

THE  
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES  
OFFICIAL REPORT

[VOLUME 7]

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE FOURTH SESSIONS OF THE NATIONAL  
ASSEMBLY OF THE SECOND PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA UNDER THE  
CONSTITUTION OF GUYANA

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18<sup>th</sup> Sitting

2 p.m.

Thursday, 21<sup>st</sup> December, 1972

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MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**Speaker**

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

**People's National Congress**

**Elected Ministers**

The Hon. L.F.S Burnham, S.C.,  
Prime Minister

(Absent)

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

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

The Hon. H.D. Hoyte, S.C.,  
Minister of Works and Communications

The Hon. W.G. Carrington,  
Minister of Labour and Social Security

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

**(Absent – on leave)**

The Hon. B. Ramsaroop,  
Minister with Portfolio and Leader of the House

The Hon. D.A. Singh,  
Minister of Health

**(Absent)**

The Hon. O.E. Clarke,  
Minister of Home Affairs

The Hon. C.V. Mingo,  
Minister of State for the Public Service

The Hon. W. Haynes,  
Minister of Co-operatives and Community Development

The Hon. A. Salim,  
Minister of Local Government

### **Appointed Ministers**

The Hon. S.S. Ramphal, S.C.,  
Minister of Foreign Affairs and Attorney-General

The Hon. H. Green,  
Minister of Public Affairs

**(Absent)**

The Hon. H.O. Jack,  
Minister of Mines and Forests

**(Absent)**

The Hon. Miss C.L. Baird,  
Minister of Education

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

Dr. the Hon. K.F.S. King,  
Minister of Economic Development

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

### **Parliamentary Secretaries**

Mr. J.G. Joaquin, J.P.,  
Parliamentary Secretary,  
Ministry of Finance and Trade

Mr. P. Duncan, J.P.,  
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of National  
Development and Agriculture

Mr. J.R. Thomas,  
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Information,  
Culture and Youth

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

### **Other Members**

Mr. J.N. Aaron  
Miss. M.M. Ackman, Chief Whip  
Mr. K. Bancroft  
Mr. N.J. Bissember  
Mr. J. Budhoo, J.P.  
Mr. L.I. Chan-A-Sue  
Mr. E.F. Correia  
Mr. M. Corrica,  
Mr. E.H.A. Fowler  
Mr. R. J. Jordan  
Mr. S.M. Saffee  
Cde. R.C. Van Sluytman  
Cde. M. Zaheeruddeen, J.P.  
Cde. L.E. Willems

### **Members of the Opposition**

#### **People's Progressive Party**

Dr.C. Jagan,  
Leader of the Opposition

Mr. Ram Karran,  
Mr. R. Chandisingh  
Dr. F.H.W. Ramsahoye, S.C.  
Mr. D.C. Jagan, J.P.,  
Deputy Speaker  
Mr. E.M.G. Wilson  
Mr. A.H. Hamid, J.P.  
Opposition Whip  
Mr. G.H. Lall, J.P.  
Mr. M.Y. Ally  
Mr. Reepu Daman Persaud, J.P.  
Mr. E.M. Stoby, J.P.  
Mr. R. Ally  
Mr. Balchand Persaud  
Mr. Bholu Persaud  
Mr. I.R. Remington, J.P.  
Mr. L.A. Durant  
Mr. V. Teekah

(Absent)

**United Force**

Mr. M.F. Singh  
Mrs. E. DaSilva  
Mr. J.A. Sutton

(Absent)

**Independent**

Mr. R.E. Cheeks  
Mr. E.L. Ambrose  
Mrs. L.M. Branco

(Absent)

**OFFICERS**

Clerk of the National Assembly – F.A. Narain, A.A.  
Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly – M.B. Henry

**The National Assembly met at 2.p.m.**

**Mr. Speaker in the Chair**

**Prayers**

**PERSONAL EXPLANATION****Newspapers Report**

**Mr. Reepu Daman Persaud:** Sir, I wish to crave your indulgence. I wish to draw your attention to a report appearing in today's Daily Chronicle which I understand emanated from the G.I.S. in which I am quoted as saying:

“He also asked for an increase of the marriage fee paid by Hindus.” This is an inaccurate report. In fact, Hindu Priests are not paid by the Government. Obviously the person who reported this story was not following the debate. I was referring to the fee paid to all Marriage Officers under the general laws of the country. It is a fee of 40 cents. The Registrar himself is paid this fee for each marriage he performs. I was asking the government to increase the fee of \$40 cents not the Hindu Community. I shall therefore be grateful if you can correct this.

**PUBLIC BUSINESS****MOTION****APPROVAL OF ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURE 1973**

*Assembly resolved itself into Committee of Supply to resume consideration of the Estimates of Expenditure for the financial year 1973, totalling \$227,712,944.*

*Assembly in Committee of Supply.*

**HEAD 29 – MINISTRY OF NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND AGRICULTURE****LANDS**

*Questions proposed that the sum of \$811,070 for Ministry of national Development and Agriculture, lands, stand part of the Estimates.*

**Mr. Reepu Daman Persaud:** I should like to speak on investigation of allocation of lands. There is no principle - - -

**Mr. Ram Karran:** May I sir? I should like to raise two small questions on land surveyors' examination.

**Mr. Reepu Daman Persaud:** Sir, this item is appearing here year after year and indeed the only "big ting" we heard about one in the news was the Minister of Agriculture and National Development was going overseas to investigate applications for lands. The official figures in 1966 is that 25,000 persons are anxious to get land so that they can cultivate. From 1966 to now that number has risen significantly with the number of retrenchment and the children of farmers reaching maturity age so that they can take their own plots and help in the development of the agricultural sector. Unfortunately, sir, nothing seriously and significantly is being done here in land allocations and when one peruses the various Reports one would find that our north-eastern Guyana coastal plain has 2,000,530 acres available land some 4,000 square miles. The Government has nearly 2 million acres of land that it can give out to people who are anxious to go and cultivate.

There is no need for us to carry out any serious investigation, we can see the bushes all over the place. We want to see these areas transformed and beneficially occupied and be productive so that the objective of reducing our high importation can be reduced. This is one area I would wish to urge the Minister whether there was a committee some time ago headed by Mr. Eusi Kwayana, known as the land Investigation Committee, coming under this same vote. Is that Committee still in existence? Or is it now dead seeing that the person who was chairman is no longer associated? If it is functioning who are the members of the Committee? Why is the Government not inviting members of the Opposition to serve on a committee for the allocation of land? I say that if unemployment is to be solved and reduced the Government itself has said from time to time that agriculture is the answer. But if you are not giving the people the land how the unemployment figure will be reduced.

I urge the hon. Minister to examine this question because of the available 2 million acres of land only able 500,000 acres of land are occupied and probably a similar amount or lesser in pasture for dairy farming and so on. We have the land and we have the people who wish the land according to the official figures but the land is not being allocated to the people who can make a contribution. What in fact the Government has been doing is the Government is persuading new people to take land; we are not opposed to this, to new people going into agriculture production. But you have people who know of agriculture, who love agriculture, persons who were born and bred in agriculture and who would like to contribute and they are the ones who are denied the land and people whom you have to pay, to force and people whom you have to give various facilities before they go on the land those are the people who are in fact given some land by the Government. The Government should have a very broad policy in so far as land allocation is concerned.

Probably the hon. Minister would like to tell this House – that is of course the purpose of argument accepting that he really went on an investigation overseas for land and he did not go for election purposes – what has been the result, how many applications he saw. I still maintain my position that you must investigate here first, give the people who want lands in this country first then you can go on excursions overseas to look at applicants. What is being done in so far as State lands which is not beneficially occupied. What steps are being taken to bring these lands under cultivation?

2.15 p.m.

**Mr. Ram Karan:** Land Surveyors Examination. I thought my friend would have been here yesterday, the hon. Minister who visited Canada to investigate application for land. I wanted to raise the question of the land surveyors examination and to enquire what efforts are being made to increase the number of land surveyors in the country. We heard very pathetically from the hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs and Attorney General that land surveyors are short, that work cannot be done. We know this country has a sever wasteage of such personnel having

regard to the attractive salaries and conditions of work prevailing in other West Indian territories, but the P.P.P. was able to lick this problem by training a large number of people at the Technical Institute with the aid of American personnel.

Our friends are very friendly with the American and I can see no reason why we should have utterances like those made by the hon. Attorney General, we should have piecemeal preparation of land surveyors with a small pittance of \$1,300 a year. Would the hon. Minister tell us, if he is in apposition to do so, whether Government proposes to arrange a sort of scheme whereby all the departments of the Government will be served by rapid training and properly-trained land surveyors?

At one time, we had the hon. Minister's predecessor telling us that all our land surveying problems are going to be licked because we are going to do aerial surveying. We know that aerial surveying is a myth. It might be applicable in certain limited areas but it cannot give the Amerindians land. It cannot solve the problems prevailing in the country. It cannot delineate lands for farmers, they cannot go ahead doing land division and things like that. I would like to ask the hon. Minister whether Government proposes to do something spectacular but successful, in so far as training of land surveyors is concerned.

We come to the last question. Publication of Section of Guyana Map. For sometime now we have not seen any new maps coming from the Ministry of Lands. There is a rumour, I cannot say that it is justified and I do not think that it is, that the Government has conceded that tiny island of Ankoko and I would like to know whether this provision is to cede sovereignty of Ankoko to the Venezuelans. I hope that the Government will include the island as our territory in the next publication of our map.

**The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Development and Agriculture**  
(Dr. Reid): I wish first of all to say that Government has not ceded one square inch of land to any neighbouring territory.



On the question of \$1,300, that is the fee for the examiners, which was raised last year from what it used to be. Training of land surveyors goes on at the Technical Institute and added to that this year the Government has been using a larger number of private surveyors so as to push the work.

In connection with the first speaker, the hon. Member Mr. Reepu Daman Persaud, I wish to say that even though the volume of work has increased because of additional requests, a few months ago we checked on how the work was going and for this year up to that time, 2,374 leases were issued over an area of 150,394 acres, plus 2,096 lease for agricultural and cattle grazing purposes. In addition to that, 318 tracts have been approved for issue of new leases over a gross area of 11,674 acres, and 202 annual permissions were issued over 13,608 acres in various parts of Guyana.

Also, we have had to do work for the livestock development project in the Canje region where 158,000 acres were surveyed. More land – 20,800 acres – was surveyed along the Soesdyke-Linden highway embracing 22 blocks for land co-operative societies, 1,932 residential and business blocks, 1,564 agricultural plots. Routine surveys of isolated tracts in the Essequibo, Mahaicony, Abary and Berbice Rivers, continue during the year while weather permitted and a total of 372 tracts were completed with an aggregate of some 4,000 acres.

In addition to all this, the final surveys and plans for registration of title under the Land Registration Ordinance have been completed for Hampton Court, Devonshire Castle, Westfield, Mocha, Parika, Adventure, Buxton, Calcutta and Elizabeth, while there are six other land registration areas which are being dealt with at Dalgin, Spring Garden, in the Demerara River. In relation to the survey of lands for Amerindians in the Upper Mazaruni River, and my colleague Parliamentary Secretary Duncan mentioned that Kamarang was finalized sometime in October and the necessary plans are now being prepared. This embraces approximately 195 square miles.

I note there has been quite some interest about the visit overseas. As we have our nationals overseas who have been applying without fully understanding the whole question, it was necessary to bring them up to date on what is happening as regards the whole situation. It was not an election campaign visit. When that time comes it will be made known that we are carrying on election campaign. The time has not yet come, no date has yet been announced for elections and we on this side are not engaged in any campaigning whatsoever.

**Mr. Ram Karran:** Sir, the hon. Minister did not enlighten the hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs and Attorney General, because I am sure you will recall that he made specific mention of the serious shortage of land surveyors. How is this Government working? *[Interruption]* You are telling us two different things.

**Mr. Reepu Daman Persaud:** From the figures given by the hon. Minister, he is supporting my argument that the greater portion of the surveys relate to the acreages I have referred to, that the Government has not really made any breakthrough in so far as land allocation is concerned. He did not proceed to tell us whether this land distribution committee is existing, or whether it is defunct, or what is the position.

**Dr. Reid:** I thought my hon. Friend knew that the committee is still functioning. This is a standing committee. This is not dissolved. We will change members here and there. This committee is functioning, doing its work in the investigation for lands.

*Head 29, Ministry of National Development and Agriculture, Lands - \$811,070 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Pages 90 and 91.

**HEAD 30 – MINISTRY OF NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND AGRICULTURE**  
**INTERIOR DEVELOPMENT**

*Question proposed that the sum of \$507,399 for Head 30, Ministry of National Development and Agriculture, Interior Department, stand part of the Estimates.*

**2.25 p.m.**

**Mr. Bhola Persaud:** page 90, subhead 12.

**Mr. Feilden Singh:** Subhead 11.

**Mr. Wilson:** Page 91, subhead.

**Mr. Bhola Persaud:** Subhead 12, Amerindian Residence and Hostels – Wages of Caretakers, Maintenance. The Approved Estimate in 1972 was \$11,344. For this year the Government is estimating an expenditure of \$12,000. There are a lot of complaints coming in from the hostels. I merely want to ask the hon. Minister whether he can indicate to the House what is the position with the Ituni Hostel on the Berbice River. If the Minister remembers, it was closed for a long period. Does the Government intend to rebuild it and, if so, have any arrangements been made to have the work done?

**Mr. Feilden Singh:** Subhead 11, Amerindian Captains. The sum of \$89,400 is being sought to pay Amerindian Captains. We have no quarrel with paying Amerindian Captains. We think that they should have been paid a long time ago. They have been performing a very useful service in the past. They have performed the duties of the police in their areas.

What worry us is the present and the future. It seems that since the P.N.C. minority Government undertook to pay Amerindian Captains they also seem to regard this as a special

post to be held by some P.N.C. agent to carry on party work in the area. This was evidenced particularly in one area that I know about in the Moruka area where the Amerindian Captain was recently elected. What in fact happened was this: The officer went in there on the afternoon before the election. He put up a notice that elections would take place the next day and on the next day elections were duly held.

Now their own people knew all about this but the rest of the people did not know. The captain who was holding office knew nothing about it. The Government officer walked in one afternoon, put up a notice and on the next day the Amerindian Captain was elected. Even Mr. Stoby, the P.P.P. Member of Parliament in that area, knew nothing about the election. He had no knowledge at all that elections would have been held on the day in question.

What was particularly significant was that when the results of the elections were declared it was found that 50 per cent more people voted than voted in the national elections. Just imagine! With all the rigging more people voted in the election for an Amerindian Captain than in the national elections. How did they do it? They were behind closed doors. They counted their votes behind closed doors and they rigged from beginning to end to produce the particular result they wanted.

Mr. Chairman, we object to this. If you are going to pay Amerindian Captains let the people have them freely and fairly elected instead of in the way in which this minority P.N.C. government by fraud had itself elected into power. As I said before, the members of the Government have absolutely no right to be there. *[Interruption.]* Particularly those people over there who behave like madmen. It is my view that the next time they go into hospital they will be kept in the hospital. Some of them give cause of people to have serious doubts as to their sanity.

These Amerindian Captains must be paid but they must not be paid as P.N.C. agents. They must be paid as genuine representatives of their people. They must be freely and fairly elected. They must not be the kind of incompetent young radicals that the P.N.C. seems to be

recruiting in this particular area and paying. Let us have a return to the days when you have competent people performing the work voluntarily and freely and really doing a good service.

Now that the time has come for them to be paid, let us give some consideration to those people who performed this valuable service for so many years in the past without one single cent for payment. Instead of that the Government is kicking them aside in their mad, power-drunk attitude as is so visible on the other side. Members on the other side know whom I am talking about. They walk in here with sticks and they want to beat people. They want to carry that attitude even in the Amerindian areas.

The Amerindians are simple people; they are not accustomed to that sort of thing. Let us not teach them that kind of rascality and let them develop in the way in which they should develop as ordinary indigenous inhabitants of this country. These are the people to whom the country really belongs. Do not let us teach them the rascality that seems to be so prevalent on the P.N.C side

By all means pay them, but pay the ones who are willing to give devoted, unselfish service to their people instead of merely acting as P.N.C. agents in the particular area.

**Mr. Wilson:** Subhead 16, Amerindian Welfare – Scholarship Funds and Books. I agree with this item. Perhaps it could be increased but in view of the fact that the Amerindians are not any more children of the forests – they are actually being integrated into the rest of the community, as is being claimed by the hon. Minister Mr. Duncan – I am of the view that similar provision should be made for other children.

It is true that we initiated this special fund but it is ten years since it was started and I think the time has come when other children, from the remote areas especially, ought to be provided special funds in order to be able to make proper use of the education provided. Very often they have all live in slum areas and the like under conditions that are not so happy.

21.12.72

National Assembly

2.25 – 2.35 p.m.

Perhaps the Minister of Agriculture will say that he is not responsible for education generally but I am thinking of collective responsibility of the Cabinet the fact that he is Deputy Prime Minister, he ought to be able to say what is Government's policy on this question.

**The Chairman:** You seem to forget he was also a headteacher like yourself.

**Mr. Wilson:** I know that. He ought to be very competent to answer this question.

2.35 p.m.

**Dr. Reid:** Mr. Chairman, maintenance for next year for hostels has been reduced of the work that has been done in rehabilitating many of them. On the question with respect to the hostel at Ituni, we shall enquire to find out what can be done there. I thank the hon. member for bringing that to our attention.

Payment to Amerindian Captains is really justified, and I do not think my friend dared to say they should not be paid. But I suspect deep down in his heart he would wish them not to be paid according to the type of relationship he would want for workers, that is, they should continue to work for free. But he dared not say that in this house for fear. Of course, he cannot speak for the Amerindians. These Amerindian Captains who are being paid are properly elected by their people. The officers who were responsible for elections followed all the legal requirements as far as notices are concerned, and the Captains so elected have been properly returned. This annoys my hon. Friend because there was a time when they could hand out to the Amerindians sweets or any red thing to do their work. There was a time when they used to put records up in the trees and say that it is the voice of god and things like that. They want these people to remain simpletons.

But this Government is determined to change this situation. Changes will continue, and their education will continue. Our Amerindian brothers are moving forward and I hope the hon.

Member Mr. Wilson would take note that for the first time in the history of this country a full-blooded Amerindian, not like what you have over there, has been awarded a Guyana Scholarship, the highest scholarship award that can be given to any person in this country. We will continue to give them special assistance because of the gap. We talk about bridging gaps, and if we are to do this then they must be given some special treatment. I agree that children in some remote areas ought to be considered too, but my friend must not forget that there are hundreds of free places and they are awarded according to districts. You will find that in some districts the number of marks for getting that scholarship is different. But our Amerindians need special treatment so that we can bridge the gap.

*Head 30, Ministry of National Development and Agriculture, Interior Development - \$507,399, agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** page 92 --

### **HEAD 31 – MINISTRY OF NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND AGRICULTURE LAND DEVELOPMENT**

*Question proposed that the sum of \$1,296,863 for Head 31, Ministry of National Development and Agriculture, Land Development, stand part of the Estimates.*

**Mr. Reepu Daman Persaud:** Subheads 4, 6, 8, 10, 11 and 12.

**Mr. R. Ally:** subhead 1, items (2) and (3) and subheads 6 and 8.

**Mr. Sutton:** Subhead 7.

**Mr. Bhola Persaud:** If the points are not dealt with I should like to speak on subhead 8.

**Mr. Ram Karran:** May I speak on subhead 6 if my colleague fails to cover the point?

**Mr. Lall:** Subhead 6.

**The Chairman:** Mr. Persaud.

**Mr. Reepu Daman Persaud:** Sir, very briefly subhead 4, Government Estates on the West Demerara. There is no doubt that the Government is, in fact, guilty of neglecting these estates, Philadelphia, Barnwell and Ruby. In all these areas people are living under sub-human conditions. In some areas they are without bridges, sanitation facilities are poor, the roads are impassible. What is very wrong to my mind is the fact that the Government is allocating lands immediately behind these housing areas to persons who are living outside of Government estates.

On one occasion, sir, a clash was avoided when on Phagwah Day farmers who are residents of the area saw strangers chasing their cows out of the pastures for which they are paying a rent. The Police was involved in this matter and nothing has been done. As a matter of fact, the residents of these Government Estates were compelled to put their cattle under their houses. I think the Government must show some concern and consideration for these people living in its Estates. Lands immediately behind these housing estates ought to be allocated to the persons living there. We want to develop a system of agriculture where the people nearer the land are given the land so that they can cultivate it. Those people really are unable to make two ends meet, they do not have any other means of livelihood save and except farming and instead of giving them lands so they can expand and giving them loans you bring people from outside. Persons to whom lands have been allocated are known activist of the People's National Congress

Subhead 6. I do not want to make all the points under this, but I want to draw to the hon. Minister's attention the fact that farmers in the Black Bush area have made innumerable complaints. There was an area where farmers were occupying and as a result of cattle nuisances the crops of farmers were destroyed. They made representation and I understand that the



stood by for some time and prevented the destruction. When this facility was withdrawn, as a result, the cattle went back and their crops were again destroyed. The farmers had to discontinue planting and cultivating these areas.

Now the Government had agreed to give them new areas and to re-allocate the areas to new people but the fact is if the Government is considering re-allocation, obviously the Government will be faced with the same problem of offering protection to the people. If the Government had in mind offering people protection then why in the first place the Government did not offer continued protection to the farmers?

**2.45 p.m.**

The gravest complaint is from those farmers who were given new plots. They were told before they could be allocated those new plots, they would have to pay the arrears of the previous occupiers, and these arrears are very high. The farmers are without the money to pay the arrears. The likelihood is, they are going to be without the land and without money to pay the arrears. The likelihood is, they are going to be without the land and without any source of income.

I should like to urge the Government, if it is moving towards self-sufficiency in food, then these farmers must be given the land to cultivate so that they can produce. Why force them to pay arrears of rental? This is a burning question because they were occupiers previously and they had to remove because of a genuine complaint, and when they are given new plots, they have to pay sums of money they just cannot afford to pay.

I ask the Government to allocate without payment. I also want to ask the Government that in the allocation of land, once there are farmers who have proven their salt in the past, the Government ought to give them land without enforcing this new policy of payment of arrears of rental.

The point I am making to the House is this. I am talking about people who are occupying, people who have actually cultivated and prepared land, and people who are unable to continue cultivation because of a genuine hindrance, cattle nuisance. The same people are giving service in certain areas. All I say is, give them the land without asking them to pay.

I speak on other problems. I have got a number of letters but just let me cite one. The farmers of Black Bush, during last year and again this year, have been complaining, and the hon. Minister of Agriculture will recall that I phoned him up on one or two occasions in so far as machinery is concerned, because there is a shortage of machinery there. The farmers were prevented from reaping their crops. Indeed, they lost because they could not get machinery, and here is a situation where the machinery is in one area. The people complete that area, they have to remove from that area and go to another area far away, and the man next door is not given the opportunity to use the machinery although he has applied and is willing to pay the necessary cost.

Many of these farmers who have complained had loans from the G.R.C. and they were not really given the encouragement and assistance that were necessary. I have several letters. One farmer complained where, in fact, he applied for the tractor. His name is Sookhai of Lesbeholden North, cultivating plot 55. He ploughed and shied with G.R.C. loan. He said he applied for a G.R.C. combine to start reaping his crop on 10<sup>th</sup> April. He applied a month beforehand but the combine did not arrive until May 6<sup>th</sup>. It reaped 20 bags and left. He said the operator just mentioned that the land was bad, and he went away. He had to wait for a long time. There was another man who applied more than a month in advance. Again, he was not given the combine.

I called Mr. Kennard on this question, complaining about these farmers' problems. These are the things to my mind which are contributing to the drop in rice production. Rain is a factor, but inadequacy of combines and lack of other facilities to the farmers are the main factors that are contributing to the drop in production of rice. I would urge the hon. Minister of Agriculture

to consider acquiring additional combines to be used in the Black Bush area and on the Corentyne because complaints came also from outside of that area.

I move away from Black Bush and I come to subhead 8, MaraLand Settlement Scheme. This settlement has been completely, I want to use the word “abandoned” but that would not be correct, it is neglected by the Government. The Government is doing nothing about it as is shown in the Estimates. What we are voting again this year is \$60,000, as we voted last year. This means that the very minimum services will continue in the Mara Settlement. The majority of farmers have left the area. You have got the facilities, you have got the land. What the people need is to be rehabilitated, and to be guided by the Government.

Indeed, not only the developed area in Mara can really provide for a large number of families, but indeed, adjacent to Mara, there is suitable land where more people can be taken in for cultivation, but we have a situation where in relation to the already developed area, people are running from it and the government is not bothering about it and so it is reasonable to assume that nothing is done to have expansion and to develop the adjacent area to Mara. These are criticisms which the Government cannot escape.

Subhead 11, Cane Grove – La Bonne Mere Maintenance of Agricultural Holdings and Drainage and Irrigation Works. I merely repeat for emphasis that something positive should be done for the Cane Grove area because what we see here is the same vote. The hon. Minister of Agriculture will say there is provision for the M.M.A. Scheme and something will be done there, but besides drainage and irrigation, these people have other problems in the Cane Grove area. May I repeat that call, that the arrears of rental for the Cane Grove area be waived?

Wauna Land Development Scheme, subhead 12. I have got letters saying that the one road in Wauna is in a deplorable condition and there is only one truck for transportation of the farmers' produce. This is really handicapping the farmers. There is need for additional transport facilities and, immediately, for work to be done on the road so it can become useable.

**The Chairman:** Hon. Member Mr. Persaud, this Head was allocated 20 minutes. You have taken up 15 minutes

2.55 p.m.

**Mr. Sutton:** Mr. Chairman, I am just using this Head to ask the Minister a very simple question which I asked yesterday. Perhaps I did not make myself clear as I did not get an answer.

I notice that the sum of \$19,000 has been budgeted for the Amazon-Charity Land Development Scheme under subhead 7 and although a portion of this scheme is in the Pomeroun area I think the Minister would have no objection to answering the question.

Yesterday I asked whether any survey had been made in order to ascertain what direct help will be given to the farms which were devastated by the floods in the Pomeroun. The Minister pointed out that canals were being dug so that this would not happen again. The place would be empoldered and, in case of any rainfall, the land would be protected. This was regarded as considerable help to farmers.

I would agree one hundred per cent but in some places the devastation caused by the floods in the Pomeroun area has been such that farmers find it very difficult to get started again. It is not simply a question of being protected from devastation in the future but it is a question of making it possible for them to start their farms again in a meaningful manner and to be given help by means of organized subsistence until they can once again live off their farms.

Can the Minister emphasise whether, in the land development that is being done for future protection, any survey has been made, or is likely to be made, to give these people who find it very difficult to help themselves direct help, whether by finance, or seeds or any other means?

**Mr. Roshan Ally:** Mr. Chairman, the hon. Member Mr. Reepu Daman Persaud mentioned the inadequate machines at Black Bush Polder. This is true. Because of this, many farmers were unable to cultivate their crops and many who had crops on the land lost their crops. This is so because of the high cost for spare parts for these machines. Not only the farmers at the Black Bush Polder and the Guyana Rice Corporation are facing this problem. The private farmers are also affected. The cost of parts has gone up during the past two or three years.

I would just like to quote a few prices, sir. For instances, in 1969, owners of combines could have purchased a truck chain for \$800. Today a truck chain costs \$3,500. The bearings for trucks in 1969 cost \$5. Today the cost is \$15.20. Other bearings used to cost \$35. Today they are sold for \$50. Field picks used to cost \$1. Today they cost \$5.00 these are all figures which prove that the cost of parts has increased. For instance, the cost of a drag string belt has risen from \$65 to \$226. The Minister comes here to tell us about increased price of rice, but he just does not take these things into consideration. I could quote a lot of figures for tractors, combines and agricultural tools and what not.

In 1969 it cost a rice farmer \$142.62 to produce an acre of rice. In 1972 it is costing the farmer \$179.62 to produce the same acre of rice. The cost of production for each bag of rice has gone up by three dollars. And when they talk about giving \$2 inclusive, this cannot compensate for the increased cost from 1969 to now.

This is the reason why even the G.R.C is unable to maintain its machines. At Black Bush Polder the farmers are facing many problems. At Black Bush Polder the Government has created four new posts for superintendents. These superintendents are doing the simple work that the senior rangers used to do in that area. The senior rangers work for \$150 per month.

Listen to what this Government has done. A house was built for each superintendent costing \$21,000 each. The house is furnished with furniture, gas stove, refrigerator and lighting plant. Each lighting plant has an operator. There are two watchmen and a relief watchman. A

caretaker, a washer, a cook, a mini-car. The superintendents receive \$150 a month as salary. \$144 travelling allowances, \$75 entertainment allowance. Two of the superintendents are pensioners. One is Reggie and one is Westmaas. I do not know whether these are P.N.C. thugs, since they are pensioners.

I think, since they have experience, the senior rangers who were doing the same type of work could have been given the preference to do this work. They were doing better than these people are doing at the moment because the hon. Minister of Agriculture, Dr. Reid, and Mr. Gavin Kennard went in November and asked the farmers to grow an agricultural crop and promised them water. The farmers knew that if they went late they would suffer, so they went into the field as soon as they were promised the water, prepared the land, some of them broadcast dry seeds on the land, while some waited to do the mud work. To my surprise, when I went in there on the 10<sup>th</sup> December the farmers came to me and showed me not only the rice plants but all the cabbages withering away. They could not get water and they were asking why the Minister promised them and just involved them in this unnecessary expense.

This is not all. With these vacant plots I would like to appeal to the Minister. My hon. Friend Mr. Reepu Daman Persaud was trying to make the point that the Land Development Department, or Ministry responsible for the selection of people to occupy lands, insisted that they should pay the arrears of rent, but let the hon. Minister tell us how much Jagnandan, a big landlord at No. 64 Village, paid. He owns 15 plots in Black Bush Polder. Toolsie from No. 49, a big landlord, also holds land. Not only those people: Christy from Victoria Village, who is behaving like a terrorist all over the place, also got a plot; he did not pay any arrears of rent but he is there on the land. He is not paying even the current rent. The Minister made mention that even barmen have land at Black Bush Polder. They are not paying rent. When I called all the names the last time they shouted at me in the House. The vacant lots are becoming very bushy. There are big bushes all over the place and these vacant plots are housing animals and insects which are affecting the farmers.

21.12.72

National Assembly

2.55 – 3.05 p.m.

I would like to appeal to the Government not to discriminate against anyone. The farmers are asking that their grown-up children should be given the plots. I ask the Government to see that all these plots are taken up by the children of the settlers.

3.05 p.m.

**Mr. Balchand Persaud:** Although some of the points have been raised I should merely like to ask the hon. Minister one question. We are spending \$60,000 in the Mara land Development Scheme again this year what is the purpose since the Scheme is not functioning as it should?

**The Chairman:** Hon. Member Mr. Ram Karran.

**Mr. Ram Karran:** No, sir. My question has been covered.

**Mr. Lall:** I should like to draw to the attention of the Minister of Housing or the Government a certain irregularity that is going on that would hamper the smooth running of the Black Bush Polder. I visited the area on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> and I met about two dozen operators and assistant operators. They have complained that since the last Spring Crop they were not given work by a supervisor who was transferred from Burma to the Black Bush Polder. It is there on record that a man by the name of Budhai at Lesbeholden who has been working as operator of a combine since 1964 and who has made the highest record for reaping 300 bags for any one day has been laid off.

The producing capacity of the combines has been reduced to almost two-thirds. How can the Scheme make progress? I was told by the workers who are employed from 1964 onwards that operators are taken from Burma to work there. I have no objection to that but first preference must be given to the people who are residing in the area, providing they are efficient, and are capable of operating the machines. I was also told that since the boys have been thrown

off their jobs the reaping capacity of each machine has been reduced tremendously. I am calling on the hon. Minister to investigate this matter. Because this will hamper the smooth running of the Scheme.

Then I want to draw to the attention of the Minister another serious matter. That is a supervisor by the name of Mr. Pearson called a carpenter from the area to make some steam boxes and asked the carpenter to give him an estimate. The carpenter submitted the estimate and they got the materials. After the materials were bought the supervisor asked the carpenter how much he will charge to make the box. He said, "I usually make them for \$8." The supervisor said, "No, I will offer you \$4." The carpenter said, "This cannot pay." Eventually what happened. The supervisor removed a security guard from his job and replaced him and gave the security guard an assistant and the security guard and his assistant took one full week to build one steam box. I do not want to go further but I wish to ask the hon. Minister to make an investigation into this malpractice that is going on in Black Bush Polder.

I was in the past Selection Committee at Lesbeholden and the Scheme was intended for settlers to have a homestead and a field where they are planting padi. But what do we see now? If this is true, I am subject to correction, several settlers have several homesteads they have purchased without having rice land and the rice land has been sold to non-residents. This was not the purpose of the Scheme. The purpose was that anybody who wants to plant rice in the area must be a resident. I do not know if the Government is departing from this policy, but if it is, the Scheme is bound to prove a failure. I am asking the Government to re-examine the policy in so far as this Scheme is concerned.

**Dr. Reid:** Mr. Chairman, we will begin with the last speaker, the hon. Member Mr. Harry Lall. He has reported that good operators have been laid off and he has quoted the record of their performance at Black Bush Polder. We have varying records of performance and I hope that the policy is carried out that nobody would stay at Black Bush simply because of past record of performance. We need current record of performance all the time, even though we keep a check



on this unless there is something irregular. The arrangement that he criticized at Black Bush polder will still show that for the present crop just reaped Black Bush Polder has done its best over a long period of years. The policy is that settlers who own the agricultural plots should also have their homesteads and this policy has not changed.

### 3.15 p.m.

Now we come to government estates. It will be noted now that the local authorities are involved in the Government estates and they too are helping to promote self-help in these areas. The money voted is to cover drainage and irrigation rates and these rates are also subsidised. In 1960-1961, these estates were offered, but nobody took them and now people are occupying them, and the rents that we collect are very low indeed on the whole of West Demerara. Some of the people keep their cattle under their houses for all sorts of reason, one is that the animals must be near to them. In some areas, even with great effort and pasture available, it is difficult to get some people to take the cattle to the pasture. I think they will have to look into this matter more to ensure when the pastures are available people use them.

The cattle nuisance at Black Bush Polder is an old story and some settlers have made representation to change from that area. This was agreed to and as plots are made available where there is no cattle nuisance, these settlers get these new plots. It is true that other people would like to occupy these plots but the one guarantee that they have to give, is that they will so organize themselves to ensure that cattle do not roan in the fields. In the same district, Corentyne, the farmers themselves have got their own organisation to watch the cattle because even when the wire fence is there, the report is that cattle owners cut the wire fence.

At the Anna Regina scheme, we instituted fencing and the farmers have people to watch the fence, even when they have not got to watch the cattle, because if there is a fence, you still have to watch the fence. If the co-operative organisation is determined to put a watch, then these lands will be made available to those who can take care of them. We have an agreed

arrangement with famers about arrears but let it be made quite clear, that we are not going to encourage the waiving of all arrears willy-nilly as my friend would like to hear this afternoon, because people make all sorts of arrangements. If you get into the waiving of arrears, the time will come when there will be no collections for many of the plots.

There is, in fact, a problem with machinery at Black Bush Polder. I agree the price of machinery has increased and this makes it more important that we take care of the smaller farmers who cannot really be encouraged to buy machines because not only the price of the machine but the price of the parts has increased and that is why there is greater pressure on the machine pool. But this year, more machinery has been bought and there in an order for more machines so that we can take care of all the farmers.

I do not think we will reach the stage where there will be no complaints because some plots that should be dry at reaping time are sometimes still swampy because the farmers themselves do not take care of their plots. When the time of reaping is approaching, diligent farmers make drains so that the surface of the soil of the soil will be hard enough for the combine to manoeuvre. If an operator gets into a plot that is swampy, then it is foolish for him to try to remain there because he will be breaking up the machine, he will be bogged down, he will delay the reaping of the crop. As we keep the seminars in the areas, we advise farmers what they should do so as to be ready for the reaping, and if farmers do not visit the plot after sowing, then they themselves are encouraging difficulties which they must experience.

Mara Land Settlement Scheme has been given its usual allocation, but next year, this will be part of the Livestock Development Company. It will be one of the big ranches for breeding and thus, this settlement will get a new look.

Wauna was mentioned. From my visit to that area, Wauna has the best road in the area if you want to travel from Mabaruma to Wauna. They are continuing that road. The road is already constructed to take you to Yarakita, but the exercise is to take that road to Kaituma and

thence to Matthews Ridge. Settlers are at the same time going in to this area. I am not disposed to wasting the time of this honourable House in any way. The question raised by my hon. and good Friend Mr. Sutton was dealt with yesterday and it is asking too much to repeat the same thing today.

I have got from my hon. Friend Mr. Roshan Ally a series of falsehoods. Under other circumstances and other places I would have said a series of lies, but we cannot use that in this House and I am not prepared to sink to his level to give answers to these questions, for whence did he get it that the price of one house is \$21,000, when we got them from Guyana Timbers Ltd. for \$10,000 each. What kind of man is this in the House? It is really irritating to hear an hon. Member stand up in this House and fail to give anything that is true.

Entertainment allowance. Who knows about this? No officer at Black bush Polder gets such allowance.

We have really re-organised Black Bush Polder during this year and we have got result from this, with Mr. Brassington in charge and dividing up the scheme so that you somebody responsible in each section – for be it known that Black Bush Polder is as large as St. Lucia. We have been trying all through the years to give all this wide area to one man to supervise. It was not working, and after careful thinking and investigation, the scheme is now divided up, and at each section, there is a man who is solely responsible.

Even though we have rangers and koker watchmen they would not function unless you have somebody who can really get to the places. That is what we have done by putting those men there who can get out into the area, and there is a complete change at Black Bush Polder. More bags of padi have been reaped at the last crop and more lands have been put under cultivation than ever before. We on this side are perfectly satisfied with what is going on.  
*[Applause]*

**Mr. Ram Karran:** The hon. Minister looks like Father Christmas. How appealingly he speaks to this House as if he is Father Christmas making gifts: The hon. Minister should know that he is misled by the officers in Georgetown because in Black Bush Polder there is at least one man who has lot where he lives but he has no land. He was made to push his hand in a bag to select a plot and that plot was arbitrarily taken away from him. He is now told to go where the cattle will graze.

The man was sent to the hon. Minister of Agriculture. I do not know who was the Minister at the time. The Minister said, "You do not live there." The man has a lot there; he has a house there but he does not live there because he has to come down to Georgetown to get treatment for his foot which was injured. He was working with the Ministry of Agriculture for 10 years. The man has a house. His daughter and his son-in-law are living there. He lives there himself but he comes to Georgetown for treatment.

Because of that, the rascals, sheltering under the umbrella of the government, took away his plot to give it to one of their friends. I do not say they were taking bribes but what was the reason? Let the Minister investigate and he will find that there are ulterior motives. The man is told, "Yes, you have a good case." The man showed me, and he showed the hon. Minister, the tag he pulled out from the Father Christmas bag. A lot was given to him and he planted it for several years. Now, arbitrarily he is told to go where the cattle are grazing. Why is this? If there is one person in this position there must be many others. The Minister must not come here like Father Christmas and mislead the House. He must get the facts.

**Dr. Reid** *rose --*

**The Chairman:** Hon. Minister, there is another hon. Member who wishes to speak.

**Mr. Reepu Daman Persaud:** I only want to deal with arrears. I do not know if the Minister realizes the seriousness of this question of arrears and Government's policy. The

farmers who have been allocated lots find themselves in arrears because of several factors which the government is aware of. They are compelled to go to the money lenders directly and what in fact has been happening is that money lenders on the Corentyne Coast have been lending farmers' money to pay the arrears or rent. Thus they become the masters of the land.

As the hon. member Mr. Haynes said, the farmer must never be the tool of production but must be involved meaningfully in the structure. What is happening is that unless the Government gives immediate and serious consideration to this bogus collection of arrear it will put us in a worse position than when our so-called "colonial" masters were here.

I know as a fact that people are compelled to do this for various reasons. They do not have arrears, and, instead of losing the land, they go to Toolsie and to others. They sign documents; "The cultivation will be yours; I will produce for you. You will take the crop." It is a serious thing.

I want to ask the Minister to appoint a Committee to investigate the question of arrears at Black Bush. I am not calling for a willy-nilly waiver of arrears from all and sundry but from all the genuine cases.

When I asked the Minister to ask persons who are already in occupation to pay arrears, I was making a positive point. They have already contributed but because of circumstances beyond their control they are compelled to take other plots and they have to pay more. Why charge them arrears? They are asked to pay exorbitant sums - \$900, \$1,000 – that are due from other people.

I want to urge the Minister to see this matter in its true perspective. I am not asking him not to ask people to pay arrears generally but there are a number of cases with a strong claim for no payment. I ask him, indeed, to save these poor farmers from the hands of the money-lending sharks.

**Mr. Roshan Ally:** I would like to inform the House through you, sir, that everything I have said is true and correct. For the first time since I have been speaking in this House, as I was speaking just now, I saw some sort of shame appear on the face of the hon. Minister. I have spoken the truth and the hon. Minister is just trying to defend himself.

**Dr. Reid:** The facts can be checked. The Guyana Rice Corporation did not sell any house to us for \$21,000. That can be easily checked.

As far as arrears are concerned, I have dealt with that matter. There is no need for a farmer to go to a money-lender. He has to discuss his case with the superintendent and the superintendent has a plan, too, for dealing with arrears.

My hon. Friend talked about his friend who lives in Bel Air. A plot is only taken from a farmer when it is not occupied by him. If the plot is not used it is fair enough to take it away.

We have under cultivation 13,000 out of 17,000 acres for the crop at Black Bush Polder.

*Head 31, Ministry of National Development and Agriculture, Land Development - \$1,296,863, agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Hon. Members, 20 minutes were allocated for this Head. We have spent exactly 52 minutes on it. Page 93 and 94.

**DIVISION XIV – MINISTRY OF NATIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT AND AGRICULTURE**

*Question proposed that the sum of \$14,814,126 for Division XIV stand part of the Estimates*

**The Chairman:** We have allocated 40 minutes for this Division. I am going to cut it down to 20 minutes

Will the spokesman for Agriculture on the P.P.P. side and the spokesman on the Government side say if they want to allocate otherwise. I will stop discussion on this division at exactly ten minutes for four o'clock.

**Mr. Roshan Ally:** Subhead 9.

**Mrs. DaSilva:** subhead 16.

**Mr. R.D. Persaud:** Subheads 11, 15, 16, 17 and 21.

**The Chairman:** The Minister has to reply within the 20 minutes.

**Mrs. DaSilva:** We have been asked to vote the sum of \$678,000 in this capital expenditure on subhead 16, Guyana Marketing Corporation. The legend says that this is "to provide for improvement in plant and marketing facilities." I would like to ask the hon. Minister whether the cost of ham will go down when the Corporation has received the money and has improved facilities.

I see that the Minister has a leg of ham in front of him. I do not know whether he is giving it as a gift to us out of his Father Christmas bag.

The Guyana marketing Corporation is heavily subsidized. It is supposed to help to keep the cost of living down for the citizens of Guyana. Ham should not be the prerogative of those who have more money in this world. Those who have less money should be able to buy a ham especially at Christmas as they cannot get half an apple or a grape. With picnic ham costing \$1.70 a pound, leg ham \$2.10 a pound and boneless ham \$2.40 a pound, they cannot afford it.

21.12.72

National Assembly

3.25 – 3.35 p.m.

The price of ham and the allied products of pork is really scandalous. Bacon is \$1.35 a pound and that is streaky bacon; back bacon is \$1.45 a pound and shoulder bacon \$1.85 a pound. At first port sausages were 90 cents a pound. I do not know why the price went up to \$1 and now it is \$1.10. Port is sold at \$1.10 a pound and steak port at 95 cents a pound. Anybody can buy port at 80 cents a pound in the country areas. I do not know what the corporation pays for it but they buy wholesale and should probably pay in the region of 70 cents a pound. Are the curing facilities so expensive?

We want to know whether pork will be made available at a lower price to the housewife when this new equipment costing \$678,000 is put in.

3.35 p.m.

Because the way it is done it cannot possibly cost approximately more than 8 cents per pound to cure their ham. It is absolutely ridiculous that the price of ham should be so expensive I would venture to congratulate G.M.C. on the quality of their ham. This is one of their best Sunbelle products. They should make full advantage of it, they should export it to other West Indian countries. There is no reason why we in Guyana should have to pay more for it. The government has told us in the Budget that with the fish coming in the cost of living would go down – and I understand this is going to be 12 cents per pound – we will wait and see if this is going to be passed on to the consumer or if, fish like port is going to be put up sky-high unnecessarily.

**Mr. Reepu Daman Persaud** *rose* –

**The Chairman:** Seven and half minutes. I am going to finish this.

**Mr. Reepu Daman Persaud:** The Government has been boasting about diversification and agricultural development and what have you but I have the figures and I am in apposition to



tell this Government that there is a drop in the agricultural sector. For instance, in 1962 we exported 4,509,197 lbs. of plantains and in 1970 that amount was reduced to 176,253 lbs.

**The Chairman:** I think you made that point during the debate, you can go on to something else.

**Mr. R.D. Persaud:** No sir. Indeed all these figures in the agricultural sector show that there has been a drop in the production of ground provision; there is a drop in the production the citrus and many other items.

Subhead 11, land Development project. What land development project can this Government point to since it went into office? What has happened with Crabwood Creek southwards? What has happened with the Torani Scheme? All are schemes which the Governemtn referred to in its own Development Programme because it has failed to honour its own Development Programme. Therefore I say the Governemnt has not been really moving in the right direction so that we can have expansion and development.

Subhead 15, Development of North West Region. This is a very suspicious allocation; it is a tricky provision. Because this comes under a general head of development of North West Region it is the intention of the Government as it has been doing year after year of pouring down the greater amount of this provision in Matthews Ridge.

Without going into much detail I want to call upon the government to present a Paper in this House explaining exactly what has been the extent of expenditure in Matthews Ridge and what has been the output out of Matthews Ridge.

The next item falls in the same category. We had in the past called for more public

enquiry into Kibilibiri. The government has ignored our request. May I on this occasion change that position and also call upon the Government because so far, we have spent in Matthews Ridge \$3.3 million. What has been the output from Matthews Ridge? As I said before there is extravagance in that Scheme. Because of this extravagance in experiment the real farmers are denied the allocation in the Budget from time to time so that they can contribute and expand, so that the production generally in all sectors of agriculture can improve.

Development of Plantation Look Out. What has happened there? It is a Government estate? What sort of development is taking place? The Government must tell us because we have said it is taking taxpayers money and buying out from its friend to save them when they are in a bad financial position.

**Dr. Reid:** Mr. Chairman, the G.M.C. sells ham at the lowest price in this country. As a matter of fact, even though the price is not controlled there is agreement about the level of price that the G.M.C. must sell its products and the G.M.C. must sell at this reasonable price because the G.M.C. has to return money to the farmers. I am certain the hon. member would not like the farmers to get nothing out of this exercise. If the farmers are to get a fair price for their product it is expected that the consumer should pay the price. If you take other people who are selling ham in this very country you will find that the G.M.C. price is far below any other price. We will continue with diversification of agriculture. There are changes in output. Of course, my friend is reading for 1970. But there was a time where we imported things like cabbage in this country now we do not. We need to import many million pounds of corn a significant quantity is now being produced here. Port products, we can supply ourselves.

These are all new products we are going into and the areas that this development is taking place are places like Kibilibiri, North West Region, Soesdyke, Wauna where new settlements are. When you come to compare expenditure at Matthews Ridge I do not know if my hon. Friends in this House have short memory or they do not recall what they say. Large sums of money were spent at places like Black Bush Polder and Anna Regina, at Black Bush Polder \$20

million was spent; at Anna Regina \$13.5 million and today we are spending a lot more money to continue the development of these Schemes.

When you compare the entire North West region with some 4,000 square miles of land to be developed, I think the work is very reasonable when we look at the figures there. The hinterland has its own peculiarities and no one can see the coastland as neglected and the old industries are not looked into, for the rice industry itself we are now investing some \$35 million. So that there is really no argument to what our friends are saying.

3.45 p.m.

*Division XIV Ministry of National Development and Agriculture \$14,814,126 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 96.

**DIVISION XV – MINISTRY OF NATIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT AND AGRICULTURE  
IBRD/IDA PROJECTS LIVESTOCK DEVELOPMENT**

*Question proposed that the sum of \$1,578,809 for Division XV, Ministry of National Development and Agriculture IBRD/IDA Projects Livestock Development, stand part of the Estimates.*

**Mr. Bhola Persaud:** Subhead 1, On-Ranch Investment. I notice we are voting for the development of long term loans for ranch investment. I want to know if the Minister would be in apposition to inform the House, as he has mentioned that the Mara land Development Scheme will be included, whether the Torani Ranch will be included, when this will be put into operation and whether the proposed scheme will be on a co-op basis or whether it will be government

owned.

**Dr. Reid:** Yes, Speaker. That ranch is included. It will be one of the ranches that will be established in the Rupununi on a co-operative basis. Already there is one established on the coast and there are three in the Rupununi. There is more application that is not being considered so that at Pirara, there will be a ranch.

*Division XV, Ministry of National Development and Agriculture IBRD/IDA Projects  
Livestock Development - \$1,578,809 – agreed to and stand part of the Estimates.*

### HEAD 33 – MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**The Chairman:** Pages 104 and 105. I think there is an Amendment which I will propose at the commencement and which the Minister will move shortly so that when we are debating we will take that into consideration. Hon. Minister, will you please propose the Amendment.

**The Minister of Economic Development (Dr. King):** I propose the insertion of a new item (19), "Economic Adviser \$10320." It follows therefore that there should be consequential changes in the numbering of subsequent items. I also propose that the total Personal Emoluments in 1973 be amended to read as follow: "\$334,133" instead of "323,813." I also propose that the Total Establishment be amended to read "90" instead of "89" in 1973.

**The Chairman:** Would that mean that the entire Head would be increased by the corresponding amount?

**Dr. King:** The entire Head will be increased by \$10,320.

**The Chairman:** To \$1,719,714.

**Dr. King:** Yes.

*Question proposed that the sum of \$1,719,714 for Head 33, Ministry of Economic Development, stand part of the Estimates.*

**Mr. Wilson:** Subhead 13. I have four simple question.

**Mr. Ram Karran:** I wish to ask a question when we underline subhead 13, but I will speak on it when we come to it,

**Mr. Teekah:** Subhead 16.

**The Chairman:** Hon. Member Mr. Wilson.

**Mr. Wilson:** I would like the hon. Minister to answer these questions. Preparation of New Development Plan. How far advanced is Government in the task of preparing the Development Plan? How soon is it envisaged that the plan will be released for public information, whether next month, or April? In the preparation of the plan, is it Government's intention, or has Government done anything to canvas ideas, suggestions, proposals etc. from the people in the districts, the various mass and other organisations, the various categories of the people? If Government has already taken steps to get people to participate in the preparation of the plan, will the Minister give examples of such steps?

**Mr. Ram Karran:** I wanted to underline Government's inconsistency and I do not want to blame the hon. Minister who is new, but I drew attention to the fact that we were spending \$50,000 under the Ministry of Information, Culture and Youth, to publicise the plan. I now draw attention to the token sum of \$1 listed under subhead 13 and again to the publication of this plan, this will o' the wisp under subhead 10 which lists the sum of \$100,000 for this plan. As I said, this is a case of Government's inconsistency and no plan is in the making at all. I do not

think they are anywhere near to the plan, although we hear about it.

**The Chairman:** Hon. Member, if you asked that specific question, you will hear the reply.

**Mr. Ram Karran:** Yes. We want to hear something more about this plan. It cannot be a State secret as has been suggested by the hon. Minister Dr. Reid because we are spending \$1 here, \$100,000 there and \$50,000 to publicise something that is nonexistent. It does not sound logical. I wonder if at the same time, on the following page under subhead 9, National Scientific Research Council, in which we are spending \$187,000 for the first time, the hon. Minister can tell us something about it. What is it?

3.55 p.m.

I want to draw attention to the fact that every year, just to make the figures impressive, they are pushing in all sorts of things.

**The Chairman:** We are not doing that Head yet.

**Mr. Ram Karran:** The Minister can make notes; as I am on my foot I can deal with it. I have dealt with subhead 10, Publication of Development Plan for \$100,000. Every year they are pushing in something new to make it appear impressive. To fool the people we set ourselves the task in this House to set up a Bureau of Standards. I have repeatedly drawn attention in this House to the sub-standard goods that are sold by the friends of the Government. Products that are almost poisoning people are being sold. I have referred to the fact that one man is buying tons and tons of rice to be ground into curry powder. The government does nothing about it and yet it talks about setting up a Bureau of Standards. *[Interruption.]* Edward B. Beharry, Ricks and others are doing the same thing. It is cheating for the Government to allow that sort of thing to go on. Those are the ones I know of; there may be others.

The Government is going in for industrialization. It is making people in this country eat filth and it is not prepared to set up the Bureau of Standards. What is this National Scientific Research Council? Is this something that is being put up like the Bureau of Standards. Three years ago I got an answer on the Bureau of Standards. Up to now no Bureau of Standards has been set up. We voted money for a technical institute to start. Nothing has happened.

**Mr. Teekah:** I have three question to ask. I observe that we are voting the sum of \$300,000 for subhead 16, Scheme for Remigration of Guyanese. First, does any Guyanese qualify under this scheme or has he to be a skilled person? Secondly, is it true that some of these persons who have returned under this scheme have gone back to England or to other countries from which they came? Thirdly, can the Minister say approximately how many Guyanese have so far returned home under this scheme?

**The Chairman:** Hon. Minister, you will answer only the questions asked by the hon. Member Mr. Wilson and the hon. Member Mr. Teekah. Those raised by Mr. Ram Karran will be answered subsequently.

**The Minister of Economic Development (Dr. King):** The hon. Member, Mr. Wilson, asked four questions. The first: How far advanced is the Government's Development Programme? The answer to that is that it is in the final draft, which will be finished on January 15, 1973.

The second question: When will it be released? It will be released at the end of March. Thirdly: Is it Government's intention to canvass ideas from people? The answer to that is, Yes.

The fourth question was: How Government canvassed ideas before? The answer to that is that I understand that before I came to this country they had been doing so. My intention is that after the draft has been finished we will take the plan back to the people and ask them for their comments before presenting it to you. That is why there is going to be this gap between the

15<sup>th</sup> January and the end of March. Mr. Teekah asked three questions on repatriation: Does any Guyanese qualify or do only skilled Guyanese qualify: This depends on your interpretation of the word "skill". All Guyanese who, in the eyes of the government, will be useful to the country, qualify.

The second question: Have any people who came to this country as repatriates returned to England or the U.S.A.? The answer to that is, Yes. This Government does not control the movement of people. However, the government has attached to the condition of repatriation repayment of money used for repatriation. That money has already been collected.

The third question: How many people have been repatriated under this scheme? I am afraid I can only give you what has happened in 1971 and 1972. For the past two years there have been 300 remigrants and specifically in 1972 there have been 40 remigrants.

*Head 33, Ministry of Economic Development - \$1,709,394, agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

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

*Question proposed that the sum of \$18,864,000 for Division VXII, Ministry of Economic Development, stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Hon. Minister, will you please reply now to the hon. member Mr. Ram Karran.

**Dr. King:** it seems to me that the name implies what it is. However, for the benefit of the hon. member I shall explain to him exactly what it is. It is a National Council dedicated to Scientific Research. The members of the Council have already been chosen. The Council's Chairman is Dr. Irvine, the Vice-chancellor of the University of Guyana. The object of the



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is to conduct research relevant to Guyana's development. [Interruption by Mr. Ram Karran.]

**The Chairman:** Hon. Member, you ask questions but you will not listen to the answers.

**Dr. King:** It seems that in the past there has been some duplication of effort in research and that priorities have not been always clearly defined. Accordingly we have got together this Council in order to avoid duplication of effort and in order to decide on priorities.

The Council has already held several meetings. It has formed several sub-committees. These sub-committees have identified projects which will be executed in 1973.

The Council has a small secretariat which will be headed by Dr. Irvine and the object of having this Council is to prevent the formation of a new institution so that the situation is as follows: the research which is conducted, say, in the Ministry of Works and Communications, in the Ministry of Forests or in the Ministry of Agriculture, will be co-ordinated by the Council and the laboratories in these Ministries will be the laboratories of the Research Council.

The objects of this Council are – to control research, to co-ordinate research and to establish priorities.

*Division XVII, Ministry of Economic Development - \$18,864,000, agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** hon. members, I wish to announce that when we resume we shall be dealing with the head, Education.

*Assembly resumed.*

*Sitting suspended at 4.05 p.m.*

4.25 p.m.

*On resumption --*

*Assembly in Committee of Supply.*

**The Chairman:** Page 136 to 139.

#### HEAD 40 – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

*Question proposed that the sum of \$6,016,668 for Head 40, Ministry of Education, stand part of the Estimates.*

**Mr. Teekah:** Mr. Chairman, I wish to speak on subhead 1, item 1, 4, 18, 21, 22 and 30, and on page 138 and subhead 10, 11, 12, 13,16, 23, 26, 27 and 28. On the following page, subheads 35 and 36.

**The Chairman:** Please proceed hon. member.

**Mr. Teekah:** On item 1, some time earlier this year, during Carifesta the Permanent Secretary of this Ministry was seconded to some aspect of Carifesta. But that was many months ago. I observe now that someone is acting in his place. I should like to ask the Government what is the position now with Mr. Agard. Has he retired? Or has he been seconded to another section of Government Service?

Item (40), Assistant Secretaries. I wish to observe that a serious irregularity occurred here, in that when the Principal Assistant Secretary went on leave earlier this year rather than an Assistant Secretary acting for the P.A.S. the Chief Accountant was asked to act in that post. I should like to know why this took place. Because such irregularity would only cause frustration

and a breakdown of morale in the Public Service and in the Ministry of Education as a whole. If a Principal Assistant Secretary is on leave then the next person would be the most senior Assistant Secretary but in this case the person was out of that line up and the Chief Accountant was asked to act.

Item (18), Chief Education Officer. Here again the Chief Education Officer, a man who has much ability, whose services I myself have appraised in this House actually reached retirement age, but unfortunately he was asked to continue in this post. This will only cause unnecessary frustration and I know for a fact that it has affected one of the senior officers of the Ministry of Education. Because it blocks promotional opportunities. I think the same point was made of another department, the Supreme Court of Judicature. When this happens people who are next in line become very frustrated. This is responsible for many Guyanese leaving the country and is also responsible for the brain drain in Guyana. That is why we ought to prevent something like this occurring. Here is a case where the Government is directly responsible for this. I say that nowadays Guyana has been putting out hundreds of qualified men and women every year and there is no need for a man having reached retirement age to be asked to continue in his post when you have qualified persons holding No. 2, 3, 4 positions.

On item (21), arising out of what I said on item 18. The Chief Education Officer Mr. Fox went on leave earlier this year but rather than the Deputy Chief Education Officer acting for him we had the ridiculous situation where the supernumerary Assistant Chief Education Officer acted for him. In this case the Deputy Chief Education Officer is Miss Francis, the Supernumerary Assistant Chief Education Officer has been Mr. Francis Williams acting as Chief Education Officer. Why was not the Deputy Chief Education Officer asked to act for the Chief Education Officer?

**4.35 p.m.**

On item (22), Senior Education Officers, I want to ask the hon. Minister – since I

observed that over the past years this vote has been running in the vicinity of \$23,000 per annum, this year 1972 only \$17,800 was actually used up – is it that one of the Senior Education Officers is on leave? Whatever the answer is, the other question I want to ask is, how many Senior Education Officers are there? You have Senior Education Officer, Primary Schools, Senior Education Officer, Secondary Schools, Senior Education Officer, Personnel. Is it that one of them is on leave and that is why the vote was not consumed last year and a small amount was used?

Another question relevant to this very item is, does the hon. Minister not consider appointing a Senior Education Officer, domestic Science? I think there is a very pressing need now for such a person to pay great attention to the field of domestic science, and I would like to recommend the appointment of a Senior Education Officer, or, if Government thinks it is even more important than that, an Assistant Chief Education Officer in Domestic Science.

Item (30), Supervisor, School Furniture supplies, I want to observe that there is a great need today in our schools for an adequate supply of furniture. In many schools, I have observed that teachers do not have chairs or tables to use. Many teachers stand all the time. Sometimes they share the seat with pupils sitting on the benches, and apart from that, even in those schools where there are enough places, in terms of the number of persons which the school was originally built to accommodate, the number of person is even greater than the furniture can accommodate. Also, some of the furniture is in various stages of disrepair, and therefore, I wish to recommend that Government looks into the question of furniture for staff and pupils especially in the primary schools.

On subhead 10, Expenses, National Council for Education, I observe that for this year 1972, the Parliament had voted a sum of \$100, but the Revised Estimates show that none was actually utilized for this purpose. We are asking here again another \$100 for 1973. I want to severely castigate the government for its failure to get the National Council for Education

functioning properly. Originally this idea of Council for Education was that of the P.P.P. Government when Mr. C.V. Nunes was Minister of Education.

The Government had conceived of the council as an advisory body comprising the various interests in the society. The P.P.P. had, in its white paper on Education in 1963, stated that the National Council for Education when formed would include the actual practioners, the teachers, officials of the Ministry of Education, representatives from the Trade Union congress, the youth organisations, the students' organisations, the parent-teachers' associations, the local authorities, the adult education councils, the widest cross section of Guyanese society.

This was how it was originally conceived because education must not be the education of a few as conceived by a few officials of the Ministry of Education. It is something belonging to the whole Guyanese community. It is education for the Guyanese community and that is why it is very important that when deciding what form of education our people must have, it must be decided by the people themselves. This is the highest form of democracy and this is really putting socialism into practice. The people who pay for education, the people who will be affected by education, the people whom education is really for, those people must have the deciding voice, the decision must be mainly theirs, and the officers of the Ministry must be the executors, they must execute the decisions of the people as a whole.

We are supposed to be a Co-operative Republic. Political power itself comes from the people. Government itself is a decision by the people. Everything is generated from the people. So is education. There is absolutely no difference. Apart from the fact that the present Government has not fulfilled the role of the National Council for Education, because I understand there is some little committee somewhere comprising a few officials, apart from its inability to satisfy the demands of such a council, such a need, such a requirement of Guyanese society, the council itself that was actually appointed does not function regularly. That is one of the factors responsible for the misdirection of education in the Guyanese society and I want to call upon the Governments to see to it that the National Council for Education is reconstituted,

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reflecting all the varied interests in Guyanese society and also, that it functions at regular intervals.

On subhead 11, Guyana Scholarships. Allowances and Passages for Scholars and Expenses of Examinations, I want to ask if the hon. Minister can say how many Guyana Scholarships were awarded this year, 1972, and how many Government anticipates will be awarded in the new year. What percentage of this number is taken up at the University of Guyana and the University of the West Indies?

On subhead 13, Free Places, Secondary Schools, this is one of the things on which I have a running dialogue with the Government. It is unfortunate that the hon. Minister of Education was not present in the Parliament when I outlined what I thought on behalf of the Opposition, if not the whole answer, was part of the answer to the problem of giving free secondary education to all Guyanese.

4.45 p.m.

I think it is an accepted fact that free secondary education is a necessity. It is something which is desired by all Guyanese. The P.P.P. in its manifestos over the years has always expressed its great desire to have free secondary education, indeed, free education for all Guyanese. In its last manifesto of 1964 even the P.N.C. said that it was also committed to free education. Unfortunately, however, this has been an elusive goal so far because although the P.N.C. has been in the Government for 8 years, it has not made any significant strides in this direction.

There are approximately 31 Government secondary schools in Guyana. But these are not enough to provide free secondary education for all. It is therefore necessary for more accommodation to be provided for all. It is therefore necessary for more accommodation to be provided for students who desire secondary education. It is indeed a problem.

The first thing which the Government will say is that it does not have enough money. The hon. Leader of the Opposition has always pointed out to the Government that every single thing in a society – the superstructure, the bureaucracy, the state, the politics, the culture, the education, the health services are based on the economy. If there is comprehensive economic planning, of course, it is possible to provide free secondary education for all. That is where the socialist countries have been able to successfully achieve and give free education to all the citizens because, out of a comprehensive economic programme, you are able to finance your health services, your education services and other services as required.

But even within the context of a bad economic programme, I think there is room for improvement in the field of education and there is still some room especially as far as secondary education is concerned. There is scope in giving more places for those who desire secondary education. That is why I outlined a four-point programme which I thought would be practical for the benefit of the hon. Minister because I would like to have her comments. There was nobody on the Government side to comment on this during the general debate. I said then that it is necessary for the Government to take over all Government-aided secondary schools. When we were in the Government, our Minister embarked on this programme. He opened discussions with a view to taking over all Government-aided secondary schools. Of course, the elections of 1964 prevented this from actually being realized.

The second point I suggested was that Government should take over the best private secondary schools. Third, it should use the existing buildings, the all-age school buildings, to provide secondary education but it will have to experiment by introducing a shift system. This might not be difficult with the new working hours to be introduced very soon. You probably could have the younger children going to school in the morning session and older children involved in the secondary programme in the afternoon session. The fourth point is the speeding up of the multilateral school building programme and expanding on it. Not only six schools but more multilateral schools should be built.

This I think will provide for the Government a wide area whereby more people will be able to gain a free secondary education. By so doing there is a great possibility that the common entrance examination could be abolished because you will now be able to have enough places available for those who desire post-primary education. The common entrance examination, which is a hurdle, will be liquidated and there will be a free flow of pupils from the primary department to the post-primary department. As soon as a student has reached 12 years he will fit into the stream corresponding to his aptitude whether it is technical education, whether it is carpentry, whether it is drama type education, whether it is sewing, whether it is agriculture, or what have you, but there will be a free flow over and that is what I strongly suggest.

Subhead 16, Lease of Land and Survey Fees. I observe here that there is a steep increase in the lease of land and survey fees. In 1971, the actual sum spent here was \$356 then in the 1972 Approved Estimates it was \$3,000 and in the Revised Estimates \$3,000. The Government is now asking for \$50,765. Why this steep increase to \$50,000?

The hon. Minister or some spokesman from the Government side might say "Well you see we want to build more schools and, therefore, we want more land made available. We have to lease more land and we have to survey the places. It is indicative of the expansion in our building programme." But we must not forget that (1) government has many acres of land under its control at the present time, and (2) even more important, nine out of every ten land owners give their land free for the building of schools. I have never known any land owner who refused to do so.

4.55 p.m.

Subhead 23, Grant to Voluntary Organisations. I should like the hon. Minister to tell us if she is in a position to give the names of these voluntary organisations which qualify for this grant. Secondly, what are the criteria for a voluntary or a so-called voluntary organisation to qualify to obtain this grant from Government?



Subhead 26, Grant to University of Guyana. Although this grant has been increased since last year any one conversant with the University of Guyana will know that the staff and students work under very trying conditions. When one looks at the grants given by other Governments to the University, one must inevitably conclude that this is far too small.

We do not have a hostel here. It is true that there is a fund raising committee whose job it is to solicit funds to construct a hostel on the campus. It has been many years since this Committee has been appointed I think during the life time of Sir David Rose who was the first Chairman of this Committee to raise funds for the building of this hostel. Up to now we do not have a students' hostel. It is true that a small amount is provided for capital development of the campus. But even if you take altogether, both sums cannot provide a students' hostel and the other things which the University demands.

I want to make a very strong plea for the Government to consider the early construction of students' hostel because the students from the rural areas suffer terribly. I have known personally where students have to come from way over Vergenoegen every day to attend classes and return the following morning, where students come from Cane Grove every afternoon after teaching at school to attend classes, where students come from Western Berbice to attend classes and it is very important that we try to assist the students by having a hostel.

That point is followed by another one which is closely related. Considering the University of Guyana, again I think Guyana can do much more than it is doing now. There are students who are teaching on the West Demerara, some at the Canal Polders, some teaching in Western Berbice, some teaching in Cane Grove coming to attend classes every afternoon. These teachers apply to the Ministry of Education for transfers to schools closer to the University but their applications for transfer were not favourably considered. There are many other teachers who live in Georgetown and who could very well be transferred to the outlying districts and make a way for those who are pursuing a University education. It is not only these students who

would benefit but the whole teaching profession and the country as a whole from the additional skills and education these students will have acquired at the end of the University career.

There was a case I had taken up with the hon. Minister when she was just appointed but nothing was done about it. The boy actually had to leave his job and he was very fortunate after many months of unemployment to get a job at the Mahatma Ghandi Secondary School. This is a way in which the Government can help teachers to get University education. It is not difficult. When vacancies arise fill these vacancies with teachers from the outlying districts who are attending University.

Concerning the University of Guyana, the grant is very small and it cannot enable the University to establish a sound day time programme. The Vice Chancellor from his speeches has been trying over the years one can observe to get a good day programme organised and implemented. But with all his optimism and dynamism he has not been able to succeed as he would have liked to. This is mainly the fact because of the paucity of funds at the disposal of the University.

Now there is another very serious problem here. Because of lack of enough money, you find a student who has been enrolled for the day programme as a fulltime student has more courses to carry than the evening student. He has to achieve his Degree within a shorter time than the evening student. That person should be allowed to get all his subjects so fixed during the day so that he can go home at nights and study. Such a person is seriously affected because of the lack of a good day programme and he has to do part of his classes in the day and part at night. Some of these young men, mind you, come from far areas. And you find in the Faculty of Technology a man doing his class at 9.25 in the evening and he is a fulltime student. In Sociology the day students are doing classes at 9.25, in History a fulltime day student is doing his class at 10.25 in the evening.

That is the position. This situation could be brought to an early end if only the University administration had enough funds at its disposal because it could employ more lecturers and it could have a separate programme for its day students; they would be in a position to complete their classes during the day and they would be able to study in the evening. This is very vital when some students have five years to complete their courses.

When the evening students are only asked to fetch three courses, some of these day students have to fetch four and in some cases, five courses. Let us take law. In the law programme, it is a fulltime programme. A student is required to do five courses per year and those students doing sociology have to wait until 9.30 p.m. to get their last lecture, and they are there the whole day.

Another thing which I must bring to the attention of the hon. Minister is the question of orientation of our students. About 80 per cent of the books in the Faculty of Social Sciences are books written by American authors. Some have no bearing on our society. Government must decide what must be the role of education and here is a case where the Government is not alert. You could very well have students badly oriented at the University.

I want to make a call to the Government and to the hon. Minister of Education in particular, that the University of Guyana should consider, Government should consider requesting the University of Guyana to teach the fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism. Government says it believes in co-operatives socialism. Assuming that it is sincere in what it says it believes in, whether it is co-operative socialism or scientific socialism, but no kind of socialism can be built in any country without an elementary knowledge of Marxism-Leninism. Once it has any semblance of socialism, whether you are expanding on the co-operative sector, the chart, the directions are found there in Marxism-Leninism.

At least, the fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism should be taught at the University of Guyana. That is where you are training the future leaders of the society, whether

they are leaders in politics, commerce, economics, in the teaching profession, but you are preparing the people for very important roles in the society and it is very essential for the people to be trained in some of the fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism. It would enable them to understand what is socialism, to differentiate it from capitalism, from fascism, and from the other societies known to mankind.

Another point about the University of Guyana is that I still cannot understand – I should like the hon. Minister to explain in a very rational way – why a faculty of agriculture cannot be established there. You talk about the emphasis being on agriculture. You say the people must take the land, you have the Guyana School of Agriculture, which could very well be the basis of a faculty of agriculture, why have you failed to establish a faculty of agriculture at the University? It could not be funds because you have set up a faculty of technology for which you had fewer facilities available to you than you have now if you were to set up a faculty of agriculture. You have a greater basis for setting up a faculty of agriculture than you had when you set up a faculty of technology.

The other thing which I do not understand: I raised this question last year, I was not happy with the answer. One year has passed. New changes, new developments have taken place in the society. If Surinam can have a medical school, why cannot Guyana have one too? If a smaller country with less income – the Government has a nationalised enterprise in the form of Guybau from which it can have much-needed funds – have a medical school, why can't you set up a medical school? And you have to rely on the importation of doctors from the Philippines and South Korea. The other day we had a case where they fought and one cut the other over the eye.

The fees at the University at present are \$105 basic per annum. I say that this is a very small amount. It is the amount that is raised from students every year. It is negligible and it would be a good thing if Government would abolish this. It would not affect the national budget significantly anyhow, and I strongly urge the abolition of the fees at the University of Guyana,

and let university education be free to those who are attending and to those who will attend in the future.

Subhead 27, Grants to Students. This is a very small amount, \$2,000. I want to ask the hon. Minister, what category of students benefit from this grant, university students, student teachers, technical students, secondary school students?

**5.15 p.m.**

Secondly, any grant to students can only be meaningful if the grant is much more than \$2,000. A grant of \$2,000 to students is a drop in the ocean. It is so infinitesimal it cannot assist anybody in acquiring education.

Subhead 28, Grants to Aided Secondary Schools: Specifically under this subhead I want to reiterate that these schools should be taken over by Government. Secondly, I want to ask the hon. Minister what is the position now with the Committee which has been appointed to look into the question of increasing fees in the Government-aided secondary schools? Has the Committee concluded its report? Is the Minister in possession of the Report? Does Government intend to raise fees in Government-aided secondary schools? That is a burning question.

I followed the dialogue between the proprietors of these Government-aided secondary schools and other members of the public and I want to say that as far as the people's Progressive Party is concerned, it is unapologetically upon the side of the parents – no rise in fees in the Government-aided secondary schools. We feel that school fees are already too high and no case presented by the proprietors of these schools could be able to convince or persuade the Government to raise the fees in the schools now.

We should be moving away from fees. We should be moving from paying for education towards free education. It would be a retrograde step if we should grant the request of the

proprietors of these schools and increase the fees. We say no increase in fees; if the Government has not yet decided to abolish fees, let the fees remain but not a cent more in school fees. This is what we want to urge the Government. It should not allow this to happen.

On subhead 35, Contribution to the Council of Legal Education, I just want to ask one or two questions. Which are the Government's contributing to this Council of Legal Education? I know for a fact that many Governments have contributed to the agreement. Our sum is going to be a pretty large sum. It is over \$200,000. Are the so-called 'less developed countries contributing to the establishment of the Council of Legal Education, and to the two law schools in the region? Obviously if all the countries which will be benefiting from this Council for Legal Education will be contributing, it means that Guyana's contribution will definitely be less.

But may I say that if there is a strong case made to show why the L.D.C why they cannot contribute then we on this side of the House will see with Government and try to appreciate some of the difficulties which the so-called L.D.C.s will have to face in taking the greater burden.

On the question of subhead 36, Guyana Industrial Training Centre: I observe that for this year \$134,400 was voted and for next year \$140,000 is being asked. I want to say that we should even provide a greater sum here because, as I understand it, we are trying to move away from grammar type education. That is why it is so very necessary that greater facilities for industrial training should be provided. You cannot ask the students of the society to move away from the grammar type education if you do not provide the facilities so that they could obtain industrial education, agricultural education and so on. I think that this is too small a sum to provide for what we desire in the country today, to provide more people with the technical skills, the technical know-how, people who will go to the land, who will be involved, who will be concerned, who will be happy to take part in industry and agriculture. That is why this area is too small.

We shall have many more facilities available to us in this field of industrial training. Those presently available are too severely limited if we are to provide new men and women to explore various areas in which they could make a living and also develop the country in a very short time.

**The Minister of Education** (Miss Baird): Mr. Chairman, in response to the hon. member's comments on the first three questions on the Permanent Secretary, the Assistant Secretaries and the Chief Education Officer I have to inform him that those matters are the business of the Public Service Commission which, I am sure he knows, is an independent body responsible for appointments and promotion.

With respect to the Deputy Chief Education Officer, the Deputy Chief Education Officer declined in writing to act for the Chief Education Officer.

The increase noted for Senior Education Officer came about because there were changes in the holders of the posts. Many people were in acting positions and these acting appointments were changed and permanently appointed persons were employed. This largely accounts for the increase in the sum.

The hon. Member requested to know the number of Senior Education Officers. The number is three.

With respect to the comment on the Senior Education Officer for Home Economics, the Ministry is requesting a senior education officer not for Home Economics but for technical education because we are now establishing a supervisory staff for technical education. Very soon an assistant Chief Education Officer for technical education will be appointed and he will be responsible for the co-ordination of technical education from the primary school levels to university.

Hon. Members will appreciate that we need supporting staff and so instead of acting for a senior education officer in one aspect of technical education, we want to request a senior education officer for technical education as a whole, which will mean that at one time a senior education officer might have a specialization in handicraft and at another time it might be in home economics and so on, but that person will be responsible for technical education as a whole.

**5.25 p.m.**

On the National Council for Education, Mr. Chairman, as you are aware the past year has been one of reconstruction for education. The Ministry of Education has set up a number of supporting committees, namely, committees in Curriculum Development and Technical Education, and a committee to identify factors relating to testing. We feel that this kind of activity should precede the establishment of a National Council for Education since it will be important to acquire clear insights with the philosophy underlying education for the Co-operative Republic of Guyana.

We have identified the role of the National Council; that role has been defined as advisory to the Ministry. We have also been able to set up and decide upon the composition of the Council, I suppose people with varying interests and expertise and we hope to announce this Committee early in the New Year.

The number of Guyana scholarships that has been awarded this year is seven, and the Ministry of Education is very proud of the fact that one of the Guyana Scholars came from the Anna Regina Secondary School. I am not in a position to say how many people will become Guyana Scholars next year because they are awarded according to the performance of the students at a given time. I will not be in a position either to predict the number of awards that will be made next year. As you know, sir, Guyana Scholars were free to study anywhere, but we have now asked them to study at the University of Guyana provided U.G. has these courses that



will be relevant to the country's needs. We encourage them to study at the University of Guyana first, and then after that the University of the West Indies. If these courses that they want to go into are not available then they go outside of the Caribbean.

On this question of free secondary education, I want to make it very clear that all children in this country receive free secondary education up to a minimum of three years because the compulsory school leaving age is 16. For a long time – and we are not to be blamed – we have come to believe that secondary education means education of the grammar-school type. Going into certain kinds of schools which educate primarily for the professions. We are trying to change the conception of education and I find it very difficult to get this over to people.

Some Governments in the past attempted to give secondary education by retaining students in the All-Age Schools by creating a secondary department in what they call primary school which is quite a ridiculous thing anyway. Because you cannot have a primary school with primary children and secondary children. The idea was to give secondary education to children after the age of 12. All that happened was mere window-dressing because the children remained in that school without the relevant facilities being offered to them. Teachers were not prepared to teach in that school. They did not prepare the teachers; the teachers were not equipped to teach in the secondary schools.

What we are trying to do at the moment is to correct this kind of thing and improve the quality of secondary school experience and make it relevant to the children who remain there.

We are reconstructing education so that the children after 12 years will be receiving the kind of education that is relevant to their ability. By that I mean that instead of just going on with the old grammar-school type of education and taking obsolete and outdated examinations, for example, the College of Preceptors, changes made are giving meaning and substance to education at that level. We are exposing students to the academic skills that they are competent to benefit from. They must have academic skills if they are going to be carpenters, or whatever

it is, but is after we have ensured that they are equipped with the academic skills that can be applied to the occupation which they will follow. It is the intention to expose students to vocational activities.

What is important about our plan is that we are not just selecting occupational activities at random. We are trying to identify and programme for vocational activities that are relevant to the community and more so to the whole country. A testimony to what we are doing at the moment, the planning of experiments which will begin in September 1973. We are working in a rural area using the Government School in that area as a school which will cater for the needs of the children over 12 years of age. We also will need to re-allocate teachers, teachers who are equipped to cope with what they have to do. We are working on the curriculum; we are working on the evaluation measures; we are guiding the children so that when they reach the age of leaving they will be able to go into the kind of employment that their abilities permit them to go into. We are not waiting until the children are ready to leave school to give them what we call career guidance. We are guiding them all the way through school from the lower levels of the educational system trying to lead them into skills and combinations of subjects that they can gainfully use.

This is what we hope to do and the experience we get from this pilot project will be applied and generalized to other schools in the country. I am going to repeat that if you look at it in this way all the children over the age of 12 or between 13 and 15 are being exposed to secondary education. The difference is that perhaps the quality of education to which they were exposed at the initial stage was not relevant to anything; it did not equip them for anything.

I think there was a comment on the Common Entrance Examination. Most people see the Common Entrance Examination as an examination that selects children for a particular school. I think the time has come for us to appreciate the Common Entrance Examination is also used to categorise children's ability.

It does not matter what happens if you have a comprehensive school, a multilateral school, you do not have anything at all, you must categorise people by ability so that you can cater to the person's needs. If we were to send the whole of Guyana's children to Queen's College, we would be in a sorry plight because all the children would not be able to benefit from the kind of education offered there.

The Common Entrance Examination, as it stands, really in addition to selection, categorises by ability, and I have some figures here taken from the 1972 examination which, incidentally, represented the first selection examination that was structured and validated for the children of Guyana.

We looked at the senior secondary schools, Queen's College, Bishops High School, Berbice High School and Anna Regina, and of 291 children of parents in poor categories, parents of children in the higher occupational level – incidentally, those parents were parents who had the benefit of what we call higher education, we call that Class "A", and we go down Class "B", Class "C", Class "D", Class "D" comprising children of parents in the unskilled section of the community – we find that 29 per cent of the children in Class "A", the parents went to those senior secondary schools, free places. We also found that 30 per cent of the children of parents in Class "B" went to those schools. There were three classes not four. We found that 41 per cent of the children from Class "C" went to those schools.

It is interesting to note that in our investigation, the children of parents in Class "A", the people who were in the highest occupational level and received higher education, those children for the most part went to private schools giving primary education, fee-paying children at St. Gabriel's and so on. Those children had the benefit of what people think is a better quality of primary education, and only 29 per cent had free places. In the lowest category, 41 per cent of the children of those parents had free places and this is very significant because those children for the most part went to primary schools, they did not have the benefit of a so-called "better" kind of primary school education, so, in fact, the Common Entrance Examination validated for

Guyana in 1972 did its job. It did not discriminate against any group. We can be, therefore, assured that the selection offers opportunity to all selections of the Guyanese community.

There was an allocation of approximately \$51,000, subhead 16, for lease of land and survey fees. I have to inform the House that that sum was allocated to meet the court settlement, the claim to a takeover of 51 schools in 1961.

The grant to voluntary organisations, subhead 23, so far as I know, two organisations receive grants, the Adult Education Association and the Theatre Guild, and they have always been receiving grants.

The allocation of \$2.8 million to the University of Guyana in 1973, subhead 26, I think indicates a steady increase over the years. I think hon. Members should appreciate that the funds of all universities are supplemented by foundations. The Carnegie Foundation, as far as I know, gave two substantial grants for university research and there were other foundations that contributed to the University.

Hostel accommodation, as other facilities, must be examined in relation to other priorities. As far as I know, the University is concentrating on the establishment of faculties first, and on developing programmes in relation to the national need, and if we look at the performance of the University, we will find that it is steadily increasing the programmes that it offers. Almost all the programmes are relevant to the national needs. In education, for example, for this year, they have structured a course to supplement the supervision of teachers in the primary schools, this is going to be tremendous help to the Government Training College because these teachers are being prepared to go out to the school to supervise the people in the class room.

So far as I know about transfers for people who apply to the University of Guyana, the Ministry of Education makes provision for transfer to facilitate these people, but we can only do this in relation to the exigencies of the service. This is the position as far as transfers go.

The hon. Member referred to the day programme. The day programme started with 180 students. It is a fact of life that in a transition period, there must be difficulties, and the University has to work out its problem in its own way. The hon. Member was quite alarmed at people who are day students having to go in the night. I was a day student at university and I went several nights to lectures because it was to my advantage to go in the evening. It was also compulsory to attend evening classes.

Some comment was made on the text books used at the University of Guyana. I think some time ago in this House, a reference was made to the Government interference in the conduct of affairs of the University Committee. It is not our business to interfere with the teaching that goes on at the University of Guyana. We can discuss and suggest, but I am surprised to find that the hon. Member does not appreciate that the works of Marx and others will come into the normal courses in the social sciences. I am wondering whether the hon. Member is suggesting that this is not done at the University of Guyana because this will be serious indictment, that the works of Marx and that kind of literature are not used at the University of Guyana. You might have a quarrel with the interpretation given to those texts.

A comment was made on a Faculty of Agriculture and a Faculty of Medicine, criticizing the University for failing to establish Faculties of Agriculture and Medicine.

5.45 p.m.

The University of Guyana has links with the University of the West Indies, as we all know, and that University, the University of the West Indies, being an older university, has very

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5.45 – 5.55 p.m.

well established Faculties of Agriculture and of Medicine. Up to the present time it is in our interest to provide that kind of education through the University of the West Indies.

What is important is that Guyana is not being deprived of training in agriculture and medicine. We are not ready to set up those Faculties because, as I said before, we must consider priorities. The important thing is that our people are not deprived of that kind of exposure and, as a matter of fact, with respect to agriculture, we have the Guyana School of Agriculture that does a substantial amount of the work in agriculture and sends its best students to Trinidad for advanced training in agriculture.

I wonder if the hon. Member is suggesting that in a country striving to be self-sufficient we should abolish fees while the Government of this country subsidises each student by \$1,700? We do appreciate that the grants put down there for students are small. I think he wanted to find out what was the purpose of these grants. That grant of \$2,000 is used to help primary school students, those who demonstrate need for books and in some cases for uniforms. It is, I agree, a small sum but at the moment we use this allocation for that purpose.

The committee set up for looking into the fees of the secondary schools has recently finished its work and I think it is in the process of writing up that report. We appreciate that the cost of education has increased and as soon as we receive that report we will decide what action to take. We have been informed that the report is now being written up.

There was a query on legal education. The contributing territories are the Bahamas, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago.

**Mr. Teekah:** Just one small point, sir. There are many things I would like to join issue on but I would not because we do not have time.

**The Chairman:** I was going to remark that we have 50 minutes allocated for this Head. We have now nearly completed that time.

**Mr. Teekah:** I will just take one minute or less than that. The point is about Marxism at the University.

**The Chairman:** We have gone 30 minutes beyond the time and already we need to cut down. I shall not say anything until we come back.

**Mr. Teekah:** I don't mind if we deduct from other Heads. On the question of Marxism at the University of Guyana, I myself have visited the library on many occasions. What is actually taught in the classes in criticism of Marxism. Most of the books you find there are what people have written about Marx.

Now, the actual tuition is not from a position that you accept Marxism. It is actually what are the criticisms of Marxism, what Smith said about Marxism and what others said. It is not from a position where one accepts and is using it to apply it to one's own circumstances. I am not saying in a fanatic and a dogmatic way that we must implement wholesale in Guyana what the Soviet Union is doing but discuss the actual works of Marx and Lenin and then apply their ideas to Guyana. That is what I am saying.

**Mr. Wilson:** The Minister gave some statistics with regard to the Common Entrance Examination results. I think if those figures are not properly understood they could be very misleading. For example, she said 29 per cent of the children passed examination. Let us divide the children according to their parents A, B, and C. People in the highest income, Group A, and in the middle income, Group B, and people in the lowest income, Group C. these percentages relate to the number of children who pass. I take it means that 29 per cent of the children who pass are from parents of the A category and similarly 30 per cent of the 300 who pass are from the B category of parents and 41 per cent of the children who pass are from the C category. But

29 per cent of 300 is 58 per cent of 150; that is to say, if the children of parents from the upper income group are only 150 and 29 per cent of them passed, 29 per cent of that will be 58 per cent.

Similarly when it is said that 41 per cent of the children of people in the very lowest income group did so well, perhaps it is only 2 per cent of the children who passed and the rest failed. I can show you mathematically. Now 41 per cent of 300 is only 10 per cent of 1200; 41 per cent of 300 is only 2 per cent of 6,200. And look at the number of children who fail. The majority of children who fail, I presume, are from the lowest income group yet we hear that 41 per cent of these children passed. I left school a long time ago. I used to be very good at mathematics.

**The Chairman:** There is now something called new mathematics.

**Mr. Wilson:** It could be that this 41 per cent representing children from the lowest income group may be only 2 per cent of passes.

**The Chairman:** Why do you want to import something that was not said? The hon. Minister said of the passes 41 per cent represent this and 29 per cent represent that.

**Mr. Wilson:** She said that examination shows it was successful.

**The Chairman:** That is a fact.

**Mr. Wilson:** Her statement that it was successful is misleading.

**The Chairman:** She said 41 per cent of the children who passed the Common Entrance Examination belong to the lowest income group.



**Mr. Wilson:** That would be only 2 per cent and that means 98 per cent of those children failed.

**Miss Baird:** Mr. Chairman, I was stating simple facts. I was not talking about some stable population. I was talking about the population 291 children who obtained free places to the senior secondary schools because that is always the bone of contention that the children of a certain group are discriminated against and so do not get into the schools. I was restricting my discussion to the performance of a number of children who went to these schools. I am repeating it: the children in category C, 41 per cent of these children were children of parents who were not exposed to a very high level of education and earned a very low income.

I also said that those children were children who did not have the advantage of a better quality of primary school education because they went to the primary schools and people say that when they go to private schools they get a better quality education. These are facts as they are.

**The Chairman:** I will now put the question.

*Head 40, Ministry of Education - \$6,016,668, agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**HEAD – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION  
IN-SERVICE TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMME**

*Question proposed that the sum of \$174,093 for Head 41, Ministry of Education, In-Service Teacher Training Programme stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Hon. Member Mr. Teekah we have 1½ hours for Education. You can use as much time as you wish but please remember that the Minister has to reply.

**Mr. Teekah:** As I was explain to you earlier, I do not mind if we deduct time from other Heads.

**The Chairman:** You can take 70 minutes and use it how you like.

**Mr. Teekah:** I will debate Heads 41 and 44 together. Both deal with teacher training. I will go to 42 when I have finished speaking here and then 43 but I will deal with 44 while I deal with 41.

**5.55 p.m.**

Item 2, Heads of Centre. I know for a fact that the qualifications of these Heads of Centres vary. One of them I know for a fact does not have a Degree. But what I am alarmed about is that they are all on the same salary scale, they are on the F13(a). I wonder if the hon. minister can explain why this is so.

Dealing with teacher training in general, I want to say that we are not getting the best results out of our programmes because of a shortage of staff at the Training Centres.

Secondly, a regular shifting around of staff at the Training Centres. This has been stated of the by the Principal of the Teachers Training College and the present acting Principal. The situation is so adverse in that one student who recently graduated – and I know the name of that student – was asked to join the staff as a part-time lecturer. This is what bothers me because teacher training is a crucial area in eh national education system. If we are to produce very good teachers who will in turn produce very good students it means that we have to have the best possible staff and then we will be going in the right direction.

When I deal with Pre-Service education I notice that there is supernumerary lecturer who I am told is a retired Education Officer. Why is it so? There are so many graduates coming out from the University of Guyana, why do we not employ them here. Because these people have the ability, many of them have been teaching for many years, some have their Diploma in Education and we should use these persons rather than have the service of a student who just have a Trained Teacher's Certificate.

On the same question, teacher training, recently the Government decided to set up an In-Service Training Centre at Linden. This is a good thing. When we were in the Government we established a centre at Linden and we established many other centres. But the Government, of course, unfortunately closed them down. What I am worried about is that the hon. Minister of Education, like myself, is very much aware that the schools in the outlying districts especially in the Interior suffer very much from lack of trained teachers. The former Minister of Education, Miss Field-Ridley had said that Government was embarking on a programme of transferring trained teachers from Demerara, the urban areas and the suburban areas, to these Interior areas. That programme has not been very successful. It is obvious why it cannot be successful because unless you make it by law compulsorily no teacher would like to be uprooted with his family to be sent down to the North West district or to the riverain area.

What is the answer is that people who are accustomed to that environment, people who live there, who feel happy there, who feel a sense of belongingness to those areas, they are the one who should be trained for the job. That is why I want to strongly urge the Government to consider the establishment of teacher training centres in these areas, because they will see how they could not have avoided our proposal that a teacher training centre should be established at Linden just so they will see that they cannot avoid implementing these suggestions that we are making to establish teacher training centres in those outlying areas.

**Miss Baird;** Mr. Chairman, I should just like to refer to the comment on the qualification for teacher educators. A person being a graduate does not necessarily mean that person is

qualified to teach. I cannot answer that kind of question unless I have in possession the information of background of persons.

When it comes to training of teachers in remote areas it is the practice of the Ministry of Education for some time now to go into the Interior areas. Recently we have had the most interesting seminar in the North Pomeroon. There is an approach for something more substantial in which we intend to give vocational training in the area.

6.05 p.m.

In areas where we have got schools, we propose to expose the young people in that area to secondary education in the same school and after a certain period give them professional education. That means you have to recruit people from outside to give that sort of education, nursing education and things like that. We have a lot of voluntary offers for this type of thing, people who are qualified are willing to go into areas to give professional education to the people and this is the kind of teacher education or professional training that we will offer in the future.

**Mr. Teekah:** The case I want to bring to the Minister's attention, to avoid any embarrassment of the person involved, I will promise the Minister, in private, I will disclose the name of the person I am talking about.

*Head 41, Ministry of Education, In Service Teacher Training Programme - \$174,093 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**HEAD 42 – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION  
PRIMARY, MULTI-LATERAL AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

*Question proposed that the sum of \$17,958,667 for Head 42, Ministry of Education, Primary, Multi-lateral and Secondary School, stand part of the Estimates.*

**Mr. M.F. Singh:** Subhead 1, item (9).

**Mr. Teekah:** item (6).

**Mr. Wilson:** Item (6). I just want to make a general comment.

**The Chairman:** Hon. Mr. Feilden Singh.

**Mr. M.F. Singh:** Item (9), Secretaries, Secondary Schools. The provision being sought is \$263,520. The revised provision for this year 1972 is \$35,029. The legend says, "New Posts", and we note that the number of Secretaries, Secondary Schools, is increasing. The number is 28. It is being sought to increase this 28 to 180, nearly seven times more so that from 28 Secretaries of Secondary Schools, next year we hope to have 180. I should like to ask the hon. Minister why. Is it that these secondary schools were not functioning properly before, that they were being run inefficiently without secretaries, and this has been suddenly discovered by the Ministry, so that precipitately and suddenly, we jump from 28 to 180 secretaries? Where are these going to be deployed? Are these going to be placed throughout the country at each secondary school? I am not sure how the figure 180 relates to the number of secondary schools in the country, but perhaps the hon. Minister would explain how the 180 secretaries will be deployed.

Another question I should like to ask I, have they got anybody acting in these posts at the moment? This increase of 152, are they entirely new posts that will exist for the first time at the beginning of next year? Are they entirely new posts, presuming there is no one doing the job at present? What will be the position as regard filling these vacancies? if we multiply the number originally provided for, 28, by 7, we get a sum of less than \$263,000. It seems that that increase of 152 will be filled early in the New Year and the vacancies will be filled from the very beginning. Perhaps the hon. Minister will answer specifically whether these schools were run inefficiently in the past and it is intended to make them run efficiently with these new secretaries.

**Mr. Teekah:** Item (6), Acting Teachers. The sum is a very large one, \$2,111,657. If one looks at the sum being voted for pupil teachers, one sees at one point \$2 million. A pupil teacher must satisfy certain qualification requirements. An acting teacher does not necessarily have to satisfy certain qualification requirements. The question I would like to ask is, why so many acting teachers in the teaching profession?

From my own knowledge of what obtains in the teaching profession, this is really where favouritism and discrimination take place. Any Tom, Dick, and Harry gets in there. Anybody has no job is employed as an acting teacher and there are many acting teachers who are qualified, who have certain basic qualifications but who are not supporters of the Government. They are not appointed and what actually happened in one area is this. The normal thing, the hon. Minister knows this, if there is an acting teacher at a school, the holidays come in July, that teacher will be paid until July. He will not be paid for the August holidays but if he is re-employed in September, he will be paid for August. The teacher's services were brought to an end in July and new people were employed in September, even though their qualification were less, and this abuse of this item should be stopped. Too much discrimination, favouritism, and politics, play here.

**6.15 p.m.**

And so I would like to urge the Government strongly to avoid having so many acting teachers all the time. Let us have them appointed as pupil teachers, unqualified assistants or something like that. Let them be appointed in the proper way.

Subhead 1(9), Secretaries, Secondary Schools. If I had spoken before the hon. Member Mr. Feilden Singh I would have made some of the remarks he made. All I wish to add is this. I think that there are about 30 secondary schools in the country. With 180 secretaries it would mean there are about 6 to each. *[Interruption]* This item deals with secretaries in the primary schools because there are 389/390 schools in the country and the item states "secondary schools"

specifically. There are approximately 30 Government Secondary Schools so six times thirty is 180.

**The Chairman:** The question has been asked you will hear the answer.

**Mr. Teekah:** This is unprecedented. Why was the money not used to build new schools? The same money committed here would be better used in building schools.

**The Chairman:** Would that not be better as a supplementary when the question is answered?

**Mr. Wilson:** Mr. Chairman, this head reads “Primary, Multilateral and Secondary Schools”. The modern trend is for education of the people to be integrated. The Minister spoke about the philosophy of education in her remarks under one of the subheads.

**The Chairman:** We are dealing with emoluments of the teachers.

**Mr. Wilson:** Yes. Emoluments in relation to the philosophy. This Government claims that it is socialist. If the Government is socialist – I am asking whether the programme for education is included in this plan to Feed, House and Clothe the nation by 1976, whether any consideration is taken of this and whether it is the intention of the Government to revolutionise the education. Also, whether in this revolutionising of the education it is the objective that the ordinary workers will hold the commanding positions in education.

The Minister tried to show that the system is integrated by saying that all children over 12 years in the schools receive secondary education. Let us agree with that; that all children over 12 years and up to 16 years of age are getting a kind of secondary education.

From the Minister's own figures just now about common entrance we can claim that 98½ per cent of the children of the masses remain in school. This is easily shown. Throw away the one. Let us take 40 per cent of 300 and let us assume that the children of the lower category who took the examination are 10,000. Those children number 10,000. I heard that 14,000 children sat the examination. *[Interruption]* I am trying to show what is happening to these children.

**The Chairman:** Is that a premise to argue – that is the statement of the Minister?. The Minister was dealing with 300 students who have passed; she is not using that figure in respect of failures. She is using it primarily on the basis of those who have passed the examination.

**Mr. Wilson:** If children have passed, children have also failed. I am saying the children who remained in the primary schools of all-aged schools after they are 12 years old are 98 per cent at least of the children of the masses. I am showing the kind of education these children are getting. If you will bear with me two minutes, sir. I am not dealing with the failure from that angle. I am dealing with the philosophy and the socialist revolution.

**The Chairman:** You will have to define who is a worker.

**Mr. Wilson:** Ninety-eight per cent of the workers' children remain there.

**The Chairman:** You must define who is a worker for us to appreciate your argument.

**Mr. Wilson:** Will you give me an opportunity to build up my point? The Minister gave some categories of the people. She did not define it. You did not ask her to define them.

**The Chairman:** She said the lower class worker.

**Mr. Wilson:** The same lower class worker I am talking about. The Minister knows that in these schools the teacher-pupil ratio is 1:60. While in the other schools that we know as



grammar-secondary schools, there is one teacher to not more than thirty students. What I am saying is that since in these schools that we say integrate with the over 12, there is one teacher to sixty, those 98 per workers' children who remain there are getting half the quality of education which the other children are getting. How are they going to revolutionise the education and so give the masses an opportunity to rise up and to hold the commanding positions in administration and Government alike?

**Miss Baird:** Mr. Chairman, with respect to item (9), Secretaries, Secondary Schools, I think that is an error. It is "Secretaries for Schools". It refers to primary schools as well as secondary schools. Primary schools are now being given secretaries. We have decided to give secretaries to Grad A and Grad B schools. Grade A schools have a population of between 800 to 1500 children. Because head teachers have such vital roles to play in supervising the kind of educational experience that goes on in these schools we have to free headmasters from the tedious administrative function so that clerical staff have to carry out their professional work and that is why we have decided to give schools secretaries. A comment was made on the number of acting teachers. Now I think it is realistic to face the fact that the demand for teachers with the minimum qualifications exceeds supply. Hence we must have acting teachers and we have to consider that teachers are human beings. They go on leave; vocation leave. Study leave, sick leave. A lot of teachers are going off to study because we are faced with the responsibility of providing supporting educational services. We have to service curriculum, we have to service testing and all sorts of new things and we have to send people to be trained.

In the Ministry of Education we have extended the educational services – there are teachers who have the kind of experience derived not only from long years of service but experience derived from perhaps advanced professional training. We have to use these people in our new services, the curriculum unit, for example. Most of the people who work there are people who are teachers who have a special kind of qualification and when we move those people out into the new services we have to find acting teachers to take their places.

Now some comment was made by the hon. Member Mr. Wilson about multilateral schools. We talk about integrated education. I think there is some misunderstanding there because the multilateral school is indeed integrated in the sense that it caters for all levels of ability and for all sections of the community. This applies to the multilateral and comprehensive. Everybody will go to the same school. You will not divide them, you will not have a tripartite system. All the children will go to the same school, doing different kinds of things.

6.25 p.m.

In that sense the multi-lateral school is integrated, and in the multi-lateral schools what is going to happen is that it is really a social philosophy expressed through the educational medium. That is all we are doing.

**Mr. Teekah:** It is the same point I was making. We have been functioning very well at the primary school level without Secretaries. One of my criticisms against Government's policy is the question of priorities. There is the burning questions of overcrowding in schools, shortage of places, and here you have now \$225,782 this is an increase now being put to employ Secretaries while that money could have been better spend for providing more schools or to extend the facilities. This is where the Government is failing miserably.

*Head 42, Ministry of Education, Primary, Multi-Lateral and Secondary Schools, \$17,958,667, agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

*Assembly resumed.*

**Mr. Speaker:** I wish to announce we will finish the Head, Ministry of Education by 9 o'clock and we will go on to Ministry of Co-operatives and Community Development. In the event that it is completed, we will proceed to do the Ministry of Labour and Social Security.

Hon. Members, who will speak on these Heads kindly be prepared. The Sitting is suspended until 8 o'clock.

*Sitting suspended at 6.30 p.m.*

**8.00 p.m.**

*On resumption*

*Assembly in Committee of Supply.*

**Mr. Chairman:** page 142.

**Mr. Teekah:** item 4, 5 and 10. Mr. Chairman, before I proceed I just want to draw your attention to the fact that the hon. Minister is absent from the House.

**The Chairman:** I have already observe that. At the suspension I said we will resume at 8 o'clock. If you do not wish to proceed I will put the Head.

**Mr. Teekah:** Mr. Chairman, I will take all these item together.

**The Chairman:** I think I will be able to answer the questions myself.

**Mr. Teekah:** I notice here that we have, for example , on item 4 for the 1972 estimates the sum of \$1, then in the Revised Estimates \$33,214 for Acting Teachers, and for part-time teachers we spend \$14,300 this year, and then Acting Teachers Home Economics \$1 voted for 1972 and in the Revised Estimates \$26,000 was spent. When I observe here is that it seems to me that there is absolutely no planning at all so far as Government is concerned. One dollar is provided just to keep the item open, so that when the requests are made for political

appointments then the Party people are brought in to act as teachers. So willy-nilly, the sum goes up. You must know what the adequate staff looks like, the size of the establishment. You must know how many places you have at your disposal. You must know who will go on leave at what time. A person cannot go on leave twice a year. I myself have been an administrator of an educational institution for many years. Obviously I know what is the normal intake of students. I must anticipate who must go on leave, the fluctuations of the staff and so on.

The point I wish to make is that this seems open for abuse at any time and from the information we have at our disposal this is where the Government puts in its supporters. The same thing goes for the part-time teachers. Whenever the Government wants to make a political appointment it is made under these items.

**The Chairman:** Your observations are the same for all the heads.

**Mr. Teekah:** Yes, sir.

**8.05 p.m.**

And this is why the Government should discontinue this practice and let there be some stability in the staff. That is what is affecting many of the institutions today. Many headmasters are complaining about the interference in the staffing. Sometimes appointments are made even without the consultation of the headteacher and this is very bad. I want to call upon the Government to discontinue this practice.

**Miss Baird:** I have a very brief answer to make. One cannot anticipate the need for acting teachers at any time. A teacher might be entitled to leave and he does not take it and so we keep the Head in case of need. The hon. Member's information about the criterion for appointing people to schools is incorrect because, as far as I know, the important criterion for appointment is qualification.

**Mr. Teekah:** That is what it is supposed to be, but from all information we have at our disposal that is not the criterion

**The Chairman:** Well, the hon. Minister is saying that is so.

*Head 43, Ministry of Education, Practical Instructions Centres - \$784,402 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 143.

**Head 44 – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION  
GOVERNMENT TRAINING COLLEGE PRE-SERVICE TEACHER  
TRAINING PROGRAMME**

*Question proposed that the sum of \$223,517 for Head 44, Ministry of Education, Government Training College Pre-Service Teacher Training Programme, stand part of the Estimates.*

**Mr. Teekah:** Sir, I want to suggest that Heads 44, 45 and 46 could go without any questions from me, having my eye on the clock.

**The Chairman:** I will put them and you can speak on the ones on which you wish to speak.

*Head 44, Ministry of Education, Government Training College Pre-Service Teacher Training programme - \$223,517 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 144.

**HEAD 45 – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION  
TECHNICAL INSTITUTE GEORGETOWN**

*Question proposed that the sum of \$549,761 for Head 45, Ministry of Education, Technical Institute Georgetown, stand part of the Estimates.*

**Mr. Wilson:** General questions: Who are the people who can go to the Technical Institute, and what are the implications of this, with reference to the Government's philosophy in education, that is, socialist education, socialist orientation?

**The Chairman:** That is a very crisp and good question.

**Mr. Wilson:** I am always very brief and crisp, sir.

**The Chairman:** I am trying to help you.

**Mr. Wilson:** I do not think you have to help the hon. Minister. She is very competent and she has competent advisers. The figures given by the hon. Minister show one side of the story. Sir, you will agree, every story has two sides. If the Government tries to give one side of

**8.05 p.m.**

the story, it is our duty to bring out the other side for the people to know. If the hon. Minister says one thing, I have a right to see what can be implied from it, even if she does not say so. If I say I saw the Speaker in his office at 9 o'clock, I am also saying the Speaker was not in his seat at 9 o'clock. I am taking the 41 per cent, the children of the masses, to see if they go to the Technical Institute. Forty-one per cent of the children of the low income group get free places. Then thousands of these children sit the examination, because it is 14,000 in all; 40 per cent of

the 300 is equal to 1.2 per cent of the children of the masses or even 2 per cent, therefore, I am saying 98 per cent of the poor people's children remain in the all-age school.

I am trying to follow the integration of the children in relation to Government's philosophy on education. As I said before, they are left in schools where the teacher-pupil ratio is about 1 to 60. I am saying that the vast majority of these children remain in the all-aged schools where they receive a kind of secondary education after they have reached 12 years. They cannot go any further; they cannot go to the Technical Institute because they will not be able to show the necessary academic skills to qualify them to go to the Technical Institute. They cannot go to the multilateral schools because they haven't got the skills.

If the Government is really serious about helping the masses, the children of the small man, whom the Government wants to make a real man, the Government wants a properly integrated system; it must provide kindergarten education for the children of the masses. I am talking of integration throughout the system. The children of the masses, who go to the primary schools without the advantage of the kindergarten education, are at a great disadvantage, first, they do not receive kindergarten preparation, secondly, they are in a school where there is a mass education. They cannot have individual attention.

**8.15 p.m.**

Hence, very few of these children can go into the Technical Institute. If the Government is really interested and sincere when it speaks of raising the quality of education in the primary schools and all-age schools, it should provide kindergarten education.

The Government believes that women should work. If the women work, what will happen to the children? The members of the Government do not really believe that women must go to work. If they really believed that women must work like men in a socialist system, they would provide kindergarten education.

It is no use talking about primary, multilateral and secondary education and education in technical institution for the masses, if you do not want to give them a proper kindergarten foundation. The children will go to waste and the Government will not fulfil its philosophy of revolutionising the educational system whereby children of the masses will benefit from the money being spent on the educational system.

That is the point I want to make and I am glad you allowed me to make it, Mr. Chairman.

**Miss Baird:** As far as I am aware, the Head under consideration is Technical Institute. The first question was: Who are the people who enter the Technical Institute? As far as I know the answer is: Any Guyanese who is qualified to enter as long as that Guyanese is 16 years or over. Technical education cannot be socialised because anybody goes to the Technical Institute. I do not understand that question. Many children take preliminary craft courses in the secondary department of the all-age schools – what you call the primary schools – and they go to the Technical Institute. Some go to the Guyana Industrial College.

**The Chairman:** What the hon. Member went on to say was this: In the light of the fact that there are certain qualifications certain students only go to the Technical Institute. Will the Government consider a revised form of kindergarten education so that the children will be able to get an opportunity to enter? Not getting into schools by means of the common entrance examination they will be qualified to enter the Technical Institute. Is that not so, Mr. Wilson?

**Mr. Wilson:** Yes sir. I was saying, also, that the teacher ratio in primary schools must be revised. There should be one teacher to 25 or 30 children.

**The Chairman:** You are now adding that.

**Mr. Wilson:** I implied it when I said it now is 1:60.



**Miss Baird:** Mr. Chairman, as far as I know the question of kindergarten education is irrelevant to the business of entry into the Technical Institute. I cannot see the relationship between kindergarten education and entry into the Technical Institute. Kindergarten education serves a different purpose. We are now on technical education. I can see no relationship between kindergarten education and the Technical Institute.

*Head 45, Ministry of Education, Technical Institute, Georgetown - \$549,761, agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**HEAD 46 – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION  
CARNEGIE SCHOOL OF HOME ECONOMICS**

*Question proposed that the sum of \$111,609 for Head 46, Ministry of Education, Carnegie School of Home Economics, stand part of the Estimates*

*Head 46, Ministry of Education, Carnegie School of Home Economics - \$111,609, agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**HEAD 47 – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION  
QUEEN'S COLLEGE**

**Mr. Teekah:** I wish to speak on subhead 1, item (5) and to make some general remarks.

I notice that there is a large number of non-graduate masters at Queen's College. Now, Queen's College has always been the foremost secondary school in the English-speaking Caribbean.

**The Chairman:** I do not seem to have heard you correctly. I see that there are four Non-graduate Masters. Is that a large number?

**Mr. Teekah:** There is something which opens itself to that somewhere along the line.

**The Chairman:** Do you want to speak generally?

**Mr. Teekah:** I started off with Non-graduate Masters because the point I want to make is that the quality of Queen's College ought to be maintained. It has always been the premier secondary school in the English-speaking Caribbean and it should remain so because it is something which Guyanese should be very proud about. There should be no effort to allow the standard to fall.

My attention has been drawn to certain remarks made by the Headmaster of Queen's College during the last graduation day exercise. The comments were carried in the Daily Chronicle of Thursday, December 14, and I want to read what the Headmaster said. The report says:

“Delivering his second Headmaster's Report at the College's Speech Night exercises, he said that since 1968 the school was overcrowded.

The building was now housing some 800 students although it was originally designed to accommodate 500, and there had been the addition of only two new laboratories, one for chemistry and the other for physics.

The principal said classes were now held in the balcony overhanging the back of the hall and visitors to the school could sometimes find masters conducting classes in the hall itself in an effort to find accommodation.

‘As more subjects are introduced into the school's curriculum we need more class-rooms and, of course, new staff.

This leads me to the question of congestion in the staff-room. This is now more than just a fact. It is a phenomenon”

I know for a fact that many students who have graduated from the University of Guyana are not put in places where they could be able to display the skills acquired at the University. As a matter of fact, this is the headache for most graduates. Even today those who are attending U.G. are worried whether they would be able to find jobs to suit the skills they have been able to obtain. What is responsible for this? Is it carelessness? It is incompetence on the part of someone in the Ministry of Education? Certainly this does not augur well for the future of Q.C. and the country. The Headmaster is not a politician, he knows very well his head could be rolled at any time. Obviously, if we read between the lines as the hon. Member Mr. Wilson mentioned he is really telling you that somebody in the Ministry is very inefficient and is not doing his or her work.

Therefore, I should like to call upon the Government to see that Queen's College is extended to take off the additional students, and to provide it with the necessary facilities that are demanded by the present staff.

**Miss Baird:** Mr. Chairman, as far as I know Queen's College is not seriously overcrowded. In relation to other schools Queen's College has a laboratory. Some schools with the same size have two laboratories. It is not overcrowded to the extent that it will affect the quality of education. We have chosen to offer more people opportunity to benefit from the exposure at Queen's College.

As regards the question of graduates not being appointed to schools, I should like to point out to the hon. Member that graduates can display their skills in any area where they work even if they work with children in their early years of existence, between 3 to 5, they can provide those skills or they have subject areas. Wherever they work, if a graduate has the subject area he will be put in the position to use his knowledge. But when the graduates of the University of Guyana or any University for that matter is not appointed to a certain place it is one of the reasons which could well be that the person do not have the subject areas that is required in a

particular place. The Ministry of Education is in a position to know that and evaluate the situation and place the graduate where his or her skills will be used.

*Head 47, Ministry of Education, Queen's College, \$328,934 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 147.

**HEAD 48 – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION  
BISHOP'S HIGH SCHOOL**

*Question proposed that the sum of \$265,258, for the Ministry of Education, Bishops' High School stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 148.

**HEAD 49 – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION  
ANNA REGINA SECONDARY SCHOOL**

*Question proposed that the sum of \$122,335 for Head 49, Ministry of Education, Anna Regina Secondary stand part of the Estimates.*

**Mr. Teekah:** I wish to make a general comment.

**Mr. Sutton:** Subhead 6.

**The Chairman:** Hon. Member Mr. Teekah.

**Mr. Teekah:** For some time now the Ministry had said it was developing the laboratory facilities at Anna Regina. It was stated that because Anna Regina was being reconstructed and more places available for students who wish to pursue technical subjects is the reason why the technical institute earmarked for Anna Regina was not being pursued. I wish to ask the hon. Minister how far has Government been able to reconstruct the laboratory at Anna Regina, and whether greater facilities are being offered now at that school than what were formerly offered.

**Mr. Sutton:** Under subhead 6, Supplies and Equipment, I want to ask the hon. Minister whether in view of the fact that there is no Technical Institute in Essequibo and if in making supplies and equipment available to the Anna Regina Secondary School whether she thought that could not be given to the establishment of a Home Economics School particularly in the present agricultural drive to utilize many local fruits and vegetables, for substitutes to be made for the imported stuff. I feel that opportunity should be given for this idea to be spread, not only in Demerara and Berbice but some opportunity should be given to the people of Essequibo. Because of the lack of having a technical institute they need some help to acquire some of the skills other than pure academic skill.

**Miss Baird:** Mr. Chairman, Anna Regina is one of the areas in which a multi-lateral school will be constructed at the first phase of the building programme, so there is no need to increase facilities at the Anna Regina Secondary Schools.

With respect to the appeal for a Home Economics Department, I am surprised to know that the hon. Gentleman is unaware that we have Home Economics Departments in both the primary and secondary schools at Anna Regina.

*Head 49, Ministry of Education Anna Regina Secondary School, \$122,335, agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** page 149.

**HEAD 50 – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION  
BERBICE HIGH SCHOOL**

*Question proposed that the sum of \$202,599 for Head 50, Ministry of Education, Berbice High School, stand part of the Estimates*

*Head 50, Ministry of Education, Berbice High School - \$202,599 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Page 150.

**HEAD 51 – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION  
TECHNICAL INSTITUTE  
NEW AMSTERDAM**

*Question proposed that the sum of \$289,055 for Head 51, Ministry of Education, Technical Institute, New Amsterdam, stand part of the Estimates.*

**Mr. Teekah:** A general comment. Not too long ago, there was a strike by students of the Institute and it is very unfortunate that the last examination results for the engineering course showed that four-fifths of the students failed. Only one-fifth passed. That means only 20 per cent passed. Eighty per cent failed. There is a serious division between staff and students at new Amsterdam. The students are very restless and it is feared that another student's protest will take place there. I would like the hon. Minister to investigate what is happening there, the high rate of failures at the last examination, and to look into the grievances and prevent any strike taking place in the future.

The residents of Berbice especially the Corentyne area, have been calling upon Government to provide for them another technical institute. The Upper Corentyne Chamber of Commerce passed a resolution calling upon Government to provide another institute for the Corentyne area, and I myself have spoken to the Principal of the Technical Institute in New Amsterdam, and he has admitted that the institute cannot cover a very wide area because the number of places is small. I should like the hon. Minister to investigate the serious problems of the students and consider the setting up to another institute in Berbice.

**Miss Baird:** The hon. Member is suggesting that the students failed an examination. I am not aware that the students wrote any external examination. The course is a two-year course and the people are in the first year. Perhaps they had internal term examinations. *[Interruption]* I cannot assume; that is an assumption that I am not willing to make. I do not think that this is a phenomenon that students fail examinations. If students do not attend their lecturers, perhaps they will fail their examinations.

**Mr. Teekah:** There was a strike at the Technical Institute. After that, a few months after, there was a term test and four-fifths of them failed. The strike was against their lecturers and it is reasonable for one to conclude that these lecturers who were struck against must have been vindictive in some small way or the other. I do not want the hon. Minister to say all is well. I am asking her to investigate, because she may well have another strike on her hands.

**Miss Baird:** The test will come when the people have taken their annual examinations. That is an assumption I am not willing to make. I will not support that allegation.

*Head 51, Ministry of Education, Technical Institute, New Amsterdam, \$289,055 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**DIVISION XXII – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION**

*Question proposed that the sum of \$1,912,400 for Division XXII, Ministry of Education, stand part of the Estimates.*

**Mr. Teekah:** Subheads 1, 12, 13 and 16.

**Mr. R. Ally:** Subhead 1.

**The Chairman:** Hon. Member Mr. Teekah.

**Mr. Teekah:** This deals with the building of primary, multi-lateral, and secondary schools, though in fact, multi-lateral schools will not come here. I think that Government is seriously lagging in its school building programme. The reason for this is very clear. The 5 to 12 population in this country is 175,449. This is what is subjected. Of this number, only 130,484 are in schools. This means that 74.4 per cent of the total school population really gets places in the primary schools today. Of course, with secondary schools that is another matter. Of the number of children who are not in government primary schools, two things can take care of them. Some of them might be going to private schools, but they would be a very small number, and the larger number of children who are not in school but are of school age, cannot get places in schools. Even those who go to school cannot find adequate accommodation and every headmaster today complains about overcrowding in schools.

What is necessary, therefore, is that the Government should step up its building programme and this Government is very famous for allocating a large sum of money and actually spending a small sum.



What I am suggesting is that the Government should take hold of the situation and grapple with the problem by having a building programme that will cater for all of these children who are really, at the age, qualified to attend school. For example, in 1970, 18,500 places were needed. Of this number only 11,000 found places. In 1971, 20,500 places were required; of this number only 2,532 really got into the schools. What will we do with our young people? Do we not see that we are allowing our young people to drift unto juvenile delinquency? When they become criminals you shoot them down; you say they are bad but you do not prevent this from happening. You do not create an atmosphere; you do not create the facilities to take them away from crime. You say they are criminals. It is wrong for them to be criminals but then you do not provide them the atmosphere and the facilities because if you were able to provide the children not only with places but with the books and with the food and clothing necessary to attend school then this would not occur. But the Government does not even look after ordinary buildings because even the places cannot be found.

The statistics show that in 1970 and in 1971 there were thousands of children who could not get into schools. Even those who are in schools are facing a serious problem with overcrowding. That is why I want to urge strongly that Government should step up its programme. The Minister must not be unaware of the fact that when 200,000 children qualify every year for primary schools, the population is expanding at 3 per cent per annum. You are getting a huge number who are qualifying every year to attend schools. You are only providing for them a small number of places. What will you have? You will have an explosion. That is why the Government must pay more attention to this aspect.

**The Chairman:** I will not permit discussion on 12 and 16. There is no provision voted for those. You are entitled to discuss 13.

**Mr. Teekah:** Mr. Chairman, could the hon. Minister say how early the new building for the Faculty of Education will be completed?

**Mr. Roshan Ally:** Mr. Chairman, I just want to inquire from the hon. Minister whether it is Government's intention to build two large primary schools within the Corriverton area. This is within the Skeldon area.

For some years now there have been only two church schools within that area and they are unable to accommodate the children there. There are thousands who attain school age and cannot gain admission into the school. At Crabwood Creek the school is divided into two parts.

**The Chairman:** I thought you were merely asking a question.

**Mr. R. Ally:** I am not going over to Crabwood Creek area. At Crabwood Creek the school is divided into two parts, one is on the eastern side of the road and the other on the western side of the road. In September last, the children who attained school age and gained admission could not go into the school building because it was too small; it could not accommodate that class. The teachers had to use an old church building that has neither a roof nor a wall. I would like to ask the hon. Minister what is Government's intention towards this school.

There is another school, the No. 68 primary school. This school has been built to accommodate 332 children but today, the same school is accommodating 680 children. The teachers told me that the school was built to accommodate 332 children but today there are 680. So you can imagine the congestion. I just want to ask what is Government's intention towards these three school.

**Miss Baird:** Mr. Chairman, I will comment on the Government school building programme. For 1973 our school building programme will provide 10,000 plus places through the completion of incomplete works in six areas and extension, which will include No. 68 Government School at the cost of \$40,000, the extension to Crabwood Creek at the same cost and a new school at Skeldon at the cost of \$100,000. Seven new schools will be built during

1973, four schools will be extended and six schools will be completed. Since 1965 Government has provided 50,000 school places.

And in replying to the allegation made by the hon. Member Mr. Teekah I would like to inform him that all children school age are in school. The legal age of entry is 5 years 6 months. If you want evidence that overcrowding is being reduced I think this evidence can be found if you look at certain schools.

There is a significant drop in the grades of schools. You know grades are related to numbers. A lot of schools have been reduced in grades because of overcrowding is being consistently reduced.

The Faculty of Education building, as you know, is under construction and I have no information as to when this building will be completed.

I think I have answered the question about schools at Skeldon, Crabwood Creek and No. 68.

*Division XXII, Ministry of Education - \$1,912,400 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

### **DIVISION XXIII – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION**

#### **IBRD/IDA PROJECTS**

*Question proposed that the sum of \$6,262,950 for Division XXIII, Ministry of Education, IBRD/IDA Projects, stand part of the Estimates.*

**Mr. Teekah:** I wish to speak generally. Mr. Chairman, Government's performance, as far as the multilateral building programme is concerned, has been very disappointing. For many

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years now we have heard the tune played about multilateral schools being established throughout the country. Apart from the fact that the Government has altered the original programme, copies of which were circulated in this House, from 7 schools to be built to 6 schools, the fact is that many years have expired and not a single school has been completed.

8.55 p.m.

I want to prove to this House why this is so or at least some of the reason for these problems.

**The Chairman:** You have three minutes more and two minutes for the Minister to reply.

**Mr. Teekah:** in 1971, the Approved Estimates under the same I.B.R.D. project, Multi-Lateral Schools, the Government said it would spend \$4,108,000. It ended up that year by spending only \$361,614. In 1972, \$5,630,000 was supposed to be spent, less than a million \$.9 million, this year the Government is saying it will spend \$6.3 million. But from the performance of the Government it shows very clearly that this will not be done and that is why the Multi-Lateral Schools have not been completed. The Government has been dragging its feet on this matter and while it is dragging its feet on the building of these schools it is the children who are suffering. Just now the Minister did not tell the House the truth. She said that all the children are in school. This is totally false; only 74 percent of primary population is in school. I challenge the Minister. Since I became a parliamentarian I have been hearing about Multi-lateral Schools, and not one has been built.

**Miss Baird:** Mr. Chairman, I am very pleased to relieve the anxiety of the hon. Member and to announce to him that he speaking of the signing of the contract for the construction of multi-lateral schools which will take place tomorrow morning and I shall read to you the anticipated commencing and finishing dates for the multi-lateral schools' construction. The Mahaica School will start in January 1973 and finish May 1974, Anna Regina, January 1973 and finish October 1974, Christianburg/Wismar, June 1973 and finish April 1975. Bladen Hall, June

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1973 and finish December, 1974; New Amsterdam, December 1973 and finish March 1975; Ruimveldt, December 1973 and finish April 1975. As we are all aware the College of Education for Primary School Teachers is being constructed at Turkeyen and the anticipated date of completion is August, 1973.

*Division XXIII. Ministry of Education, IBRD/IDA Projects, \$6,262,950, agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Hon. Member, I wish to thank you for your corporation. We have finished on time.

**Mr. Teekah:** Yes, sir, as promised.

**The Chairman:** Page 180 and 181, the Head Ministry of Co-operatives and Community Development.

#### HEAD 61 – MINISTRY OF CO-OPERATIVES AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

*Question proposed that the sum of \$939,521, for Head 61, ministry of Co-operatives and Community Development stand part of the Estimates.*

**Mr. Durant** page 181, subhead 6.

**Mr. Ram Karran:** I wish to speak on subhead 6 also.

**The Chairman:** There is no understanding between you and your colleague? Both of you are going to speak on subhead 6?

**Mr. Ram Karran:** If he does not make the point I have in mind.

**The Chairman:** You have no confidence in him? Hon. Member Mr. Durant.

**Mr. Durant:** Mr. Chairman, I see in the Estimates \$10,000, Training Courses for Personnel of Co-operative Societies. I only want to ask the hon. Minister to tell us when this will take place.

**Mr. Ram Karran:** I spoke under this subhead, Training Courses for Personnel of Co-operatives Societies with special reference to what has been taking place in, one would say the premier co-operative organisation in this country, that is the Regent Complex recently set up.

**The Chairman;** I thought you were talking about Greenland.

**Mr. Ram Karran:** I think we have already exposed Greenland.

**The Chairman:** It no longer occupies the premier position.

**Mr. Ram Karran:** No, sir. The hon. Minister I think would be invited to deny that Government's interference by the Minister and by sections of the Government causes this organisation to be in a very difficult position. The Manager, for instance, dismissed three girls and one would have thought that the girls who are employed would have been trained in co-operatives. If they are trained they would have understood the philosophy of co-operatives but they were dismissed by the first Manager allegedly because these girls had stolen something. And what happened? The co-op philosophy of the Government is to dismiss the Manager because he had dismissed the girls. Fortunately or unfortunately a new manager was appointed recently when he said, "Look, I want to know what my position is. If I dismiss anyone would I be dismissed?" He was of course told that he had full authority and he dismissed six girls.

It shows that it is pointless spending this money for training of personnel of co-operative societies, whether it includes the rank and file in this organisation or whoever it applies to. I should like the hon. Minister to tell us and perhaps to explain this occurrence at what I call the premier co-operative organisation.

While on this point I wonder if you will tolerate me a little more. I want to refer to the Reports of the Chief Co-op Officer for the years 1967 and 1968. We have gone so bad we cannot have reports annually; we have to take them in pieces. Page 38 of this Report, and I say this with special reference to the hon. Minister's glowing report to this House when he reported on the number of co-operatives.

**The Chairman:** 1968 to 1972 is a long time.

**Mr. Ram Karran:** I know, but we do not get Reports. I merely want to ask the hon. Minister whether the situation has been changed.

**The Chairman:** Is that not so implied with respect to his glowing statement?

**Mr. Ram Karran:** Oh no. And at the rate things are going it might be worse. I hope the hon. Minister will be plain enough I would not say honest having regard to the observations which I made about the premier co-op society.

Before I go further I wish to draw your attention to another one where the Ministry of Economic Development and Co-operative Division, 1 Water & Cornhill Streets, on 13<sup>th</sup> December, 1971 wrote the Secretary of the United Sad'r Islamic Anjuman. The name I know is not what they have written to the Guyana Sad'r Islamic Anjuman.

**The Chairman:** It is obvious that is the organisation they are writing to.

**Mr. Ram Karran:** The Organisation I know is the United Sad'rAnjuman Islam. There aren't two organisations, but it shows that the Government does not even know what it is doing. The letter states;

"I forward receipt Number 87040 being payment made for the amount of \$10 for the registration of the above named society."

Sir, you and I know, and I think the whole country too, that the Sad'rAnjuman has been registered by statute by a Bill passed in this House. In any case there was in existence such an organisation and surely the people in the Co-operative division who issued this receipt No. 87040 ought to have been aware of the fact that such an organisation --

**The Chairman:** What is the date of the receipt?

**Mr. Ram Karran:** The receipt is dated December – My God, they have issued a receipt without a date. The date of the letter accompanying the receipt is 13<sup>th</sup> December, 1971. It does not seem to me that having regard to all these things that are taking place, that the observations made in the Chief Co-operative Officer's Report of 1967 – 1968 have changed anything, and I should like to read into the records something from page 38.

"As previously mentioned, statutory powers were employed to remove the committees of management of three societies from office for maladministration and the neglect of duty. The committees were replaced by managers ..."

It goes on another page, page 36 which I will read,

"Arbitration:

The Commissioner for Co-operative Development is responsible under the law for the settlement of disputes arising out of the business of co-operative societies.



During the period two thousand, seven hundred and forty-two (2,742) cases were referred to arbitration; of these one thousand, two hundred and eighty-one (1,281) awards were made, two hundred and twenty three (223) cases were withdrawn; the remainder of the cases were pending.”

I say all of this to give the Minister an opportunity to tell this House whether things have changed, and as I said from my observations with respect to these two cases, where the Co-operatives Department was very slack, very incompetent, if the situation is the same way or if it has worsened, the hon. Minister should be asked to give this House the assurance that some improvement has taken place.

**The Minister of Co-operatives and Community Development** (Mr. Haynes): Mr. Chairman, page 181 subhead 6, Training Courses for Personnel of Co-operatives Societies, asks the hon. Member Mr. Durant, when will the training courses for which this money is devoted will commence. We have always been doing training in co-operatives. As one can see on this very page, money was provided in 1972, money was provided in 1971, money was provided in 1970. There is continuous training in co-operatives because we believe that if the co-operatives are to perform properly, then the people must be trained, and so this money is used for training secretaries, treasurers, and in the whole system of co-operative societies wherever training needs are identified from time to time.

With respect to the question posed by the hon. member Mr. Ram Karran, at first he talked about Government's interference in the co-operative wholesale society. I want to give the assurance to this House and to the hon. Member, that there is no governmental interference in the co-operative wholesale society. The society is managed by a committee of management made up of co-operative societies. The manager who the hon. member claims was dismissed from the wholesale society, as far as my knowledge goes this man was never dismissed, that he was on secondment from the Ministry of Economic Development when the Co-operatives Department was under that Ministry. He was seconded and his term of secondment came to an end. He was not dismissed, as I know. What I do know, and this is outside of the realms of having anything to

do with government interference, is that the Manager had some dispute with the committee of management and they gave him certain instructions which he refused to carry out because he felt he should not carry out those instructions.

**The Chairman:** Please do not take any notice of any member who sits down and talks especially when he comes in late and does not know what is going on.

**Mr. Haynes:** He could not get on with them. With respect to the statement by the hon. Member about the Reports of the Commissioner for Co-operatives, the Report for 1970 and 1971 are nearly completed and will be put before this House some time early next year. I want to say that as far as I am concerned, and I speak as one who knows about what is going on in co-operatives in this country, the situation with co-operatives has not deteriorated.

As a matter of fact, the number of societies that have been registered over the last year is an indication of the understanding and the recognition of the service which the co-operative can provide to the people. And so, we have societies of varying types being formed so that they can play their part in the developmental thrust of the Government.

**9.15 p.m.**

Co-operatives have a bright future because it is the government's conviction that the co-operative will be the vehicle for bringing in economic and social change for the vast majority of people in this country. As I said earlier in this House, we are setting up a College at Kuru-Kuru which will provide for extensive education of people in the co-operative sector. Indeed, I would hope that some of the members of the Opposition would use the facilities of the college so that they can become more up-to-date with co-operative education.

The hon. Member spoke about some receipt sent by the Co-operative Department with respect to the registration of the Anjuman. My understanding is that the Anjuman sought to be

registered as a friendly society, that is, to be incorporated under the Friendly Society Ordinance and it would appear that the Anjumana was a Trust established by Parliament. It was seeking to be registered as a friendly society but we were advised by the law officers that it could not be registered as a friendly society because it was incorporated in some trust or the other, and so. I think the Co-operative Department rightly sent back the money. If they have not, the Anjuman can collect the money from the co-operative Department if they want.

*Head 61, Ministry of Co-operatives and Community Development - \$939,521 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**DIVISION XVII – MINISTRY OF CO-OPERATIVES  
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

*Question proposed that the sum of \$4,441,845 for Division XXVI, Ministry of Cooperatives and Community Development, stand part of the Estimates.*

**Mr. Roshan Ally:** Subhead 2.

**Mr. Ram Karran:** Subheads 1 and 3.

**Mr. Roshan Ally:** Mr. Chairman, I have seen here under subhead 2, Co-operative Department, the sum of \$975,000 is to be provided to assist in the development of the co-operative sector. Within the Block III area at the rear of Sukran's Crown there are six co-operative societies. The Youth Farmers, with 3,5000 acres of land; Lotus Valley with 1,050 acres of land; Friendly Farmers with 776 acres of land; Babylon with 3,517 acres of land; Guyana's Burg with 1,437 acres of land; and Leeds Pioneer with 1,210 acres of land.

These co-operative societies have done all the imploding and internal work. They spent approximately \$4 million on the land and they were producing, not only rice but ground

and green vegetables. Because of ingress and egress difficulties the people had to cease planting there for approximately five years.

Since it is the Government's intention to assist co-operatives, these societies are asking that Government build a road to the Canje Creek in the 52 area where the Government has a large reserve.

There are other co-operative societies at the rear of the Black Bush Polder scheme. Those co-operative societies are suffering at the moment. They are unable to do anything on the land because of the matter of ingress and egress. Even the cattle industry will be boosted up in that area if the Government builds that road. The people would not have to search for land. The reserve is there; it was left there for the purpose of building a road down to the Canje Creek. I wish the hon. Minister will tell us what is Government's intention.

**Mr. Ram Karran:** Subhead 1, Purchase of Equipment. I particularly asked the hon. Minister in this House the questions about the equipment which is described in the Estimates as "miscellaneous equipment". I notice that some hon. Ministers do spell out in the Estimates what they propose to buy and I should be very grateful if the hon. Minister will tell us what type of equipment he wishes to purchase for the Co-operative and Community Development. In the future I hope it will be possible to make a note of them because there is a lot of space on this page.

Secondly subhead 3, Community Development Projects. A sum of \$1,500,000 is being sought "to provide for the undertaking of miscellaneous projects." As you know, sir, hon. Members in this House would like to gauge the success or otherwise of the Government. When they hide the proposed work under statements like these, "miscellaneous projects", at the end of the year or when we are examining the Estimates again next year –

**The Chairman:** They cannot hide when there are members like you in the Opposition. You are too experienced.

**Mr. Ram Karran:** I merely ask the hon. Minister to indicate –

**The Chairman:** To “itemize” the equipment.

**Mr. Ram Karran:** Not necessarily to itemize, but to give us an idea so that when we go around the countryside we will see it. We have an interest. We want to see the co-operatives developed; we want to see self-help developed, even though we want to see the Government destroyed. We want to see the people benefit, we want to see programmes succeed although we hope to overtake the Government very shortly.

**The Chairman:** Hon. Member, Mr. Ram Karran, I want to finish by half-past nine.

**Mr. Ram Karran:** I ask very seriously for the hon. Minister to indicate the projects in these omnibus votes so that the Opposition and indeed their own colleagues will know that there are the projects they propose to undertake.

I wonder if the hon. Minister will, when he gets up on his feet, give us an idea of what is covered by this.

**Mr. Haynes:** Subhead 1, Purchase of Equipment. The legend says “to provide for the purchase of miscellaneous equipment”. We are talking about land rovers, boats, outboard engines, trucks, projectors, screens, photocopying machines and things like that.

With respect to the community development projects, we are going to spend this money mostly on infrastructural works, recreation and welfare, education and agriculture, industry and commerce, pure water supply and so on. We have a list of the areas where we propose to put

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down these projects. Perhaps if the hon. Member would like to assist us in helping to put down some of these projects in certain areas we can always let him know the areas in which we are going to put them.

9.25 p.m.

The hon. Member Mr. Roshan Ally raised a question about ingress and egress where a number of Co-operative Societies are involved in an area. I am not in a position to say when Government will build a road there. But because of the seriousness of what he has said we will have a look at it and the Ministry responsible for building roads will then decide when they will be able to build a road there.

**Mr. Balchand Persaud:** I will be very glad if the hon. Minister would tell the House who are the officers of the Greenland Co-op Society. [*The hon. Minister offered no reply.*]

*Division XXVI, Ministry of Co-operatives and Community Development - \$4,441,845, agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman: Pages 184 and 185.**

#### **HEAD 62 – MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY**

*Question proposed that the sum of \$591,277 for Head 62, Ministry of labour and Social Security, stand part of the Estimates.*

**Mr. Lall:** I should like to speak on subhead 1, item (1) using that to make a general observation on the Head; and then I wish to speak on items (14), (15), (16) and (23), and on the next page subhead 10.

**Mr. Ram Karran:** Subhead 1, item (1) very short question.

**Mr. Durant:** Page 184 subhead 1, item (17) and (18).

**The Chairman:** Hon. Member Mr. Ram Karran.

**Mr. Ram Karran:** I wish, first of all, to enquire of the hon. Minister of Labour and Social Security whether it is true that the Ministry through the Permanent Secretary wrote the Rice Development Company advising them to withdraw recognition from the M.P.C.A. and to hold a poll among the workers for the examination of the claim by the G.W.U. and the U.A.A.W. which is the Union supported by the Guyana Government. My information is that the Minister through his Permanent Secretary has instructed this Corporation to do this thing. I hold no brief for the M.P.C.A. or any of the unions involved. [*Interruption.*] If the hon. Minister will indicate to this House whether it is so, I will ask who holds back his hands? Who is preventing him from declaring a similar situation with respect to the sugar industry?

**The Chairman:** Hon. Member Mr. Durant.

**Mr. Durant:** Mr. Chairman, under item (17), Chief Employment and Productivity Officer and item (18), Labour Research Officer, I have not seen any explanation in the legend as to what are the functions of these two officers. I should like the Minister of Labour to give us some explanation.

What I understand by research is an officer who is doing research in the labour movement. Because at the moment I do not believe we need such an officer unless the research is being done as to the needs of the working man so that the Minister would be in a position to introduce the necessary laws to protect the workers.

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There are many problems facing workers which we have drawn to the Minister's attention daily, but we seem to get nowhere. For instance, there is a construction company by the name of Premar International Limited. I think this company is engaged in putting up silos. It is now constructing the silos in Wakenaam. This Company seems to be an expatriate Company as far as I know and the workers who are employed by it are encountering a lot of hardships. It is the very Labour Minister who fought vigorously against these things and if he was still a labour leader I think that the Government would have plenty of trouble with him where the workers and these malpractices are concerned. The workers employed in this Company have not been enjoying privileges of receiving holidays with pay. How is it being operated? Three days before the completion of any year – the workers count the year at 225 days in the year as laid down in the Government Agreement – a worker is eligible for this leave. Three days before the end of the 225 days the workers are dismissed and three days after the Company re-employs them.

9.35 p.m.

I would be very pleased if the hon. Minister could pay some attention to this because, to my mind, the only research officer I can see now is a research officer to go into all these things, because these workers in these remote areas are left without union representation.

There is a peculiar thing about union representation in certain fields. Sometimes, as soon as a union goes in to these companies, the next thing you know is that the workers are dismissed because they become unionists. That is one of the difficulties facing the Minister. There is nothing he can do about it when they are dismissed. There is nothing at his disposal, even if he should investigate it. He cannot tell the employer to re-employ the workers because they were wrongfully dismissed.

The Minister of Labour, one time he told me and another labour leader that we as labour leaders should guide the Ministry and assist the officers but we have taken many things to him



and unto this day he is not in a position to get the necessary legislation, and they remain the same way. At one time, he made a promise that all these things would be set out under the labour code but these things are not forthcoming and, therefore, these are sore points along the entire labour field. That is why a section of labour is terribly exploited, that is, small workers, hundreds of them, but then we are left in a peculiar position in that as soon as we start to mobilise them for union representation so that the exploitation can stop, they have no jobs. The Minister is powerless.

It happened that the workers worked at one establishment, where the factories officer agreed with me that the place is a factory, declared it a factory, therefore, the fifteen workers were exploited to the tune of over \$4,000 which they should have been given in back pay. The case went to the Ministry and the Minister said there was a case to get this employer to answer the call of the Ministry but the Minister is powerless. Every effort was made.

**The Chairman:** - - -

**Mr. Duant:** Yes, Mr. Chairman, but the workers will have to pay the lawyer. They cannot afford. There should be legislation to say that a worker should be paid "X" dollars and if the employer infringes that law, then the Minister will have the power to take him to court and he will have to pay. The workers should be protected by the Government. Do not leave it to the workers to take the man to court. Some workers find the money, and when we take them to court, we win. I took the Ministry of Agriculture to court last year November. I won the case, this year April, and that man found the money. He got \$4,763, he went all around. If a worker is placed in a position that he cannot find the money, we cannot rightly say that --

**The Chairman:** You are not leaving any money for your colleague, the hon. Member Mr. Harry Lall.

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**Mr. Durant:** Yes – that this Government is really trying to make the small man a real man.

**Mr. Lall:** Since we have noticed that several reports have been appearing in the newspapers pertaining to the N.I.S., sir, it was suggested at a meeting, where the General Manager of the N.I.S. was opening the first annual conference of union by the name of the Agricultural and Allied Workers' Union, that some of the workers are inflicting self injuries.

First, for one to make such a statement it is inhuman. I will pose the question whether the General Manager of the N.I.S. or the Minister of Labour believes, as the General Manager has said, that he had evidence where two workers cut out their tongues. Will he reasonably suggest to us that he can cut out his tongue for a pittance? Will the Minister suggest that he could just prick his hand with a pin? It is highly unreasonable to state that, for an officer like that to say that the workers are inflicting wounds on themselves to receive a benefit. Sir, this is only to expose the vandalism of his thinking. He went on to say that from 1969, September 29<sup>th</sup>, to November 1972, the scheme has saved in securities to the tune of \$30,600,000.

9.45 p.m.

*[Interruption]* If the Chairman allows me, I can read it.

**The Chairman:** You may do so if you wish to waste time. When the hour is up the head will be put.

**Mr. Lall:** It is stated here in the Daily Chronicle of 18<sup>th</sup> December, 1972:

“He disclosed that injury benefits paid out in 1970 after the initial three-month period of the scheme started in September 1969, had passed, amounted to \$344,000. This rose to \$931,000 last year, and at the end of the November this year the amount paid out in 1972 was \$1,371,000.”

Now, sir, let us take into consideration that the sum of \$1,371,000 was paid out as injury benefit and the sum of \$1 million was paid out for other benefits, maternity benefit, sick benefit, funeral benefit and so on. That would give a total of \$2,371,000. We are not taking into consideration the amount that is in the bank, the money which has been saved, which is \$30.6 million in securities and bonds. Is it so unreasonable to say that the people are taking too much when there are 168,000 people insured under the National Insurance Scheme and only an amount of \$2.3 million was paid out?

**The Chairman:** Please proceed to the other subhead because you have only five minutes more.

**Mr. Lall:** I will cut short my questions on the other subheads. Please allow me to speak because this is very important. An officer of the Government, who is to protect the people, is putting the people's security in jeopardy and the Minister of Labour sits here and hears an officer accusing workers of robbery. He takes it easy instead of taking steps to discipline that officer. He sits down and imbibes it as though he is a representative of the capitalist class in this House.

I have mentioned the amount of \$30.6 million, but he come to another point. Claims are scrutinized to determine whether the worker was injured in truth or not although the driver, the field foreman and workers sign cards to witness that a worker was injured in the field.

What do they do? They hold up the claims from the workers for months and, believe it or not, if this atmosphere continues next year there will be trouble. Only when the nation revolts will you understand that something is happening. We are swallowing these statements. Payment is delayed for months. How are these people to live? Today I had three claims that I had to appeal. I can bring them to you, sir, in your capacity as a legal brain. If you look at these simple cases you will observe that these people are working against the working class and not in the interest of the working class. I had to appeal to the Appeals Tribunal on simple matters.

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This is wasting the time of the Tribunal; it is wasting the time of the workers and wasting man power because the worker has to wait until the appeal is finished before he or she can resume work.

I want to draw this to the attention of the members of the Government so that they can know what is going on. Scrutinize under the table to see what is going on.

This officer is making a big pronouncement about the fraudulent claims of workers, but let the members of the Government go under the table and they will see what is going on. I do not want to point a finger at anybody, but it is Government's job to examine what is going on.

Then there is the doctor, Dr. Nicholson. He is working in collusion with the General Manager.

**The Chairman:** Hon. Member I will not permit you to say that.

**Mr. Lall:** How shall I put it? They are working together. I just want to make an observation on what happens when the doctor examines a patient. Today I saw an incised wound on a man's leg. That wound is about 1½ inches long and about ¼ inch deep. The doctor gave instructions that this man should receive treatment at the hospital but should not be paid because he aggravated the wound. Is this not inhuman? How could we accept something like this? How could a working-class Government accept something like this – that a man is going to aggravate a wound? The little money that they are paying a man will not allow him to support his wife and children. He would like to work but I do not know what is happening.

9.55 p.m.

Let the hon. Minister deny this. A weeder from Annadale, about seven months ago grass stuck her eyes and after two weeks Dr. Nicholson said: "You are discharged; your eye is all

right". I took the lady myself to the Minister; I said, "Mr. Minister, look at this lady's eye". The Minister immediately telephoned Dr. Nicholson. After the Minister's intervention the same lady who was discharged by Dr. Nicholson was given glasses. She received an operation on the eye and she got glasses. She has been incapacitated for six months. Now we are asking the state to give her light work.

I can bring many more cases to this House so as to prove my case that the General Manager is misusing his position and I am asking that some stop be put somewhere. I am not saying that if a person is found guilty of misdemeanor that person should not be taken care of by the law. Sir, but do not paint a black picture of the people who give you \$30 million to help you to run the Government. This is downright ungratefulness.

**The Chairman:** I propose sitting until half past 10 o'clock to finish the Head.

**Mr. Lall:** As I told you I will wind up on the others. I should like to make an observation on subhead 1, items (14), (15) and (16) together.

**The Chairman:** Hon. Member Mr. Lall, do you not want to hear the Minister's reply to these questions?

**Mr. Lall:** I brought to the hon. Minister's attention the shortage of Labour Officers in Berbice. In Berbice we have the four largest sugar estates; then we have Kwakwani and Everton, and we have many sawmills and rice mills and there is only one Senior Labour Officer, one labour Officer, one Assessor and one Factory Officer. In Georgetown there are fourteen Labour Officers. We are asking that more Labour Officers should be placed in the Corentyne area so as to give better services to the workers in that area.

**The Chairman:** Please hurry we have two Heads more to go.

**Mr. Lall:** I want to draw to the hon. Minister's attention the fact that the Labour Officer are put by some head of authority in Labour Department to go into inter-unions disputes, and there is a union there which is carrying out what I would call forgery by saying that workers are signing their names for withdrawal whereas they are not doing so. I have the Evening Post to back my statement.

**The Chairman:** Do not read it now.

**Mr. Lall:** I do not want to waste your time, sir. I should like the hon. Minister to give us some explanation on the union involved U.A.A.W. I have brought it to the attention of the Assistant Labour Inspector, the Chief Labour Officer that all the withdrawal forms must be signed in script. We want an investigation to be carried out into this question.

Sir, this is a big head because labour deals with the economy of the country and labour is responsible for the economy therefore labour should be given a little more time.

**The Chairman:** If you and I are here next year you must tell your colleagues to allocate more time.

**The Minister of Labour and Social Security (Mr. Carrington):** Mr. Chairman, it is regrettable that we do not have enough time to discuss heads. I should have liked to deal more at length with these matters but time does not permit. I would reply first to the hon. Member Mr. Harry Lall with reference to U.A.A.W. on the question of withdrawal forms. I would report this matter to my officers so that they can investigate if the matter comes before them. But I note that the hon. Member is very much concerned about the U.A.A.W. I do not know the reason for this. I do not know if they have really got back the Frankenstein of Dr. Latchmansingh. I know that they will be very worried about this because as far as I understand Dr. Latchmansingh was one of the most outstanding leaders in the sugar industry. I attended a Conference of this Union just last Sunday and reference was made to the work of Dr. Latchmansingh who was a member of this

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party, that he did quite a lot of work in the sugar industry. So I can see the need for this fear. This union seems to be a union bent on servicing the workers and not fooling the workers politically and otherwise.

I am here to take the complaints of the Opposition and I will investigate these matters and report back to him at another place.

On the question of more Factory Officers, this has been a recurring situation. When we had less officers in New Amsterdam the hon. Member complained. Now we have increased the number of officers he is still complaining. There were no Factory Officers in New Amsterdam. We have now put an additional officer in the New Amsterdam factory. We have now put an additional officer as a Labour Assessor in New Amsterdam, and still another additional officer, a Senior Labour Officer is now assigned to New Amsterdam.

10.05 p.m.

This is at the request of the hon. Member, when we were discussing the last time. Every year he comes here, he must have two or three or more officers. Why? So that these officers will do the work of the trade union. I am not only referring to the hon. Member, or the G.A.W.U., but also the M.P.C.A. and other unions who want the Ministry of Labour not only to investigate but to make representations.

On the question of the N.I.S., I am very unhappy about the hon. Member raising this under this Head, because almost every Head in the Estimates refers to N.I.S. It is there because every Ministry will have to pay for employees. I will answer, but the hon. Member knows that every year a Report of N.I.S. will be submitted to Parliament for the scrutiny and discussion of Parliament. This is a scheme separate and apart from what one finds in the Estimates.

I am prepared to defend the Manager of the N.I.S., and to some extent, what he is saying is the truth. During 1971, I chased members of the G.A.W.U. out of my office, about 26 of them, who came with claims for backache, and neckache, and side-ache, and hernia, and “something is falling down”. They worked throughout the crop and as soon as it came to the end of the crop, whether it was the spring crop or the autumn crop, suddenly there were claims for industrial benefit.

We know as a fact that some of the G.A.W.U. representatives in the field usually ask the workers: “You are not going to make any claims for N.I.S.? You are coming to the end of the crop.” We have this as a fact. *[Interruption]* Because they are contributing, they must abuse and misuse the Scheme. We are proceeding not only to warn them but to charge them. Sir, I tell you some of the things you do not know. They come with swollen knees. They catch the marabuntas and they put them on their knees; they use some ointment to remove the pain and they are swollen. *[Interruption]*

It is a fact that I did not look into the matter which the hon. Member Mr. Lall referred to, where the lady’s eyes were running and they were red, but we know as a fact that at the end of these crops many of the workers use pepper. We are now carrying out an investigation. There are some people, not sugar workers on the sugar estates, who specialise in doing some of these specialised operations. A man cut off is thumb with a cutlass and none of the other fingers even got a bruise.

These reports have not been coming since the N.I.S. In the Ministry of Labour, many of the labour officers complained and evidence came before the Ministry, that these fellows use anaesthetic at the end of the crop. One man is reported as saying that he is prepared to lose a toe and have a taxi car. **[Mr. Lall: “How much you pay for a toe?”]** Enough to assist in getting you a hire car. These matters were taken up to court and the S.P.A. has been able to prove in court



that these were deliberate acts by some of the workers. And here they come to condone this action, robbing a Scheme that is doing so much for the workers.

I agree with the hon. Member that some of these cases may be genuine and it is my intention to discuss with the Manager of the N.I.S. and the doctor, to make sure that their investigations, medical or otherwise, satisfy the workers that their claims are justified or otherwise, but he knows what I am talking about. The marabunta and the pepper are an old story.

On the question for Mr. Durant's point about the malpractices and employment at the various silos: he says there is nothing in the law where you can take these employers – This Government knows that in many cases we can do very little, in some cases nothing at all, because the law does not provide and like the N.I.S. where many of the lawyers like Derek Jagan, who made mints of money through workmen's compensation - - - With the N.I.S., there is provision where any worker can appear before the tribunal and defend the worker's case. I agree there are no such laws but the Government suggested an industrial court where many of these matters would have been resolved in the interest of the workers.

**10.15 p.m.**

The members of the Opposition are opposed to an industrial court in this civilized age to resolve matters affecting the workers. If they continue to protest in this manner they should know that the Government is willing and ready, as soon as they are ready, to introduce an industrial court to resolve these matters.

On the question of the workers having no protection before the court, I was to say that if the worker does not have the money the law provides that we can give assistance to him, free of charge, to summons the employer and take him to court.

Mr. Ram Karran made reference to the I.L.O. and earlier Mr. Durant made reference to man-power, the Productivity Officer and Research Officer. There is such a division in the Ministry. He would like to know what this officer does. These are all new developments in the Ministry of labour.

With this massive development taking place in Guyana, if you are to have effective planning, you must know what your manpower needs are. You do not just start a development programme and plan everything else without knowing what are your manpower needs. It then becomes necessary for the Government to have in the Ministry of Labour an officer responsible for this section. He will have the duty to find out what are the nation's manpower needs in various skills and occupations and so advise the various training centres to train people in the skills required for our productivity and manpower needs. That is the job of this officer.

I do not know what the hon. Member Mr. Ram Karran is talking about. He makes reference to the question of recognition at Guyana Rice Corporation. The Permanent Secretary does not deal with industrial relations. He is the Chief Administrative Officer. The Chief labour Officer is the officer who deals with industrial relations and not the Permanent Secretary. I do not know where he gets the idea that the Permanent Secretary made reference or referred the matter of recognition to the Guyana Rice Corporation. *[Interruption by Mr. Balchand Persaud]*

There are lots of people who use anything to talk on and they talk *stupidness*.

There is the question of recognition of the Guyana Rice Corporation. There is recognition in the sugar industry. He is concerned about this. In the sugar industry, as I said before, it is the employer who determines recognition. It is the employer who gives recognition and not the Ministry. Once an employer, private or public, requests the Ministry of Labour to

carry out a survey, we will. It happens that this union demanded recognition from the G.R.C. and the employers requested that we carry out a survey. We carried out the survey. It was proved that this union has the majority.

I know that this particular situation will worry the G.A.W.U. and the P.P.P. You know why? Because the P.P.P. felt for many years that the agricultural sector, the rice and sugar industry, was exclusively theirs and the workers only came to them from time to time to make representation. They have found out now that here is another union and there are leaders who are capable of influencing and attracting the workers to their organisation. They are worried. I am not a member of this union. They invited me to a Conference last Sunday and I was more than surprised to see the cross section of workers that attended this Conference where a medal was presented to Dr. Giglioli.

It was a very interesting Conference. At this Conference Sir Lionel Luckoo made a statement and surprisingly the whole Conference cheered. The Conference, comprising workers from the sugar industry, the rice industry and many other agricultural concerns, cheered when Sir Lionel Luckhoo said that the Prime Minister's image is the greatest in the Caribbean and in other parts of the world. This is what is worrying them.

**The Chairman:** Hon. Member Mr. Hamid I will have to deal with you severely if you continue in this manner.

**Mr. Carrington:** They are worried because they know that once this large percentage of workers from the agricultural sector come to a union that supports the People's National Congress they will also bring their votes with them.

*Head 62, Ministry of Labour and Social Security - \$591,277, agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**HEAD 63 – MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY  
EMPLOYMENT EXCHANGE SERVICE**

*Question proposed that the sum of \$75,312 for Head 63, Ministry of Labour and Social Security, Employment Exchange Service, stand part of the Estimates.*

**Mr. Lall:** I would like to make a general observation. All I have to say is that this head should be deleted because I am made to understand that there is another institution that is usurping the functions of this department.

**Mr. Carrington:** This has been an old question about the Employment Exchange having its functions usurped. I would have liked to have been in a position to bring the many placement forms, the many blue cards, received by members of the Opposition who are able to secure jobs through the Employment Exchange.

*Head 63, Ministry of Labour and Social Security, Employment Exchange Service - \$75,312, agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**HEAD 64 – MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY  
SOCIAL ASSISTANCE**

*Question proposed that the sum of \$3,790,477 for Head 64, Ministry of Labour and Social Security, Social Assistance, stand part of the Estimates.*

**Mr. Lall:** I would like to speak on subhead 1.

**The Chairman:** You can speak on all for two minutes.

**Mr. Lall:** Subhead 1, items (5) and (6). On item (5), Social Assistance Officers, I wish to say that there are hundreds of applications remaining uninvestigated.

**10.25 p.m.**

I am asking the Minister to see to it that these very applications be scrutinised because in the various districts to which you go there are complaints about officers not going, two and three years elapse and people do not get consideration for old age pension and social assistance.

I will take subheads 5 and 6 together. I am asking that the means test for old age pension should be abolished. If the Government is not in a position to abolish the means test, then I am asking that the figure of \$16 should be raised to \$48, that is the means test so that the workers who are entitled to social assistance and old age pension can cope with the cost of living, by also having the Government raising the pittance it is giving to old age pensioners and those who receive social assistance.

**Mr. Carrington:** Sir, this matter is being looked into right now by the Ministry, the Question of the means test and improving the payments for old age pension and for social assistance. But when the hon. Member makes mention that it is a pittance we agree that it is a small amount, but is from that very pittance the P.P.P. collects its party contribution.

*Head 64, Ministry of labour and Social Security, Social Assistance - \$3,790,477 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** page 188.

**DIVISION XXVII – MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY**

*Question proposed that the sum of \$232,324, for Division XXVII, Ministry of labour and Social Security, stand part of the Estimates.*

**Mr. Ram Karran:** Subhead 4, Creation of Management Productivity Centre. I should like to ask the hon. Minister to explain to us what is this all about. We are going to spend the sum of \$144,200 for this Management Productivity Centre. What is it? How is it going to be disbursed? What organisations will benefit? Or what schemes the Government hopes to set up?

**Mr. Carrington:** Mr. Chairman, I think the hon. Member needs to know about this because these are all new developments where only a very progressive Government you will note will introduce these matters. But I think the hon. Member should know what is meant by management productivity. When you talk about national development, sir, you want to change the work force in vocational training and training of skills. But the leaders of any industrial development are the managers. You need to train them also, managers of anything, managers of farms, factories, groceries, managers of any concern. Once you need to have rapid development you must train. And out of the training of managers who are the leaders of industry you must get more productivity. I am sure the hon. member agrees that we need to have this type of training at this particular stage of our development. What would happen is we would set up a sort of institution, a centre where these managers, supervisors, foremen and such persons go for training. Also the Productivity Centre would provide consultation to various industries if they are having problems with their management and other things. But you have to have instructors, teachers, classrooms, and other such means for setting up such an institution.

**Mr. Ram Karran:** I would have thought that industry would have been responsible for the training of management in so far as production is concerned or in so far as the running of industry is concerned. I do wish to take the opportunity of congratulating the Minister and the Government on having joined openly the capitalist in our country.

21.12.72

National Assembly

10.25 – 10.35 p.m.

*Division XXVII, Ministry of Labour and Social Security - \$232,324, agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.*

**The Chairman:** Hon Member Mr. Harry Lall, I want to thank you for your co-operation. We have finished this head in one hour.

Hon. Deputy Leader of the Opposition, we propose doing tomorrow the Head, Ministry of Works and Communications.

*Assembly resumed.*

#### ADJOURNMENT

**Resolved,** "That this Assembly stands adjourned to Wednesday, 22<sup>nd</sup> December, 1972 at 2.p.m. [Mr. Ramsaroop]

*Adjourned accordingly at 10.35 p.m.*

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