the primary school children receives it. Is it meant to convey that the other 75% is not in need of milk? In my opinion there is need in the country districts for a bigger percentage of school

children to be given milk. If we are unable to give milk to the children who are now in school, then it seems to me to be an unwise policy for Government to embark on the policy of giving children milk before they reach school age. I think it would be better to concentrate on feeding the children who are now in school and give more than 25% of them milk.

I am also of the opinion that Government should put some money into the project to supplement what has been given to us by UNICEF or any other organisation.

Mr. Benn: Government is putting money into this scheme, and it has been trying to expand the programme. Government has also been trying to include the Regulation No. 95 schools in this programme. I reminded the hon. Member just now that Finance Committee voted a sum of money to erect a building for storage of milk. Government is purchasing biscuits from a local factory to give to the children and it bears the cost of distribution. Government is unable at the present moment to do more than it has done.

Mrs. Jagan: I may mention that only this morning I was examining the expansion of this scheme to include more school children and pregnant women. In the report I was examining I also saw the report of the Government Medical Officers who indicated that the milk reinforced with biscuits had brought about a substantial change in the children who have been receiving this additional diet. They indicate that the lack of vitamins, which gives a certain pattern of manifestations in children, has been considerably reduced. It is felt that the introduction of this scheme for school children is absolutely necessary.

I may mention for the benefit of the hon. Member who said that the cost will be considerable, that the Medical Department at the moment is making every effort to include this distribution at the lowest possible cost to this Government. I understand that it may cost this Govern-

[MRS. JAGAN]

ment about \$7,000, and Finance Committee may later be asked to vote this sum of money. It is intended that this milk will be distributed from the Infant Welfare Clinics, and certain dispensers who go into the remote areas will look after its distribution there. I cannot emphasize sufficiently what this additional diet of biscuits plus milk means to the school children.

Mr. Campbell: I would like this point clarified. The hon. Minister of Community Development and Education mentioned that all of the children in Amerindian schools get a supply of milk. I am grateful for this facility. I think it is one of the most charitable institutions started out here by donors overseas. The point I want to make is that not only the Amerindian children but people of all races are getting their fair share of milk and vitamin "C" in the North West District. Personally, I have noticed that it has been a great benefit to the children, because most of them live from hand to mouth. Since this gift has been given, things are much better for the school children over there.

Mr. Jackson: The hon. Minister of Community Development and Education said that the programme or policy will include the distribution of milk to pregnant women, and the hon. Minister of Labour, Health and Housing has indicated that the Medical Department is likely to undertake a programme which will reduce the cost by distributing milk to pregnant women at the Infant Welfare Clinics. It seems to me that there will be an overlapping of services here, because the Red Cross people are doing almost the same thing in every district. If the Red Cross is distributing milk, perhaps from the same source from which the Government of British Guiana is getting its supply and the Medical Department is doing the same thing, then the two organizations will be doing the same kind of work at the same time. If the hon. Minister of Labour, Health and Housing is coming to Finance Committee for money to carry out this scheme, I hope she will submit

a memorandum to Members setting out the facts and statistics to show that there is no duplication of services. I believe that there should be a co-ordination of services, rather than having a number of Departments doing the same type of work.

Mrs. Jagan: I can assure the hon. Member that my Ministry has gone into the question with the Medical Department and the Red Cross long ago. Joint conferences have been held, so that there would be no overlapping.

Mr. Jackson: It takes a great deal of prodding in order to get certain information. I now beg to withdraw my motion.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

GRANTS

Mr. Burnham: I beg to move the reduction by \$1 of sub-head 2, and in doing so, I would like to ask a question of the Minister. I understand most of the schools in Georgetown are overcrowded. I would like to know what provision the Minister has made for remedying that situation; in view of the fact that not all schools in Georgetown are overcrowded, whether there has been admission of more children to schools that are not overcrowded.

Mr. Benn: Wherever possible, admissions are being made to schools that are not overcrowded. On this question of overcrowding, I do not remember the correct figures, but though a school may be built to accommodate 500 students according to the Education Code, it is not possible during this period to restrict the admission of children in order to observe the accommodation figure of 500, so most schools are allowed to have admissions from 25% to 30% in excess only. What we do is recommend the child to go to any on a list of schools, and if there is still no place, then the Education Department looks after it. We have asked the G.I.S.

to assist in this matter in Georgetown. Wherever possible, children have been directed to St. Andrews Church of Scotland School, St. George's Church of England School and Christ Church Anglican School, as these can take in a few more children.

Mr. Burnham: Mr. Chairman, did I understand from the hon. Minister that the three schools are St. George's Anglican, Christ Church Anglican and St. Andrew's Church of Scotland? Am I right?

Mr. Benn: Those are the schools where there is a little more space. One does not know if there are other schools in the City that can take in a few more children, but those are the specific schools to which children are directed.

Mr. Burnham: Mr. Chairman, will the Minister tell us whether on the 30th of December he did not pen a minute to the Director of Education directing that schools other than those mentioned should not accept new entries?

Mr. Benn: I did not so do. I wrote a minute to the Director of Education in which I said that "already overcrowded schools in the City should be advised not to admit new pupils for the new term."

Mr. Burnham: He is reading from a file which I cannot read. It is a confidential — red — file. May I ask whether when he wrote it he was not aware of the fact that there were only three schools not overcrowded on the 30th of December.

Mr. Benn: I knew there were new schools in the City which could take children——

Mr. Burnham: May I ask whether St. Stephen's Church of Scotland School——

Mr. Benn: I-I did not specify the schools where there were other vacancies.

I did not know of all the schools in the City of Georgetown.

Mr. Burnham: Mr. Chairman, the Minister knows why he is stammering at this stage. As Minister he knew on the 30th of December that there were only three schools not overcrowded, and he addressed a minute subsequently to the Director of Education asking that all schools except those three should not have any admissions made. He sat down here and encouraged the poor Financial Secretary in the Finance Committee to mislead the Finance Committee into believing that St. Stephen's School did not have any pupils and more particularly admit a certain young pupil named Benn.

Mr. Benn: I knew he would bring this up, and I have the file here. The hon. Member said it was a red file and he could not see it, but I would quote from it for the benefit of the hon. Member——

Mr. Burnham: On a point of order! A Member cannot quote from something which is not available to us. It must be a document available to Members of the Legislative Council.

Mrs. Jagan: You have seen it.

Mr. Burnham: I have not seen it.

Mr. Benn: On the 30th of December I wrote a minute. I was discussing the question of students from Campbellville, Lodge and Ruimveldt Housing Schemes who, it was felt, might gain admission to St. Andrew's, Christ Church or St. George's, with accommodation by bus provided. This matter of transportation was discussed with the Head Teachers and the Motor Transport Company, and it was afterwards discovered that it would be too expensive a project. We understood, however, that the buses would be asked to call at the nearest stop to the school, mornings and afternoons, to take children.

As I said in this minute, the already overcrowded schools in the City should be advised not to admit new pupils in the

[MR. BENN]

new term. I said also that a school may be allowed to have more than what it was built to accommodate. My son, Paul Robeson Benn, was transferred from Mount Olivet Lutheran School in Canje and the particular School to which he was admitted was St. Stephen's Church of Scotland in the City of Georgetown. His mother took him to St. Stephen's on the opening day, when with 44 other pupils, Robeson Benn was admitted.

After the 5th of January, when the School was opened, the Headmaster again requested the Education Department to allow him to take in eight more students, since he had vacancies for eight more, and he was allowed to do so. On the 12th of January the schoolmaster asked to take in one more student who had a brother and a sister at the School. It was a very small child and its admission would have created no great hardship. The Headmaster was allowed to take in one more. In other words, Robeson Benn was one of 45 plus eight plus one child taken into the School.

Mr. Burnham: All that is very interesting, but what I say is this: these people, like Caesar's wife, must be above suspicion. If the Minister on the 30th December, 1958—

Mrs. Jagan: Shame!

Mr. Burnham: Drawing of the teeth is limited to a certain stratum, to which some people over there belong. If the Minister knew that on the 30th of December, St. Stephen's —

Mr. Benn: I did not say that on the 30th of December St. Stephen's School was an overcrowded school.

Mr. Burnham: May I discover from the hon. Minister when did he know that Christ Church, St. Andrew's and St. George's were not overcrowded schools.

Mr. Benn: I did not say they were the only schools not overcrowded. I said that they were schools to which children could be taken, but Christ Church, St.

George's and St. Andrews could take many more than other schools.

Mr. Burnham: I expected he would have said that. I ask whether it is not right that apart from those schools named, there were schools overcrowded and most of them overcrowded to the extent of 35% or more, according to the Education Code.

Mr. Benn: I think I did explain to the Council that the Education Code allows for a certain number of pupils, but the schools are allowed to take in a certain percentage of children above that amount.

Mr. Burnham: There are no vacancies, as admitted earlier. He has already admitted that St. Stephen's had pupils above the Code requirements, but he cannot tell us what percentage above. My contention is that St. Stephen's was overcrowded to about 30% beyond the Regulations.

Mr. Jackson: May I enlighten the Minister as to what transpired in Finance Committee? When the Member for Georgetown Central asked about overcrowding in the schools, the Chairman of the Committee, with respect to St. Stephen's Scots School, said there was no admission into that school in 1959. The Minister sat there when the Chairman gave that information. Subsequently, the Chairman was forced to correct himself and apologize for the wrong information he gave. Then he said that on the 5th of January the school reopened, but that before that date there were on roll an excess of 400 children. Four hundred children were there at the end of 1958 in excess of the number provided for. The Minister took office in 1957, and I am sure he has been looking into this question of the overcrowding of schools; I am sure also that, because of this overcrowding, money has been spent and perhaps more has been voted for the extension of school buildings.

If at the end of December, 1958, St. Stephen's school was overcrowded to the extent of 400 children, why should

that school have taken in 44 more children on the 5th of January, 1959, whether that number included Robeson Benn or not? And if the hon. Minister of Education knew, as he must have known, the extent of the overcrowding it would have been better if he had not encouraged the admission of his son to that school. For anyone who did not know the circumstances to which he has referred but who knew that Robeson Benn, the son of the Minister of Education, had been one of the 44 children admitted to the school at that time, would say "If you can take Robeson Benn, why not take my child?" Ministers of the Government ought to be more careful about how they behave in matters of this kind.

The hon. Minister said that on the 12th January one child was added to the number in the school, and he gave the reason that that was done because a sister and brother of that child were already there. Even if we accept the Minister's version, who gave authority to the teacher to admit that child? I have had my little child refused admission to a kindergarten school because of the same instructions given by the hon. Minister of Education. I sent my little girl to the St. Angela R.C. kindergarten school to be admitted, but she was not admitted because there was no space, and the teacher explained that it was because of a circular received from the Ministry of Education. I say this only by way of reference.

One wonders who gave authority to the teacher at St. Stephen's school to take in that other child on the 12th January. If there was no authority the teacher should be asked to explain. We know that on the 13th of January 8 children were withdrawn from the school and another 8 taken in. If the school was overcrowded at the end of 1958 in excess of the number allowed, and 44 more children were admitted on the 5th January, and one more on the 12th January, making a total of more than 445, why was there need after 8 children had been withdrawn, to take in another 8, when there was room for more children at Christ Church

school, St. George's, St. Andrew's and St. Ambrose schools?

The hon. Minister of Education ought to know that it is of no value to the education of a child to have it cramped in a school so overcrowded as St. Stephen's school was, and somebody ought to have been made to explain why 44 more children were taken into the school on the 5th January after the hon. Minister had written his letter to the Director of Education. On whose authority were those children admitted to the school on the 5th January? Did the Director of Education issue that instruction, and why was one more child taken in when after 8 children had been withdrawn 8 others were accepted in their places?

Mr. Burnham: I raised this question not because there is any animosity on my part towards the hon. Minister of Education, nor yet because there is any animosity towards one Robeson Benn, but because the People's Progressive Party, of which he is the Chairman, has always prided itself as being without faults and always ready to disparage and chastize other persons. It seems to me that a Minister of the Government, especially the Minister of Education, who knows about the overcrowding in a school, should set an example to the rest of the community, and we should not have had that Minister taking his son to a school that was 400 overcrowded at the end of 1958, a fact of which he must have been aware.

I know that he knew it. It smacks of discrimination. It may well be that the hon. Minister did not intend to throw his weight around, and it may well be that he did not intend to use any influence, but we must think of the impact it has had on the public. People who are always criticizing other people for being crooked must, like Caesar's wife, be above suspicion. If you are a Minister and you know of these things you must set an example and take your child to one of those four schools which are not overcrowded. There are lots of other things about these Ministers that will come to light later.

Mrs. Jagan: The level of our debates has certainly gone down. I really feel that the injection of this note into this part of the debate is a sorry example for this Council. The hon. Member for Georgetown Central (Mr. Burnham) asked a question and received a reply that the son of the Minister of Education was one of 44 other little boys and girls who were allowed to enter the school. If Robeson Benn had been the only student allowed to enter the school, or if he had been the last child to enter I too would have joined with the hon. Member in saying that that was wrong. But Robeson Benn was one of many children in the city of Georgetown, not only in that school but in other schools, who were allowed to enter in the last term because the teachers realized that they must do their utmost best to accommodate as many children as possible. Certainly there was no exception for Robeson Benn but for many other children, and I think it most improper that such an allegation should be made against the hon. gentleman. I recall, Sir, that in another debate a filthy allegation was made against the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Beharry) by the same Member who, when presented with facts, refused to withdraw his allegation, and again we find him coming up with unfounded remarks.

The Minister in this instance, as in the other, has fully vindicated himself, and I think it is improper that we must sit here for hours and listen to all this nonsense. Certainly Members can make criticisms which are honest, and we will do our best to reply to them, but how long are we going to be pestered with these inconsequential and objectionable remarks which seem to be more filled with malice than with any object of improving this country?

Mr. Burnham: The age of chivalry is turning, for we see Sir Gallahad now wears a skirt. For the information of the hon. Minister I say that it is not for her to decide what is nonsensical or what is proper by the Standing Rules. It is for you, Sir, to decide when I indulge in any

impropriety. Apparently the code of morals which I have grown up to observe is different from that observed by the last speaker. I said that the Minister of Education must, like Caesar's wife, be above suspicion. I was not for one moment suggesting that his child was the only one admitted to the school, and I think it is a bad habit to send children to schools which are overcrowded when there are other schools available with a great deal of space. That was the problem which I recognised when I was Minister of Education, and it was a matter on which I wrote a minute to the Director of Education similar to the one written by the present Minister, and I feel that it should be strictly observed. One can understand the ordinary man in the street who does not appreciate the situation.

I am not going to apologize, Sir, because every fact I have put forward is absolutely correct. The Minister knew, and I say that as Minister he ought not to have done so but should have taken his child to another school, to set an example so that there would be no further stretching of the elasticity. I am not going to be lectured here by someone like the Minister of Labour, Health and Housing, on what is proper or not. That is the type of thing the members of the P.P.P. talk and write about when they are out of office, accusing this person and the other. Stand up and take your licks. This is not the place for a prima donna, but a place for hardened politicians. I will take my seat when the Chairman rules that I must take it. Listen to the P.P.P. at the street corners—everybody is a stooge, everybody is a rascal. That is why I say that Minister must be like Caesar's wife, above suspicion. There must be no ground for suggesting that they are using their influence.

I was particularly solicitous of the Minister's good name, and I told him that the public should not get the impression that he is throwing his weight around. It is not malice, spite or any objection on my part to his son enjoying the benefits of the good education given at St. Stephen's

school, but I am interested in seeing that the good name of the ministerial system be preserved; so that there could never be any suggestion that our code of morals is so low that we are not fit for the ministerial system.

Mr. Benn: When the hon. Member was Minister of Education the name of the Ministry of Education was most reprehensible.

Mr. Burnham: I will not reply because I have learnt not to answer a fool according to the multitude of his folly.

Mr. Benn: The hon. Member should know who is a fool.

Mr. Burnham: May I repeat slowly: I will not answer a fool according to the multitude of his folly.

Mr. Benn: He that knows not and knows not that he knows not—

Mr. Jackson: Arising out of what was said, I asked a certain question but has received no answer. I give figures and dates in my statement. I said that on the 5th January forty-four students were taken in the school, and I know that some were turned away. I want to know on whose authority that was done, since the Education Department had issued instructions that no more children should have been admitted at the St. Stephen's School? I would like to know on whose authority the extra child and the other children were admitted to the school? My five-year old daughter has two sisters attending the St. Angela's School, but she was turned away from the kindergarten because of the circular which had been sent out by the Education Department.

Mr. Benn: The extra child and the other children were admitted on the authority of the Director of Education.

Mr. Burnham: I would like to know why the hon. Minister of Community Development and Education sat down in Finance Committee and allowed the Chairman of Finance Committee to give

us inaccurate information? The hon. Minister was present and he said nothing.

Mr. Tello: The hon. Minister was very outright in his reply that the single child was admitted on the authority of the Director of Education. Previously he informed us that the Director of Education served in a dual capacity. I would like to know whether he was acting in the capacity of Director of Education or Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Education at the time he gave his authority? I would like the hon. Minister to enlighten us on that point.

Mr. Davis: I urge that the question be put.

Mr. Burnham: Not "urge", you will have to move.

Mr. Davis: I wish to correct myself. I move that the question be put.

Mr. Kendall: This is a very important question—

The Chairman: You are the last speaker I am allowing to speak on this item.

Mr. Kendall: Mr. Tello is asking whether the instructions were given by the Director of Education in his capacity as Director of Education or in his capacity as Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Education?

The Chairman: The question was put quite clearly. I think it has been answered.

Mr. Kendall: It has not been answered; it may be an oversight on the part of the hon. Minister of Community Development and Education.

The Chairman: Well, there is no answer forthcoming.

Mr. Burnham: I beg to withdraw my motion.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion withdrawn.

Mr. Campbell: I beg to move the reduction of item 8 by \$1 in order to —

REFRESHER COURSES FOR TEACHERS

Mr. Tello: Sir, I know that you will be reluctant to go back to item 6 if the hon. Member proceeds with item 8. I beg to move the reduction by one dollar of item 6, Refresher Courses for Teachers. I want to inquire from the hon. Minister of Community Development and Education how he proposes to spend this \$6,000?

The Chairman: Yes, I do not want to go backwards.

Mr. Benn: The \$6,000 will be spent on travelling by the Education Officers and Head Teachers who go around giving lectures, stationery and incidentals. As you will notice the amount went up in 1958 and it has gone up in 1959. The Government feels that in order to have a proper standard of education one must have well-trained teachers.

Mr. Tello: I do not see any increase in the vote for 1959. Can the hon. Minister of Community Development and Education tell us by how much the vote was increased?

Mr. Burnham: The hon. Minister of Community Development and Education cannot subtract.

Mr. Benn: I said that the vote went up in 1958 and it has gone up in 1959.

Mr. Burnham: It was \$6,000 in 1958 and it is still \$6,000 in 1959. Can't the hon. Minister subtract?

Mr. Tello: I beg to withdraw my motion.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion withdrawn.

EXAMINATIONS

Mr. Campbell: I beg to move the reduction by \$1 of item 8 Examinations. In Finance Committee I inquired why there was such a long delay in getting the results of examinations. Very often people had to wait five or six months before they received the results of their examinations. I pointed out that that created tremendous hardships on students, because by the time they received the results they only had a few weeks left to prepare for another examination. They have very little time left to secure textbooks and so on. All over the country people are complaining about this matter, and I would like the hon. Minister to tell this Council what arrangements he has made to give people the results of the examinations in a month or two.

Mr. Benn: With regard to the Examinations Section, I said that the volume of work in the Department has increased considerably. I wish to quote from a Release which will be issued shortly in order to give hon. Members an idea of certain aspects of this matter. I quote:

"In the Primary School Certificate the number of entries has doubled since 1953 and is now 6,000. The Government County Scholarship Examination now has 1,500 entries as against 1,035 in 1952 and the Pupil Teachers' Appointment has a present total of 1,228 entries as against 341 in 1952. For all these examinations the nearly ten thousand entries have to be carefully tabulated and checked, marks have to be checked and cross checked and pass lists prepared. The volume of work is considerable.

The overseas examinations that attract the greatest number of entries are the London General Certificates of Education and the Cambridge School Certificate Examinations. The London G.C.E. Examination was conducted by the Department for the first time in 1951 when the number of entries was 125. There were 1,543 entries in 1958 and the number for 1959 will be over 2,000."

Besides the Local Examinations including the Teachers' Certificate Examinations, the Department conducts examinations for the Law Society, the London Chamber of Commerce and several others.

It is to be regretted that in 1958 the results of the examinations did not go out as early as was anticipated, but, as I have said, it was due to the fact that the Department has a great amount of work to do. Additional persons were appointed to assist in the marking of papers, but in spite of that the results did not go out early enough.

Government has decided to increase the strength of the Examination Section with effect from this year in order to enable the people concerned to get their examination results as early as possible. I think I have already mentioned that the Pupil Teachers' Examination and other examinations have been postponed until April. Those are some of the things that have been done by the Department, and I hope that hon. Members will appreciate the difficulties involved.

In addition to all this the Government has decided to start a new system of Teacher Training, and 500 persons have already applied for the courses. In collaboration with the Teachers' Training College we will endeavour to do our best. The Department hopes that this situation will not recur in 1959.

Mr. Tello: I have listened with interest to the explanation given by the hon. Minister of Community Development and Education, and I think he has dealt with the matter in a convincing manner. I am of the opinion that this Government is putting too much emphasis on money. I have listened to the voluminous amount of work that has to be performed by the Examination Section, and I feel that the provision of \$1,500 is inadequate. I am sure that by the end of next year we will be faced with the same question about papers being marked late, and there will be a lot of confusion in the Education Department. How is the Department going to accomplish all of this work with \$1,500? This amount of money is far from being realistic.

Mr. Campbell: From the answer given by the hon. Minister of Community Development and Education, I gather

that we are to be satisfied to sit and hope that something good will turn up but there is nothing tangible before us. We can only hope that 1959 will be better than 1958. That answer does not satisfy me. If it is necessary to increase the provision in the Estimates that should be done as early as possible, because education is a very important item in any part of the world.

Mr. Tello: I am still hoping that the hon. Minister of Community Development and Education will answer my question, because we do not want another excuse twelve months from now. We want to know what is taking place now. We want to know what mysterious means he is going to employ in order to make \$130 do the work of \$300.

Mr. Benn: The grant for the 1959 Examinations has been increased from \$10,500 to \$12,000, an increase of \$1,500.

Mr. Tello: You will need more than \$1,500 to straighten out the unfortunate position in which you have found yourself. I know that it is impossible to do all that you propose to do with the amount in the Estimates and I would be very grateful if you could break that down into detail.

Mr. Benn: Sir, I cannot keep all these things in my head, such as the whole list of things to be done in the Examination Section. As I said, more people will be marking papers, and everything will be done to expedite the marking of papers.

Mr. Tello: We want the present Government to avoid the pitfalls. It is from his information that we recognize that something is wrong. Probably we are wrong, and I do not expect him to carry with him all these figures, but I would expect him to come here expecting questions and therefore arming himself with information.

Mr. Benn: The amount of this provision is enough to take care of all we hope to do in 1959.

Mr. Campbell: I beg to withdraw my Motion.

TRAVELLING EXPENSES OF INTERIOR TEACHERS

Mr. Gajraj: I beg to move the reduction of sub-head 9—"Travelling expenses of teachers stationed in the Interior"—\$4,000, by \$1, in order to point out that it is inadequate. Travelling expenses of teachers stationed in the Interior have been reduced by \$500 in the year 1959, whereas the cost of paying teachers, which vote one would find under sub-head 1, has gone up by \$315,000. Are we to understand, Sir, that there will be less teachers stationed in the Interior during 1959, thereby necessitating the reduction of the amount to be voted for travelling and so forth?

I believe all of us are of the opinion that with the increasing number of children who have to go to school, there is a very great need for increasing the number of teachers whether in the City schools or in the schools in the Interior. I am suggesting therefore that travelling allowances for teachers in the Interior be increased so that indirectly the children in the schools there will not suffer as they have in the past.

Mr. Benn: The position is that it has been difficult all along to secure enough persons to go into the Interior to teach, but through the instrumentality and the good and faithful assistance of people like the Rev. Fr. McKenna considerable work has been done in producing teachers in certain parts of the Interior, so there is a greater number of teachers who live in the Interior than there was in the past, and it is not necessary to send more teachers out.

Mr. Burnham: It is true there is taking place some training of teachers in the Interior, but no one can convince this Committee that the quality of such training is comparable with that received in Georgetown. And I would like to say this further, that there are many schools in the Interior where one may not find any trained teachers—trained in the sense of their having been trained in the Gov-

ernment Training College, which is for the moment the only training college in British Guiana—and one of the reasons for this is the miserliness of Government. There are a few trained teachers in the far-off Rupununi who are happy to serve there provided they get station allowances in view of the extra cost of living in those remote areas. I know of cases of trained teachers in the Rupununi who have served there but who have been asking for station allowances and so far have got no favourable answer, and so far as I understand, they are likely to leave. As a result there will be no trained teachers, and the quality of the instruction will definitely suffer.

I would remind the Minister that apart from the good works of Fr. McKenna, there are teachers who are willing to serve, but none of them can afford to be so philanthropic as to serve at a heavy loss.

Mr. Benn: Station allowances are not taken care of under this sub-head. It is quite true that the quality of the teaching in the Interior is not up to that of the teaching on the Coast, but on the Coast the position is not much better, because in this country only 25% of our teachers are trained; and it is difficult in schools from Corentyne to the Essequibo Coast in that they do not have sufficiently trained teachers. It is a very serious matter, and something which the present Government is tackling. We want to start an accelerated teachers training programme in this new year.

A problem itself is the control of teachers. Some teachers do not choose not to go to work in the Interior only because of insufficient allowances, but because they do not want to go into the Interior. Or if a teacher is employed, say, at a Roman Catholic School, and he sees an advertisement of a vacancy elsewhere, he would immediately apply and he might get a transfer to another school. Or, if a transfer to another Roman Catholic School is not possible, he might go over to another denominational body and take up a teaching appointment, in order to come to town.

The question of station allowances is a burning one; the present Government realizes this, and I have been fighting to get station allowances for teachers. The whole matter is in the hands of the Establishment Department, and has been there for some time. The difficulty creates extreme hardship on these teachers in the Interior.

Mr. Jackson: I am a bit surprised to learn that the question of station allowances payable to teachers who are not Government officers lies with the Establishment Department.

I am not saying that teachers are not to be encouraged to serve in the Rupununi, but it is very strange, if it is the policy of Government to pass out these allowances to people who are not directly employed by them.

The Minister said that teachers have been trained by priests in the Rupununi, and he tried to justify their lack of qualifications by saying that there are schools in the populated areas of our coastlands with perhaps only one trained teacher. That might be true, but those other teachers had time to pass their teachers' examinations, and so the two situations cannot be put on all fours. I think credit must be paid to the Church for having done all this to assist some teachers to be trained, at points where Government found it difficult. I am sure that if the Church is given additional financial assistance, it would do even more. I hope the Minister will take note of this. We need as many qualified teachers in the Rupununi as possible. If it is difficult for teachers to get the courses in the Rupununi, let us bring them down to Georgetown for their training, at the end of which they would go back to the Rupununi to help their own people as trained teachers.

Mr. Benn: We are taking a certain number of teachers from the Rupununi and other parts of the Interior for training in Georgetown. We have just given a special scholarship to a young lady from St. Ignatius to be trained in Home

Economics but it sometimes happens that people who come to Georgetown for training do not want to go back to the remote areas.

Mr. Tello: The information that a scholarship has been awarded emphasizes exactly what I have in mind—a training scheme on an experimental scale. Does not the Minister think then, that Government is premature in withdrawing these allowances? I think there is too much of a tendency on the part of Government to make changes that would have a detrimental effect in some direction or other.

If the hon. Minister is correct, then to bring these people from one part of the country to the other is going to cost more than \$500, and once they get accustomed to the bright lights of Georgetown and to City life, they are going to apply for jobs like anybody else. I think it would be safe for Government to put that \$500 back into the Estimates for before the end of the year a supplementary vote will have to be asked for, far in excess of that amount. Who is the Government trying to mislead? Not us! Themselves! The Government is trying to say, on paper, "if we expend so much, we will get a surplus of so much," but I feel that if the Minister is to make a success of his job, he must be much surer about these things. I do not know how many Financial Secretaries there are now. The hon. Minister is now becoming Financial Secretary. All we hear is that we have no money, and that we have to cut down expenditure. Money seems to be the most important thing. I would suggest to the Minister to reconsider this matter and let us all feel happy about the future of the schools in the interior.

Mr. Gajraj: It is very difficult for me to reconcile the first answer which the hon. Minister gave to my query, with his last statement, because in his reply to the point I raised he made mention of the fact that there are large numbers of persons belonging to the interior who are attached to the interior schools, therefore the amount of money needed for travelling of teachers from the City to the

[Mr. GAJRAJ]

interior is definitely less. Now he tells us that it is part of the policy of his Government to bring persons from the interior into the City in order to give them additional training so as to enable them to do a better job as teachers. If, on the one hand, there is no need for so many persons travelling one way from Georgetown into the interior we can see that travelling for this will be cut down, but for the refresher course it will be greater because there will be two-way traffic. I do not know how the mathematics have been worked out, but from the statement made it would seem that far from having to reduce the provision it would be necessary to increase it.

Mr. Benn: What the hon. Member suggests will be taken care of under the new teachers' training scheme which will come up at a later stage. The Governing Bodies do pay some part of the travelling expenses of their teachers to the interior.

Mr. Burnham: I do not want to appear to be ungenerous to the Minister who has, after all, conceded the validity of my observation with respect to station allowances, and what I am about to say is not by way of criticism but really by way of inquiry. Can he tell us how he, a Member of the Executive Council and an important Member of the Government, cannot get money for station allowances? It is not a question of Establishment; the majority of teachers have nothing at all to do with the Establishment. There is a block vote or grant to the Denominations who make the disbursement to teachers. I really cannot follow the Minister, and I am asking the question out of a desire to be enlightened as to what his difficulties are. If as a Member of the Executive Council he says that he needs \$1,000 more, as long as he has the support of his colleagues it should not be difficult for him to get that amount.

Mr. Benn: A Committee is looking into the whole question of station allowances, and I would ask hon. Members to wait until the Committee has submitted its recommendations.

Mr. Burnham: May I advise the hon. Minister that he need not worry about this Committee. The Minister must have learnt by now that these Committees move as quickly as the wills of the Gods. He will have to wait a long time while the people chiefly concerned will be undergoing great difficulties. Subordinates on the regular establishment get their station allowances, but the teachers are not paid such allowances.

I would advise the hon. Minister to take the bull by the horns and his courage in his hands to see that the necessary amount is provided in the Estimates for the payment of station allowances to teachers who have to work in the Interior. This is an important matter and it should be gone into fully.

Mr. Campbell: I feel that the teachers in the Rupununi area and other areas outside of the coastland should be given not only station allowances but many other allowances. A teacher must have guts and courage to stick it out there. It is known that teachers do not like to leave Georgetown to go up there and work. It is necessary to have good teachers up there. Some of the teachers up there are working from the point of view that they are doing a job that nobody else wants to do. I do not want to go into details except to mention that the teachers up there are working under a tremendous handicap. I know that some of them are merely sticking the job because most of them have been recruited from the Moruca area. Those teachers are hardened people; they may not have all of the qualifications necessary, but they have the basic knowledge to impart to the school children in those parts.

So far as specialized training is concerned, a first class trained teacher told me in the Pomeroun that he had gone through the Training Course; he was a first class teacher, but when he entered the North West District he had to go through another type of training in order to keep the job that he was called upon to do.

Mr. Jackson: I hope the Committee which is dealing with this question of station allowances for teachers will be asked to work quickly. Can the hon. Minister of Community Development and Education tell us how many teachers in the Rupununi District have been trained by the Priest, and whether he has given consideration to the question of bringing not only one teacher but several teachers from the St. Ignatius area to Georgetown for training? I feel that several teachers should be brought from the Rupununi area for training and sent back to teach the Amerindians.

Mr. Benn: How am I going to know how many teachers in the Rupununi area have been trained by the Priest? I said that one teacher from the area has been given a Princess Margaret Scholarship. Other teachers will be given the Teachers' Training Course from time to time.

Mr. Jackson: I appreciate the Minister's difficulty in not being able to say how many teachers are trained in the Rupununi area. I thought he would have been able to tell us the size of the school as well as how many teachers and students could be found there. It should have been easy for him to tell us that.

While it is true that one person has been given a scholarship and brought to Georgetown to undergo training in home economics, I would like the Minister to state how many of the teachers attending the Teachers' Training College are from the Rupununi area or the North West area.

Mr. Benn: A teacher has been chosen and the course will commence in September. If the hon. Member wishes any further information I will give it to him at a later stage.

Mr. Jackson: I thank you very much. I appreciate the attitude of the hon. Minister who is willing to give us information at a later stage. We will be glad to ask him for more information if he maintains the same attitude.

Mr. Gajraj: I would like to know whether the curriculum of training which these teachers from the Interior will be undergoing is similar to that for teachers in the urban and rural areas. I ask that question because I believe that hon. Members will appreciate that the conditions of life and the conditions under which one has to earn a living are different in the interior parts of the Colony from that which obtain in the rural and urban areas.

I have not studied the question myself, but the thought has just passed across my mind that it might be a good thing if these teachers, apart from getting training in teaching English, Arithmetic, Geography and so on, were also given courses of training in Handicraft, Agriculture and other things which are so necessary to the people who inhabit the Interior and are trying to make a living there.

Mr. Benn: I am grateful for the question asked by the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Gajraj. Some of the teachers in the Rupununi area are trained by the Priest. I do not want Members to get the impression that the instruction or training given by the Priest to these teachers are the same as what obtains at the Teachers' Training College. The instruction given by the Priest is well suited for the teachers in the Rupununi area.

So far as training teachers generally to work in the North West District is concerned a Committee was set up to go into the whole question and it sent in a report some months ago. I understand that the Education Department proposes to put some of the recommendations of the Committee into effect very soon. I think the hon. Member for North West District asked about this aspect of the matter some time last year.

Mr. Tello: I think the hon. Minister of Community Development and Education has attempted to please us. We appreciate his attempt at trying to satisfy us. The questions from this side of the

[MR. TELLO]

Table are asked in the interest of the Colony, and I hope that this spirit of give and take will remain during these debates.

Mr. Benn: I feel the same way as the hon. Nominated Member who has just spoken.

Mr. Gajraj. I beg to withdraw my motion.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Council resumed.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Speaker: Council is now adjourned until tomorrow afternoon at two o'clock.