

SECOND LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

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

Friday, 20th February, 1959

The Council met at 2 p.m.

PRESENT :

Speaker, His Honour Sir Donald Jackson	
Chief Secretary, Hon. M. S. Porcher (acting)	
Attorney-General, Hon. A. M. I. Austin, Q.C.	} <i>ex officio</i>
Financial Secretary, Hon. W. P. D'Andrade (acting)	
The Honourable Dr. C. B. Jagan	<i>Member for Eastern Berbice</i> (Minister of Trade and Industry)
The Honourable B. H. Benn	<i>Member for Essequibo River</i> (Minister of Community Development and Education)
„ „ E. B. Beharry	<i>Member for Eastern Demerara</i> (Minister of Natural Resources)
„ „ Janet Jagan	<i>Member for Western Essequibo</i> (Minister of Labour, Health and Housing).
„ „ Ram Karrao	<i>Member for Demerara-Essequibo</i> (Minister of Communications and Works).
Mr. R. B. Gajraj	<i>Nominated Member</i>
„ W. O. R. Kendall	<i>Member for New Amsterdam</i>
„ R. C. Tello	<i>Nominated Member</i>
„ L. F. S. Burnham	<i>Member for Georgetown Central</i>
„ S. Campbell	<i>Member for North Western District</i>
„ A. L. Jackson	<i>Member for Georgetown North</i>
„ B. S. Rai	<i>Member for Central Demerara</i>
„ S. M. Saffee	<i>Member for Western Berbice</i>
„ Ajodha Singh	<i>Member for Berbice River</i>
„ J. N. Singh	<i>Member for Georgetown South</i>
„ R. E. Davis	<i>Nominated Member</i>
„ A. M. Fredericks	<i>Nominated Member</i>
„ H. J. M. Hubbard	<i>Nominated Member.</i>

Mr. I. Crum Ewing—Clerk of the Legislature

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

ABSENT:

Mr. F. Bowman.

Mr. A. G. Tasker, O.B.E.—on leave.

The Clerk read prayers.

House

MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Thursday, 19th February, 1959, as printed and circulated, were taken as read and confirmed.

PAPERS LAID

The Minister of Trade and Industry (Dr. Jagan): I beg to lay on the Table, the

Report of the Director of Audit on the Accounts of the British Guiana Tourist Committee for the year ended 31st December, 1957, together with the audited statement of accounts, and the comments of the Chairman of the British Guiana Tourist Committee on the Report of the Director of Audit.

HOURS OF SITTING AND PENDING BUSINESS

The Chief Secretary (Mr. Porcher, acting): Before we proceed with the Order of the Day, I thought I would tell the Council something about the plans for sitting. I have consulted as many Members as possible, and I hope there is general agreement. Members decided to sit on Tuesday and Wednesday next week from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. and on Thursday from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. It is proposed not to proceed further with the Budget but to have a break from that and deal with the Valuation of Property Bill and the Land Registry Bill.

ORDER OF THE DAY

APPROPRIATION BILL

BUDGET DEBATE

The Financial Secretary (Mr. D'Andrade, acting): I beg to move that Council resolve itself into Committee to consider further the Bill intituled,

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

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

Question put, and agreed to.

COUNCIL IN COMMITTEE

Schedule

EDUCATION

WAGES OF SUBORDINATE EMPLOYEES

The Chairman: I think when the Council adjourned yesterday, the hon. Member for Georgetown North was speaking on an Amendment moved by the hon. Member for New Amsterdam, under sub-head 37 — "Wages of Subordinate Employees".

Mr. Jackson: I said yesterday that since the Minister of Education admitted in his comments on observations made by Mr. Kendall that there are teachers who received training and had gone back to their schools but could not put their additional knowledge into practice, and that there is wastage of effort, time and money in this direction, I must now ask what is the purpose of embarking upon a scheme without first having decided upon its final implementation?

What is the purpose of sending a teacher to be trained in domestic science for the purpose of teaching the students or pupils of the school when no scheme is propounded to put into operation the necessary machinery and equipment required to put this teaching into effect? I think Members will agree that this whole scheme of action as mentioned by the Minister of Education is based upon a hare-brain idea, with no planning and policy behind it at all.

This is certainly going to lead to frustration and make the teachers feel that it is unnecessary to take advantage of this laudable idea of being teachers of domestic science. It is going to make them feel it is no good responding at all; that the knowledge they would gain would be locked up in their minds and not passed on to the children. It is like pouring water into a container with no outlet for the water. It will produce con-

fusion and dyspepsia. In this case it may be mental dyspepsia, but that is one aspect of it. The other aspect is, what is the goal the Minister has set for those students who are now on a three-year course? He said yesterday that they no longer do domestic science only, but have to return to the primary school subjects, so that there is a joint session to learn the subjects which they perhaps have forgotten from their primary school days, and in addition, domestic science.

To what programme is this scheme attached? Is the Minister creating more domestic servants for people who cannot afford to pay servants? He did not tell us what is the increase in the number of those students who have been taken into the Carnegie School of Home Economics since it was decided to close down the tailoring and embroidery section. We do not know whether 10 or 40 more students have been admitted to utilize the space which was made available during 1958. If 10 more students have been added, what is the outlook for those people? Are they being trained to be domestics? If so, where will they be employed — in what homes and at what salaries? Is the plan intended to flood the market with domestics so that there can be a surplus of domestic labour? Then, if there is a surplus of labour in that field, to reduce the already low standard of wages, does the hon. Minister intend to persuade the Minister of Health to see that a number of them go to Canada to demonstrate in a foreign country the value of the training they have received here? If the plan is to turn out 40 or 60 students a year there must be some idea of what is going to be the end. The Minister has not indicated to this Council whether this policy of his is tied to any other policy of the Government which would take care of these people after their training has been completed.

In this Colony where unemployment is at an alarming rate, and where the tragedy is that we have a very young unemployed population, as most of the unemployed are between the ages of 18 and 30, it is going to be more difficult if after the training these girls are receiving

they are going to be at the loose end of their career. Perhaps the Minister has not given any consideration to this aspect of the problem, but perhaps he is right because, after all, he wants it to be recorded that the Minister of Education has done something. If the Minister of Natural Resources is doing something for his Government the Minister of Education should also do something, and it must be recorded that he has been able to train 40 more schoolgirls and given two more scholarships. He also wishes to have it put on record that the Carnegie Trade School is no longer a trade school for women but a School of Home Economics, which is a more high-sounding name.

I hope the Minister will give us some indication as to what is going to be his policy. Since we are dealing with wages I want to say that last year when he put out of employment girls who were working at the Carnegie Trade School, the Minister said his policy was to make room for the programme he had in mind. We did not know what was intended to be done with the money which was to be saved — whether it was to be put into revenue—but it is a very bad policy for a Government to put people out of work just to save a few thousand dollars. What is more ridiculous is that those girls, some of whom had been working at the Carnegie Trade School for 20 years, were given no superannuation benefit, the reason given being that they had been doing piece-work. What does it matter whether they were doing piece-work or working on a weekly or monthly basis?

The Minister of Community Development and Education (Mr. Benn): I should like to make it quite clear that the Carnegie School of Home Economics is not intended to train domestic servants. It is a school—we may call it a vocational high school—where young women are trained in the skills of Home Economics mainly, in order that they should be better wives, better mothers and better citizens. It is true that there is considerable unemployment in this country. I can assure the hon. Member that the standard of training which young women now receive at the

[MR. BENN]

Carnegie School of Home Economics is superior to that which they received in the past. It is a much more extended course, and if by chance some of the women who have been educated at the Carnegie School are recruited as domestic servants to work in Canada then we will be assured that those who go to Canada as domestic servants from the Carnegie School are better trained and more capable persons.

The hon. Member referred to the question of the teachers and the final application of the scheme. I wish to let him know that the teachers who were taken from their schools and trained in Home Economics at the Carnegie Trade School, were not trained during my time as Minister of Education, and what the Ministry has been trying to do is to provide more centres and Home Economics Departments. I said yesterday that because of the small number of trained teachers in the country it was considered necessary to retain in the schools for the teaching of general educational subjects our trained or highly certificated teachers. The hon. Member suggests that because they were trained in home economics they will not be able to put their knowledge to use.

Training in home economics involves several subjects, and even if a teacher is trained to cook I am certain that she could put that knowledge to some use in the class-room. These teachers are taught a little bit of science, pastry making and so forth which they could very well put to some use in the schools. Knowledge is never wasted; it is power. I should not like the hon. Member to imagine that because those teachers went back to their schools to teach normal subjects, the knowledge they had gained is lost, for after all we have the problem of the potato tax and as a result of their training in Home Economics at the Carnegie School they should be able to pass on some knowledge of the use of local foodstuffs, and so on and so forth.

The question of geography does come into it, and I hope the hon. Member will take a little time off to visit

some of our schools and if he would listen to some of their classes he would realize that in a geography lesson several things are taken into consideration. When they are talking about rice they discuss the areas in which it is grown and where it is sold. They also discuss what use is made of rice straw. I wish to impress on the hon. Member that we want to save for the normal work in the schools those teachers who have been trained.

What about the other people? I said that some persons are being trained now at the Carnegie School of Home Economics. Most, if not all of them are past students of the Carnegie Trade School, so that the hon. Member must see that opportunity is being provided right there for the girls who pass out of school. Fourteen of them are being trained, and three of them are young women who lost employment when the three workshops — the Embroidery, Dressmaking and Tailoring departments — were closed down. The other 11 are persons who passed through the Carnegie Trade School and will get further training to become teachers, so that when we establish our Home Economics Departments and centres, those persons will be employed in them. In addition, there are several persons who give instruction at evening classes in the rural areas, and there are also persons who give instruction as part-time teachers. Some work in the Minor Industries Department and others part-time during the Carnegie course.

Courses are arranged in the rural areas. If the hon. Member would look at item (45) — “Evening Classes Rural Areas” — he would observe that the amount has been increased from \$3,432 to \$4,432, an increase of \$1,000, so that people can be trained there. A few will be trained as teachers in home economics; a few in art; a few will assist in Evening Schools in the rural districts; a few others will become good wives and mothers; and, perhaps, a few will be absorbed in other employment. The course is very wide, as hon. Members will realize.

Formerly some people regarded the Carnegie Trade School as a place where

people were trained as domestic servants and that is why the name was changed. I would like the hon. Member to regard it not as a training place for servants, but as a Vocational High School where people are taught something about child psychology, arithmetic, geography and elementary science. There has been an increase of about thirty persons in the Carnegie Trade School over the number last year, and these people are going to use up the additional space. I want the hon. Member to realize that the fact that the school has eight rooms does not necessarily mean that the eight rooms are in use throughout the day. An art room is not necessarily used all day, but at some period of the day there will be an art class. I feel it is necessary for me to explain these things in detail to the hon. Member in order that he may see that it is not, as he says, a hare-brain scheme.

The hon. Member asked whether Government was doing this in order to get rid of certain people. I would like to remind him that though the workshop was run at a loss, that was not the reason for closing it down. Government had decided to change it from a Trade School to a Home Economics School, and it was necessary to use up all of the space available. It is not necessary to use up all of the money because the entire vote was used up before.

I have already drawn the hon. Member's attention to the fact that a vote under this Head has been increased by \$1,000. In addition to that the hon. Member must have noticed the increases in other votes under Education. I think I mentioned yesterday that the Head of Education was increased. Because the sum of \$24,000 plus \$10,000 is not seen under the Head of the Carnegie this year, it does not mean that the money will be spent on something other than education. I hope the hon. Member will be able to appreciate the points which I have made, and I hope he will be satisfied with my reply.

Mr. Jackson: The hon. Minister of

Community Development and Education said that "knowledge is power". I would have preferred him to say that much knowledge is power, for there is a saying that "a little learning is a dangerous thing". It seems to me that his intention, while he may consider his policy to be good, is one which tends to fit his scheme into the last phrase I referred to: "A little learning is a dangerous thing".

The Minister of Community Development and Education says that there is a shortage of trained teachers, and it is not possible to utilize them to the best advantage in certain directions. It is felt that if they are utilized in the primary purpose for which they were employed they will not be able to give all the attention they should to the children, because they would not have enough time to teach the children the basic requirements of education.

It is a laudable idea to make good wives of our girls so that they can take their place in society with other people who are qualified to keep good homes. It appears to me, however, that, in the absence of an economy which can ensure a good standard of living for these people, the value of the course which they are receiving will be negligible in the long run. If you take a girl from a home where her father is working for \$2.52 a day or less than \$15 a week, after she is trained and sent back to her home the circumstances and conditions remain the same there. Keen as she may be to put what she has learnt into practice she finds it difficult to do so, because she does not have the means to raise the standard of living in her home. The scheme appears to be a bit premature. It is a good scheme, but it should not have been put into practice so early after the Minister had taken over his portfolio.

Last year when we were debating the retrenchment of the people at the Carnegie, we told the Minister that it would have been better for him to retain those girls in the School for training so that they would have been able to carry out the programme which he had in mind.

[MR. JACKSON]

Today we are convinced that that would have been the proper thing to do. If those trained teachers cannot devote their time to this kind of work because of the shortage of trained teachers, those girls would have been able to carry on. They would have been trained in the Carnegie School and would have been able to specialize in a particular field. They would have been admirably suited for the scheme which the Minister has in mind. If the hon. Minister had only listened to the commonsense view expressed by this side of the Table last year. —

Mr. Benn: I would like the hon. Member to understand that everybody who sews or does embroidery is not necessarily a good teacher. Some of the people who were at the Carnegie at the time applied for the present course, and three of them have been accepted. The Minister has to decide on policy, and it is for the Headmistress of the Carnegie Trade School to have the people trained. The Minister could not go and say who were to be trained. It was the duty of the Headmistress to decide who were the persons to be trained to become teachers in home economics.

I would also like the hon. Member to know that two girls from the Carnegie have gone to the United Kingdom and Canada. The tailor has been given a contract, and much of the interest of the Headmistress of the Carnegie School of Home Economics has been put into it. Twenty-one seamstresses are now working at the Briana Shirt Factory. Everybody who has done sewing in a tailoring department cannot necessarily make a good teacher.

Mr. Tello: I notice that the number of instructors remains the same. Last year there were 13 and the figure is the same this year. While the Minister has explained the present status of the School, the importance of its contribution to the community, the space he has saved for accommodating more people and so on, he has not told us why the number of instructors remains the same. I would like to hear something about this matter. I

know that in planning these things very often the human element is not taken sufficiently into consideration. I would like an assurance from the Minister that he had consultations with these thirteen instructors, the Teachers' Association has been consulted, and everybody is satisfied that these instructors will not be called upon to do more work than they should merely because of their interest in their profession and the development of the Colony as a whole.

I have listened to the Minister telling us about this wide curriculum, and it is obvious that more work is involved in this matter. In the circumstances, I feel that the number of instructors should be increased. I feel that the work per man hour must be more, especially when we take into consideration the fact that some of these instructors must take part in night lessons and do a considerable amount of overtime. I am not saying that this is a fact, but that is how it appears to me.

I would like the hon. Minister to clear up this point. I think I have the right to say that in initiating this scheme sufficient interest has not been given to these instructors, and they may have been exposed to unnecessary hardship by having to do more work for the same pay.

Mr. Benn: Again I must let the hon. Member understand that I have the benefit of the advice of the Board of Governors of Carnegie School of Home Economics, the Ministry of Education, the Education Department and the Ministry of Health, and I did ask the Teachers Association what the instructors thought about this.

Mr. Tello: Very bad.

Mr. Benn: Not because the cost is expanded it means that teachers are going to have more working hours. Let us imagine the curriculum. You may have seven classes in English. You may decide to lessen those and have one class in geography; or you may decide that since you want to do some gardening, you would have less of woodwork.

The teachers, most of them, have been teaching in primary schools, have been to the Teachers' Training College or attended courses in home economics at the University College of the West Indies or in Puerto Rico.

Not because you have 10 classrooms, you are going to use 10 classrooms at the same time. Teachers are not overburdened, and there has been no complaint to me by the teachers individually or by the British Guiana Teachers' Association, which knows all about this. Members of the Board of Governors visit regularly, and I have had the benefit of the knowledge of the Headmistress herself.

Mr. Tello: I am grateful for the Minister's answer, but I am extremely disappointed that the Ministry is going into something without consulting the employees. As far as I know, the Education Department has always been made up of tremendous knowledge and experience; also, as far as I am aware, each time they embarked upon something new they always consulted the Association. I seem to think that the Minister is starting something which will end up very badly. We must not mistake friendly co-operation for lack of grievance, and, possibly, lack of the presence of disappointment.

I have said already that teachers have been sincere in their endeavour to serve their country through their profession and they might willingly do these things, but there are many matters that might be ironed out in consultation with them. I do not see why the Minister should think that the opinion of the teachers would not be worth while. Only yesterday we were informed that the Director of Education is also Permanent Secretary. I wonder if that means that the Minister took it for granted that the Director had already consulted the competent body to have their views. I say that it is not too late to consult these people and to make us the promise that at any time when a new policy is embarked upon he will consult the people authorized.

Mr. Benn: Sir, please let me go a little further, and, as one who has been a teacher will understand, use a little more patience. I said that not only the Ministry advised, but the Department also. The Education Committee now includes two members of the British Guiana Teachers' Association. I wonder if that satisfies the hon. Member.

Mr. Jackson: I cannot see how the Minister can regard that as an adequate answer. It does not mean that because the Education Committee has two members of the Association on it, those two members, *ipso facto* become the mouth-piece of the Association. One does not say that the expert advice he received is not qualified, but there is other advice to be had from people whose knowledge is not necessarily scholastic or academic. If we are to take his outlook into consideration, we would see that many people would not be regarded as qualified to do some jobs because they are not academically qualified. There is a two-way course in matters of this kind. Today the worker is no longer what he was 10 years ago, and he is fully qualified to be consulted before things affecting him are implemented. Today he is considered to be qualified enough to be asked to make valuable contributions to any scheme which the employer wishes to put into operation. I hope in future the Minister will not ignore any organization which represents the workers and which can be of value to his Department or his Ministry.

Mr. Benn: I have the greatest respect for the British Guiana Teachers' Association, and I have done my best, in my effort to have knowledgeable persons on every committee, to include members of the Association.

But I am just wondering if, say, the Minister of Labour, Health and Housing were to start a scheme for training nurses, if she would have to call in the Nurses' Association, or if the Minister of Communications and Works wanted to start a scheme concerning the Transport and Harbours Department, if he would have

[MR. BENN]

to call in the Transport Workers Union, and so on.

I have mentioned the sources consulted and I am satisfied that no additional burden has been put on these persons. I think that is enough.

Mr. Jackson: This is the age of established employer-employee relations where the smooth running of any industry is concerned. Let the Minister of Communications and Works do something in the Transport and Harbours Department without first consulting the Transport Workers' Union, and let it be an adverse thing, and he would see what would happen; let the same be done in connection with the Post Office, without the consultation of the Post Office Workers' Union, and he would see what would happen. He knows the strength of those Unions.

He is part of the Government, and he ought to know that you can have a harmonious operation rather than conflict in the long-run if the workers' organizations are consulted.

The Chairman: I think the matter has been well ventilated. Does the hon. Member wish to withdraw his Amendment?

Mr. Kendall: I wish to withdraw it, but before doing so I would like to ask the Minister whether the tailoring workshop has been transferred to the prison, and whether some of the work which was done at the Carnegie Trade School, other than what is done by contract, is being done by prison labour?

Mr. Rai: I think the hon. Member can only speak on the subject if he moves a Motion. He cannot do so by asking questions. With all respect I say that it is a dangerous procedure.

The Chairman: Are you ruling? It appears to me that you are ruling. Perhaps I did not hear you properly.

Mr. Rai: If you did not hear me

properly I do not see how you could say it appeared to you that I was ruling.

The Chairman: I heard you declare that the procedure was dangerous. I do not know whether I heard you correctly and that is why I am inquiring. I do not know whether you have risen to a point of order or what.

Mr. Rai: May I start over again as you have not heard me? I rose to a point of order and said that as far as I knew the hon. Member could not speak unless he proceeded by way of Motion if he wanted to amend an item on the Estimate.

The Chairman: But he moved.

Mr. Rai: That is all I had to be told — that he had moved. I did not hear him move. I heard him ask a question.

The Chairman: I have told you that he has moved. Will you accept that? This debate is on his Motion. I said that the matter had been well ventilated and I asked the hon. Member if he wished to withdraw his Motion. He replied that before doing so he wanted to ask the Minister a question. Perhaps you did not hear that.

Mr. Rai: No, I did not hear that.

Mr. Benn: I said yesterday that I did not expect to be put under cross-examination.

The Chairman: It is entirely a matter for the Minister to reply if he wishes to. If he feels that he has sufficiently answered the points raised it is well within his province not to say anything further. If the hon. Member withdraws his Motion I shall put the Question.

Mr. Kendall: I will withdraw my Motion and I will make my observations under Prisons.

EVENING CLASSES — RURAL AREAS

Mr. Campbell: I beg to move a reduction by \$1 of sub-head 45 — Evening Classes, Rural Areas, \$4,432—in order to ask the hon. Minister of Education a question or two. My first question is how far do rural areas extend? The explanatory note says that this money is to be used to train 12 teachers in Home Economics. I would like to know whether the training of those teachers has already begun, or is it to be started some time this year. I notice that a sum was allocated for 1957, therefore I take it that this training has already started. My next question is whether evening classes in Home Economics will be held in rural areas as far as the North West District. We have been told that one of the objects of this scheme is to make good wives, and I think that we can do with the making of good wives in the North West District in addition to ordinary class work in the schools. I think I heard the Minister say that it is a three-year course. If that is so it means that we are not going to have evening classes in Home Economics until three years have gone by.

Mr. Benn: I did not say that it was a three-year course. That is for the Carnegie students, not for the teachers. I do not know if the hon. Member expects me to answer his question as to how far the rural areas of British Guiana extend. Home Economics and evening classes have been planned for many areas in the Colony, and as time goes by those classes will be extended when we get more teachers to go into all the areas. If we can organize community development and other schemes, as was done on the Essequibo Coast, the teachers in the Home Economics Department of the schools would be asked to give assistance in starting these evening classes with the help of the Women's Institute.

I do not know if I have answered all the questions which the hon. Member has asked, but I would wish the hon. Member to realize that this Government is only 18 months old, and teachers are not yet available to be sent all over the Colony.

Mr. Jackson: I do not think the Minister of Education has given any indication that in his scheme the North West District is being taken care of right now. That is the plain question which the hon. Member for the North West District has asked the Minister. Has he in his programme provided for the establishment of one of these Home Economics Departments in the North West District?

The Chairman: I do not wish to interrupt, but the hon. Member who asked the question may be satisfied with the answer. He has not said anything.

Mr. Jackson: But there is nothing to prevent me from being dissatisfied with the answer.

The Chairman: No, nothing at all but you are stressing about the hon. Member for the North West District. If you are dissatisfied about it you are within your right to say so.

Mr. Jackson: I am saying that the answer does not satisfy me. Will the Minister say whether he has in mind the establishment of one of those teachers in the North West District in a year or two from now? Has he in his mind the establishment of classes to assist the people in the North West District?

Mr. Benn: The classes are designed to help the people of British Guiana, and one of the teachers undergoing training is from the North West District where she will return after training. It is not a three-year course. I am wondering what else I must answer. I cannot remember anything else. Can you ask some more questions?

The Chairman: I think I must stop this. Please address the Chair. Members must not address each other across the Table. If there are questions to be asked it must be done through the medium of the Chair. I wish that all Members will observe the rules. Some Members are greater sinners in this respect than others, but all have sinned.

Mr. Campbell: The hon. Minister of Community Development and Educa-

[MR. CAMPBELL]

tion mentioned that there is a student from the North West District in training, and I am very glad to hear that. I take it for granted that she will return to the North West District, after she has completed her course, and teach the pupils over there something about home economics. I was afraid that students from the North West District were not included in this scheme. However, in a roundabout manner we were told that there is provision for this. I thank the hon. Minister for his explanation, and I now beg to withdraw my Motion.

Question put, and agreed to

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

TRAINING OF STUDENT TEACHERS

Mr. Burnham: I beg to move that subhead 1, item (46) "Training of Student Teachers," \$3,780 — be reduced by \$1. My Motion is primarily to ascertain from the hon. Minister of Education whether this scheme is the one for which subordinate employees were removed from the Training School.

Mr. Benn: I have said very clearly that the expansion of the other classes and the change in the syllabus are taking care of the space in the classrooms. This scheme is in addition to other activities that are now taking place at the Carnegie School of Home Economics.

Mr. Burnham: I am partially satisfied with the reply. In the circumstances, I beg to withdraw my Motion.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

EXHIBITION EXPENSES

Mr. Burnham: I beg to move that subhead 1, item (47) — Exhibition Expenses — be reduced by \$1, in order to permit me to express my deep concern over the reduction of this item by \$1,000. I should not like to say very much at this stage, because I would like to find

out from the Minister exactly what type of expense is incurred and in relation to what exhibition or exhibitions. It may well be that it is a type of exhibition which is an alternative to a scholarship, or it may be similar to the exhibitions given by the League of Coloured People. I would like the Minister to explain the matter.

Mr. Benn: If a student comes from a far area it includes passages and perhaps living expenses.

Mr. Burnham: I believe I put the question to the Minister the wrong way and gave him an opportunity to answer me in that manner. I do not think it refers to Centenary exhibitions.

Mr. Benn: I do not know whether I am being examined under the Head to which the hon. Member is referring. I was referring to Exhibition Scholarships. These are Exhibitions from Fairs given by the League of Coloured People, the Catholic Church and so on. The Carnegie Trade School took part in these things before.

Mr. Burnham: I hope the hon. Minister will be patient with me. What is the reason for the reduction of this Sub-head by \$1,000?

Mr. Benn: Since the establishment of the Minor Industries, and since the work of the Social Welfare Department which looks into the question of home economics, and the Women's Institute have been doing such work, much of the work and expenses go under their heads. In this particular case I do not know what are the ruling factors, but I will look into the matter if the hon. Member will give me an opportunity to do so.

Mr. Burnham: In the circumstances I ask leave to withdraw my Motion, and I hope to get a satisfactory reply from the hon. Minister later.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

The Chairman: The Question is, That Head 12 and 12A — Education — be carried out at \$5,971,047. Those in favour please say "Aye", those against "No". I declare the "Ayes" have it.

Head passed.

EDUCATION—QUEEN'S COLLEGE

PRINCIPAL

Mr. Burnham: I beg to move the reduction of subhead 1, item (1) — "Principal", \$8,160 — by \$1., in order to mention what may be a rather touchy or delicate subject, but certainly one of principle and importance. Whatever may be the difference between myself and the Party to which I belong on the one hand and the Minister of Education and the political Party to which he belongs on the other hand, I feel that it is about time that Government Officers and employees understand what the Ministerial System means, its significance, and not only the significance of the system but the significance of the post of every Minister.

I have been particularly concerned that over the past few weeks two Government Secondary Schools, and one in particular, Queen's College, held Speech Days. This is a matter which may appear to be trivial, but so far as I am concerned it is rather important. Queen's College had extended the courtesy to the Minister of Education of inviting him to be present. I think that these Government Officers like the Principal of Queen's College must understand that the person responsible for education is the Minister of Education and not the Governor or anyone else, and that when there are important and significant functions like this to which our Ministers are invited, they must be given places of precedence and they are the people to make pronouncements on policy.

I believe that not a sufficient number of Government Officers understands the significance of the Ministerial System. It is a matter for the Minister whether he will accept that type of thing. Perhaps other persons who were Ministers before him would not have paid them the cour-

tesy of attending the function. I feel I should mention this matter publicly so that the person who is responsible for Establishment will communicate my feelings in the matter which, I am sure, are the feelings of the Unofficial Members of this Council today.

I am not disposed to withdraw the Motion at this stage, unless I get some undertaking from the person responsible for Establishment that the necessary instructions and advice will be sent to Government Officers. I will attack the Minister of Education; I will break a lance with him always, but he is the Minister and must be treated properly. This is an attempt, as I understand it, to undermine the dignity of the Ministerial System and the Minister. In England one does not hear of the Sovereign delivering lectures on Education — it is the Minister of Education who does that.

The Chief Secretary: If there are any occasions when a Minister feels that any member of the Public Service is not paying him due regard in the running of his Department, and he takes up the matter with me I will look into it. If the hon. Minister felt that he had been slighted, I have no doubt that he would have spoken to me or to the Governor about it.

Mr. Burnham: The Minister is a human being. It is bordering on immodesty for him to report those things. It is not for the Minister to do that, and I should be glad if the Minister sits without taking part in this debate. It is for us Guianese, the Unofficial Members of this Council, to take up these matters. Do you expect the Minister to come to the Chief Secretary and say that he has been slighted? I am saying that, perhaps, a number of Government Officers does not understand the significance of the Ministerial System.

The Chairman: I thought you were indicating that a Member or somebody had slighted the Minister.

Mr. Burnham: Those are the facts as I see them.

The Chairman: I am not here to enquire into the facts; I am merely here in the capacity of Speaker. I merely said that from the trend of your remarks.

Mr. Burnham: These are the facts: I attended the Queen's College Speech Day at which I saw the Minister of Community Development and Education, obviously by invitation. He was not given the precedence which he ought to have got, and he was not given an opportunity to say anything on the policy of Secondary Education or otherwise.

The Attorney-General: But you said that he does not have a policy!

Mr. Burnham: I have said so. In politics I will tell him that, but Government Officers must not overlook him.

The Chairman: Are you saying that the Minister has no policy? I did not understand that.

The Attorney-General: No, Sir. I said that the hon. Member for Georgetown Central said that the Minister had no policy. I admit that I did not rise to address the Chair. How could he give a policy, when the hon. Member says that he has no policy to give?

Mr. Burnham: That is the difficulty with lawyers. They are always —

The Chairman: I cannot allow you to say that.

Mr. Burnham: To be serious; I may stand here and I may say that the Ministry or the Minister has no policy. That is taking the matter too literally. Without for one moment lessening my criticism of the Ministry, I was filled with disgust at the incident as I saw it. The hon. the Chief Secretary said that if a Minister feels that a thing has not been properly done and representations were made, some correction would take place — but it is a delicate matter.

You expect a man over 21 to go to some one and say, "Mr. Head of Department did not do this, or that?" That is

something he must guard against. This is the sort of thing that requires a circular. I used to work in the Civil Service, and I know what a circular is for. On these occasions like the one at Queen's College, it is a Minister who must speak, and speak authoritatively on the subject.

The important thing on a Speech Day at the premier secondary school in British Guiana — a Government secondary school — is that it is the Minister who must speak. Other people such as His Excellency the Governor should go through the formality of prize-giving, but the Minister must speak on policy, and until he declines to say something, it should never cross the mind of any Head of Department not to ask the Minister to say what he has to say. Those are axioms, as I understand it in the democratic world. Policy or lack of policy is another matter. I will not be the one to stand up or sit down and see our Ministers insulted. What I would have accepted from the hon. the Chief Secretary was an undertaking that he as the person responsible for Establishment, or perhaps for advising members of the Public Service what is the correct thing to be done on these occasions, would take action.

The Chief Secretary: I am certainly not going to issue a circular, as the hon. Member suggests, but I would be willing at any time to discuss this question with my Ministerial colleagues, and if any changes are thought necessary, we will discuss them and agree on the action to be taken.

The Chairman: We will pass on.

DEPUTY PRINCIPAL

Mr. Burnham: I ask leave to withdraw my Motion, and I desire to move an amendment that sub-head 1, item (2) — "Deputy Principal" — be reduced by \$1. There are two main reasons for my doing so. The first one is that though the post of Deputy Principal is now vacant, we have not noticed any appointment, nor has it been brought to the notice of the

public that anyone has been appointed to the post of Deputy Principal of Queen's College; and the second reason for my wanting to move this reduction has to do with a certain advertisement discriminatory in its nature.

It appeared some time ago in the public Press in connection with this post, which was to become vacant. I know that the offending advertisement was subsequently withdrawn, but, as we say in creolese, "*beg pardon mek lil' boy mash big man toe*"; and lest the people who were responsible for the promulgation of this advertisement feel that by apologizing they will get away with murder, for murder this is, I should like to be able to discuss it.

In that offending notice they called for the Diploma of Pedagogy, I am not particularly interested in the Diploma of Pedagogy, but I suppose they mixed up the Diploma of Education with the Diploma of Pedagogy—I know only of a Canadian school which gives the Diploma of Pedagogy, but it was the Public School education as a qualification which was offensive. Mr. Chairman, in British Guiana you are hardly likely to find any Guianese who has been to Eton, Harrow, etc., etc.—you are hardly likely to find anyone with a Public School education.

I will say this: you are not going to find any Guianese with a Public School education as the term was understood in that advertisement and intended to be understood; and as we Guianese saw it, it was a subtle attempt to discriminate against Guianese applicants for the post, because I am sure that none of the Guianese who applied did have an English Public School education.

It is all the more wicked in view of the declarations of the Official Government that the policy is to Guianize the Service as far as possible. I take the opportunity of discussing this question here and to warn the Administration that the people of British Guiana are not that stupid as not to recognize this as discrimination.

I am instructed that the matter was taken up by the Civil Service Association and there was some disclaimer as to knowledge as to how these two qualifications crept in there. I understand that no one seemed to know how our Government preferred the Diploma of Pedagogy and a Public School education. But it does not matter who preferred them or who was responsible, the person responsible for Establishment is the Chief Secretary, and he should have seen that offending, and, I should add, offensive publication before it was sent out. This is a matter on which a certain organization to which I belong, the Queen's College Old Boys' Association feels strongly; it is a matter on which the Civil Service Association feels strongly, and it is a matter on which I desire to have an undertaking from the Chief Secretary that there will be no repetition.

The Chief Secretary: The facts as described by the hon. Member for Georgetown Central in relation to those two advertisements—there was one advertisement at first, then it was withdrawn and another inserted—need some comment. The first advertisement was badly phrased and this was brought to our attention—and I think I am right in saying that it was noticed first by an overseas officer, and not a Guianese, — who wrote in a letter about the matter to the newspapers. We corrected it as quickly as we could. There was no ulterior motive behind that advertisement.

As the hon. Member has said, I am responsible for all the things issued from Departments within my Portfolio; so I naturally take full responsibility. I am sorry, but I cannot see every single thing published in my name, and although I will try to see no similar error occurs in the future, I will not be so emphatic as to say they will not occur.

Mr. Burnham: Mr. Chairman, I accept in part the explanation given by the hon. the Acting Chief Secretary, but I think he should further abate matters by apologizing fur-

[Mr. BURNHAM]

ther than he did. I accept his apology, I accept his undertaking, I agree that it will be inhumanly possible for him to check everything but, Mr. Chairman, it is unhappy that the Chief Secretary sought to persuade us that the advertisement was badly phrased. It was a clean, clear intentionally—

The Chief Secretary: On a point of order: I said that there was no ulterior motive, and that it was badly phrased. I think that should be accepted.

Mr. Burnham: The Chief Secretary said that there was no ulterior motive, and that it was badly phrased. I am saying that if you say "Public School education" it was not bad phrasing. The English was perfect—flawless. It was clear that the person who drew up the thing knew that a Public School background would be preferred. I am not talking about the motive—that was patent. I accept the Chief Secretary's apology. I am prepared to go as far as to say that the Chief Secretary was not responsible for it, but the Chief Secretary must not insult us by telling us it was bad drafting! If he had said it was unhappily conceived, then I would have conceded.

The motion was withdrawn.

SENIOR MASTERS

Mr. Jackson: I beg to move the reduction of subhead 1, item (3)—"Senior Masters"—by \$1, and to make an observation on the notes on the opposite page, page 31, which reads:

"One post of Snr. Master has been abolished on the retirement of the present holder. Masters in charge of subjects will in future be paid Non-pensionable allowances".

Why should this be, when allowances paid to other offices are pensionable?

The Chief Secretary: One reason is that they only draw them when they are doing their work. For instance, they do not draw them when they are on leave. It is an allowance merely to recompense them for responsibility.

Mr. Jackson: In view of that reply may I ask whether that applies to the other case where the allowance is pensionable, or where some people draw this allowance while they are on leave?

The Chief Secretary: Obviously, a pensionable allowance must be drawn all the time. A pensionable allowance is part of the officer's emoluments.

Mr. Burnham: I cannot help feeling this is another case of a subtle discrimination against local personnel. In the field of education we have been fortunate in having our institutions predominantly staffed by West Indians and Guianese, but it is very unfortunate that the Government, which has a penchant for the regular and the observance of the established rule, should have made the allowances to Queen's College Masters in charge of subjects non-pensionable, while the Commissioner of Police receives a pensionable allowance. It may well be that this is a mere coincidence. It may really be accidental, but Government has always to be careful and to adopt and apply the advice of St. Paul to avoid the mere appearance of evil, and in this case to avoid the mere appearance of discrimination. Why should local men only draw a responsibility allowance when they are teaching, while the Commissioner of Police draws an allowance when he is on leave? I observe that the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education is giving the Minister some advice. I would like to know why has one of the Senior Master's post been abolished, and when will the other be abolished?

The Chief Secretary: To take the hon. Member's last point first, the posts of Senior Masters are being abolished because these non-pensionable allowances for Masters in charge of subjects are being introduced. One post was abolished because it was vacant; the other will be abolished when the present incumbent vacates it.

As regards the other point raised by the hon. Member, these allowances were

introduced last year. They were, presumably, approved by Finance Committee, and I should have thought that the time to raise the question was then, but I do not know if that was done. There is no discrimination against Guianese. As the hon. Member well knows, there are Guianese and overseas officers in the group of people who receive these allowances. There is a very considerable distinction between the reason why this type of allowance is awarded and the reason why the other type, to which the hon. Member referred, is awarded, and he knows that very well.

Mr. Jackson: It is not that we have not raised this question of personal allowances in Finance Committee. In fact we have raised it on several grounds. We have raised it with respect to the Commissioner of Police and asked why must he be paid a personal allowance, and why it should be pensionable, and we were told it was because it was difficult to get a Commissioner of Police to come here.

The Chief Secretary: To a point of order! We are not discussing the Commissioner of Police.

Mr. Jackson: I am talking about personal allowances.

The Chairman: The hon. Member for Georgetown Central referred to the other allowance, but only incidentally. You cannot make it form the major point of discussion here. When the particular Head comes up you may move a reduction and make it a point of major discussion there. What we are discussing at the present moment is the question of making the allowance non-pensionable. I think the real point is that the post will be abolished on the retirement of the present holder. You cannot make reference to allowances to other officers under Heads we have not yet reached.

Mr. Jackson: I was trying to make a comparison between the policy adopted by Government in respect of different officers, and I asked why should some officers be given pensionable allowances

and others not allowed the same conditions. The Chief Secretary said that teachers do not draw this particular allowance when they are on leave, while other officers draw it when they are on leave. I say that the principle is bad. If there is need to give a personal allowance to one type of officer the same principle should apply wherever a personal allowance is given. Government should not give one officer a pensionable allowance and deny another officer of the same condition. I feel that the allowance paid to these Masters should be pensionable.

The Chief Secretary: I tried to explain before and I will endeavour to do so again. This is a duty allowance which is attached to the actual job that an officer does. It is quite conceivable that one year he may be the Master in charge of a subject, and the next year he may not be. In the second year he would not draw the allowance. It is a duty allowance payable while the officer is performing certain duties. In this case of the other form of allowance, whether the hon. Member for Georgetown North (Mr. Jackson) agrees with pensionable allowances or not, the fact remains that they are paid on occasions and they represent a part of the officer's permanent pensionable emoluments, which he draws all the time, whether he is on duty or on leave.

Mr. Burnham: I used to be a Master at Queen's College and I am not impressed by the explanation given by the Chief Secretary, of Masters being in charge of subjects. Charge of a subject attaches to a Master who is pretty senior. It is his responsibility to be in charge of French or in charge of Latin. He is the Latin Master or the French Master of the school, and that is as a result of the combination of his ability and seniority. I cannot see that because a Master wishes to go on leave he should not be paid for that seniority.

When we raise this question of allowances under other Heads we get the hue and cry "Wait until Mr. Gorsuch's report comes out", but now Government feels like introducing this here. It is wrong.

[MR. BURNHAM]

I have served in schools in the United Kingdom and I know that if you are a Senior Master you are paid for being senior. If this Government is going to confess that the maximum of \$660 per month is not sufficiently high for a Master who is responsible for a subject it should admit it and raise the salary. I wonder if it has any connection with the structure of the Education Department.

I feel that provision should be made for more Senior Masters, or Masters in charge of subjects should be graded differently. If this year or for six months of the year "X" who is in charge of a subject is away, then "Y" who is acting for him will get half of the maximum — if that is not discrimination against local personnel it is failure on the part of the Administration to recognize the importance of education. It is so unimportant in the eyes of the Administration that a Master who is in charge of a subject at the premier Government secondary school gets just a temporary duty allowance, but the Police Force is so important that the Commissioner of Police gets a permanent pensionable allowance.

The Chief Secretary: I hope this will be the end of it. I purposely did not mention the name of Mr. Gorsuch because it seemed needless to say that he is looking into the salaries and conditions of service of Queen's College Masters as well as other members of the Service, and will be reporting on them. I think possibly we might let the matter rest now and see what he has to say in his report. I may add that the note with respect to the item is a little misleading. It seems to imply that these allowances are being introduced from this year, when in fact they were paid during most of last year.

Mr. Tello: The little difference, as I see it, between the payment of last year is that the explanatory note says that two senior posts will be abolished, so that non-pensionable allowances will be paid to the holders of temporary appointments. I believe that is the complaint of Members of this side of the Table.

Mr. Jackson: I beg to withdraw my Motion.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

MASTERS

Mr. Burnham: I beg to move the reduction of Sub-head 1, item (4) — 33 Masters, \$151,148 — by \$1. I do not wish to start another debate which was prematurely brought to an end by my hon. Friend who withdrew his Motion, but I merely want to ask a question. I am not at all interested in personalities, though I have a very strong attachment to the individuals who have benefited from a practice which I think is wrong. Why is it that Government has found it necessary from time to time to re-employ Masters at Queen's College in faculties or with respect to subjects where there is no shortage of qualified personnel?

When a young man enters the Service, whether it is the teaching, administrative or clerical branches, he looks forward to promotion. When a man qualifies himself for a certain job he looks forward to getting promotion to the post for which he is qualified, but if he is going to find a number of retired gentlemen blocking his way it is certainly not going to be conducive to the smooth running of the particular department or departments. This sort of thing creates dissatisfaction.

Of course the person in charge of the Establishment may not hear the dissatisfaction and the rumblings. It might be like the rumblings of an earthquake which some persons may not hear and may not be aware of until it is too late, and there is an actual eruption. I feel that Government should stick to the policy of not re-employing retired gentlemen unless they are **absolutely** indispensable. I am yet to be convinced that in the field of teaching, especially the Arts subjects, we have no such gentlemen qualified.

The Chief Secretary: That is not a question for the Minister; it is a question for me. As the hon. Member says we are

not dealing with personalities or with individual cases but with a question of principle. He therefore has no particular case in mind. From time to time people are re-employed after they have retired, and the general principle, as the hon. Member expressed just now, is briefly what he has said.

As far as the re-employment of the teaching staffs goes, I would agree that no teacher is likely to be absolutely indispensable. However, the continued use of a particular teacher with long service may be very advantageous and, provided it does not block anybody's promotion, I would see no harm in it. The question of whether it blocks somebody outside of the Service from getting a job is another matter. I think it is very unlikely to do so, because I imagine that an experienced, retired teacher who was re-employed would be doing a different job from what a new recruit would be called upon to do.

Mr. Burnham: It is difficult sometimes to answer the Chief Secretary, because he is always so apologetic and is always accepting this and that. There is a little thing that he did not accept in what I said, and it is that there is no shortage of teachers in the Arts subjects in British Guiana. There seems to be a breach of principle in the case of Arts Subjects.

I shall not press the point any more because it is somewhat delicate and may be misunderstood by some people. I should like, however, to see that the Government examines and scrutinizes most carefully any suggestions or applications for the retention of people past the retirement age. When it is known that a large number of people is unemployed, it is unfair to re-employ people who have reached the retirement age for they will be preventing others between the ages of 18 and 30 from securing employment.

When the officer in charge of the Department is about to retire it is assumed that the officer under him — unless he is a nitwit — will be promoted and he

would have sound experience from which the school would benefit. This question of experience can be over-emphasized and can be used as a veil for something which is considered in many quarters irregular. Having made these comments, I ask leave to withdraw the Motion.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

The Chairman: The Question is, that Head 12 B—Education—be carried out at \$270,281.

Agreed to.

BISHOPS' HIGH SCHOOL

MISTRESSES (GRADUATE)

Mr. Jackson: I beg to move the reduction of subhead 1, item (3)—19 "Mistresses (Graduate)", \$67,560—by \$1, in order to voice my disapproval of the existing system whereby there is discrimination in the remuneration of female graduates at the Bishops' High School and male graduates employed at other schools. The principle has long been accepted that there should be equal pay for equal work and qualifications, and it is very regrettable that up to now Government has not found it possible to put that principle into operation with respect to the graduates who are employed at the Bishops' High School. The principle applies in medicine; it applies in the lower brackets of the teaching profession, and I can see no justification for keeping this line of demarcation between male and female graduates.

Mr. Davis: I should like to support the hon. Member for North Georgetown in his suggestion that this matter should be adjusted. Hon. Members will no doubt remember that I raised this matter in Finance Committee, and I was given the assurance that it would be looked into and possibly recommitted. I must confess that I have heard nothing from the Financial Secretary nor the Minister, and I am grateful for an opportunity to speak on it now that it has been raised by the hon. Member.

[MR. DAVIS]

The point made by the hon. Member is a worthy and substantial one. This disparity only exists at the Bishops' High School, as far as we can find out. I had taken the trouble to find out what happens in the case of teachers in the public schools, and I found that there was no differentiation. Why should the disparity occur in this school? I should be very grateful if I could get an answer here.

The Chief Secretary: This matter was raised in Finance Committee, and the Financial Secretary had promised to look into it. Since we have Mr. Gorsuch's Report almost on our doorstep, I think it would be proper to wait and see what he has to say before making any pronouncements. I would not wish to express my own personal views before the report is received and considered.

Mr. Davis: Surely when it comes to matters of principle one should not defer consideration of them. Here is a matter of principle, and I submit that an injustice is being done to these people. I feel that the matter should be attended to with due dispatch, otherwise we may find the teachers concerned becoming dissatisfied—I have not yet heard of any dissatisfaction—and we may not get the best results from them. This is not a matter that should be handled in a willy-nilly manner. Because a Salaries Revision Commissioner has been appointed to go into the salaries generally, I do not think we should wait to hear what he has to say. This, in my view, is far from satisfactory.

The Chief Secretary: I do not know what the hon. Member means by willy-nilly. Government has accepted the principle of equal pay for men and women for doing the same type of work. As far as I know that applies generally, but I am saying that in the week or two before the Salaries Revision Commissioner's Report is received is a bad time to think about changing salaries. In the circumstances, I am not prepared to recommend that an alteration should be made in the Estimates now. I hope that my answer

will satisfy the hon. Member. As far as facts are concerned, the hon. Member has not suggested that we should increase the salaries paid to female teachers because that would not be a proper Motion at this stage.

Mr. Jackson: Mr. Chairman, I am grateful to the Chief Secretary for giving us the assurance that Government has accepted the principle, which is fundamental in dealing with the remuneration of people who have the qualifications. These people were doing the job all the time, and in spite of the fact that this principle was accepted long before today, it was not put into effect so far as these people were concerned. Why these people have gone all these years without this adjustment in their salaries when Government had accepted the principle, I do not know. Mr. Gorsuch will soon be reporting, and we are not going to guess what he will say on a matter like this. Perhaps he may accept the same principle. In the meantime I hope that an assurance will also be given that it will be gone into and an adjustment made so that people will not continue to suffer loss.

Mr. Burnham: Mr. Chairman, I am afraid I do not assume as much as the hon. Member for Georgetown North. He has assumed that the principle was accepted for some time. The Chief Secretary has made some remarks but I would like to know how long it is since Government accepted the principle, before I make my further comments.

The Chief Secretary: The principle of equal pay for men and women for equal work has been accepted, but I cannot say how long it was accepted.

Mr. Burnham: Was it accepted as long as a year ago? The Chief Secretary knows why he cannot answer. Mr. Gorsuch or no Mr. Gorsuch, these should not read as they do now; because they would all have been Masters and Mistresses of the same level, and when Mr. Gorsuch came to report he would tell us whether or not secondary teachers in the

Government schools should get more pay.

I am going to put it a little more bluntly than the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Davis. I am going to say that perhaps it was a blessed day for him, the Chief Secretary, when this one-man Commission was appointed because it has now become the curtain behind which Government hides its face whenever the question of remuneration is raised. Whenever the question of this principle is raised Government submits that the principle is accepted, while this year we observe that salaries under 12C should have been salaries under 12B. The Chief Secretary's attitude is illogical and unconvincing, and no shaking of heads will convince me to the contrary. It is just like saying, "we treat women badly; give us a chance to treat them badly a little longer".

The Chief Secretary: On a point of order! I never said that.

Mr. Burnham: He did not say so; I am using my own words: To use a local saying, "I am breaking it up into fine change". They are saying, "because we treat women badly, give us a chance to treat them badly a little longer, and then we will give them a chance to be treated as they justly deserve". I feel that Government must be reminded of its duty, because the hon. Member has nothing to add to the statement that there has been no change in remuneration or any additional remuneration.

The Chief Secretary: The hon. Member for Georgetown North raised a point on which I must make some comment: the question is not whether the two classes of graduate teachers should be on the same salary scale, or whether the graduate teachers at Bishops' High School should be paid equally with graduate teachers at Queen's College. In the responsibilities, duties and types of work of these teachers there is a difference. So the distinction in pay is related to the duties rather than the qualifications of teachers.

Mr. Davis: The plot deepens. Surely

if the classes at school were broken down into regular sizes of 20 or 30, or whatever the number may be, if a school is large, teachers would then be able to put over their instruction with greater facility. One school may be larger than the other, and that may be the difference between them. Therefore the last remark by the Chief Secretary really startles me, and I must express my great concern at this situation.

Mr. Burnham: Mr. Chairman, I am confused. We heard the laudable and chivalrous statement by the hon. the Chief Secretary that Government believes in and accepts the principle of no-discrimination between men and women, provided they do the same work, and now we see he is making a loop-hole for his Government when this abuse referred to is not remedied when Mr. Gorsuch reports.

The question of 'responsibility', that nebulous and ununderstandable term to those who have not had the advantage of spending years—not fossilizing—in the Civil Service! I used to teach in the United Kingdom. I got a certain salary and it was based on all my qualifications and teaching experience. There was no question of less responsibility or more responsibility, or getting more for doing somebody else's work. The argument is unconvincing.

I am glad he put it forward because we see in which way they are moving. Not the Majority Party — they are unfortunately not in control, and I am sure they are thinking like us. We see what they are up to: they are not going to give them more.

I am a man. I am jealous of and I speak for my sex. But I believe in fair-play, and I think Government should not merely come here and talk about 'responsibility'. From my experience, it is easier to teach 30 boys than to teach 30 girls. What is the difference when you are teaching boys chemistry or teaching girls chemistry, or Latin? Do you use Caesar in one case and Virgil in another? Do you use golden Latin in one case and

[MR. BURNHAM]

silver Latin in another? And in the next case, Tertullian? The Chief Secretary should not attempt to look at us, at least, and give such explanations.

Mr. Jackson: I withdraw the Motion.

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

The Chairman: Hon. Members, in another two minutes the sitting will be suspended. Rather than continue in Committee for two more minutes we may resume in Council with the two minutes to spare.

Agreed to.

Council resumed.

Sitting suspended accordingly.

RESUMPTION

The sitting resumed at 5 p.m.

Council resumed and resolved itself into Committee to resume consideration of the Appropriation Bill.

The Chairman: We were at Head 12C—Education—Bishops' High School. I think I should put the Head now. The question is, that Head 12C be carried out at \$123,535.

Agreed to

Head passed.

ESSEQUIBO BOYS' SCHOOL

HEADMASTER

Mr. Jackson: I beg to move a reduction by \$1 of sub-head 1 (1) — "Headmaster", \$4,560. We all accept the condition that lads who have misconducted themselves up to a certain point are sent to the Essequibo Boys' School, but one must ask the question whether the policy in relation to that school of trying to make those lads better citizens is really being given effect to, or whether it is really a good policy.

The lads who are sent to the Esse-

quibo Boys' School come from various types of homes, and it would not be reasonable to assume that all of them have no chance of turning over a new leaf. I am reliably informed that the treatment these lads receive at the school is not always what it should be. One admits that if those lads were guilty of stealing before they were sent to the school they are likely to steal while they are there, but is it right that if a lad stole a pint of milk he should be made to swallow as much milk as his stomach can take until he throws it up?

That is the type of punishment which is being inflicted on boys at that school. If a lad steals a coconut his meals for that day consist entirely of coconut, and if he steals pepper he is made to eat pepper for that day. It may sound strange or even amusing, but surely if the object is to reform these lads that type of punishment would not bring about any reform. It is cruel, unkind and inhuman of anyone in charge of a reform school to inflict such forms of punishment, and I am sure that it was never the intention of the Government that reformation of those lads should be carried out in that manner.

It does appear to me that the persons responsible for the running of that school are unsuited to the task which has been assigned to them, for one cannot make a beast of a human being and expect him to return to the normal life of a good citizen. I have brought this matter up so that an investigation may be made and steps taken to see that this inhuman form of punishment does not continue. If the Headmaster has not the quality or cannot introduce measures which would assist in the process of reformation without resort to cruel methods, some other course of action should be taken.

Mr. Jai Narine Singh: In 1958 I presented to this Council a Motion recommending to the Government the establishment of a Borstal institution which is still to become a reality in British Guiana. The Essequibo Boys' School is indeed a

very sore question with the entire community. One is alarmed to find that at least 50 per cent of the lads who leave that school do not follow the path of rectitude, largely because of the way in which that institution is run. Youngsters between the ages of 11 and 13 years who misbehave themselves are removed from society and placed in a dungeon where one lad cannot lead another in the way life should be led in a civilized community. That is exactly how the Essequibo Boys' School is being run.

Under our present state of unemployment and under-employment a boy who is tempted to steal cakes, sweets or a soft drink on two or three occasions is sent to the Essequibo Boys' School, and his life is forever doomed. When he leaves the institution he is a marked man. After spending from three to five years away from his parents he finds neither employment nor loving arms to receive him. That is the unfortunate experience of those youngsters of our country who find themselves in that situation.

A grave responsibility faces this Government to take some steps to improve conditions at this reformatory school. Until that is done the institution cannot justify its existence. It is the responsibility of the community to see that any youngster who departs from the path of rectitude is restored to decent society. This Government is now 1½ years in the saddle but has not taken any steps to reform the Essequibo Boys' School and the methods employed therein. Instead it has followed the beaten track, and it is time the Minister of Education took some heed of what is happening to the youth of the country who find themselves in that institution.

It is an institution where youngsters are lost in homosexuality and bug-ridden beds; they are practically lost to home society, and unless something is done while they are there to bring them back into society I am afraid that Government will not be doing its duty to the community and to those unfortunate lads. In the circumstances, I urge the Government

to take active and immediate steps to review the method of administration and management of the institution, and to establish a proper Borstal institution which is a dire need so far as our youngsters in this country are concerned.

Mr. Tello: I want to join in this plea for some review, but I would not say that Government has done nothing. This is not one of the problems that we should rush into. I do not know of any territory in the Caribbean that has made a considerable review in dealing with juvenile delinquency problems. I expect that a great deal of thought will go into this problem of a review.

I am encouraged to join this plea because the hon. Minister himself was a school teacher, and I am sure he will appreciate the need for a Juvenile Prison. His experience as a teacher may be very helpful in deciding on the best advice and, probably, the right channel through which it could be obtained.

If the hon. Minister says that he was busy with other revisions and could not find time to look into this matter, I will accept that. I am not certain that this Boys' Borstal is the correct thing. I think the hon. Minister must pay heed to the matters referred to by the hon. Member for Georgetown South. As one who has taken pride in teaching children, he must realize that bad treatment of boys will make them men converted into beasts. I expect that, from his environment and because of the fact that he was so closely associated with the education of children, he will now give us some assurance that this matter will be gone into and, within twelve months, he will come to us with some scheme for revision of the entire policy of the School.

Mr. Benn: I am deeply distressed to hear this matter aired in this Council. I do not want the hon. Member for Georgetown North to think that he does not have the right to speak about these allegations. If he feels that the punishment in the Institution is the wrong type

[MR. BENN]

—I agree with him that the type of punishment which he mentions is cruelty—I feel that every Member of this Council would prefer him to make such complaints to me privately so that I could have them investigated.

I hold no brief for the officers at the Essequibo Boys' School. I know that these allegations are going to make headlines in the Press. Everybody is saying that the Essequibo Boys' School is a dungeon. I know that a lot is being done at this school to help the boys.

Last year the hon. Member for Georgetown South complained about certain practices there. On that occasion he made such complaints in Finance Committee; the matters were investigated, found to be true, and rectified. I am now grieved to hear that the officers and the Headmaster of the Essequibo Boy's School are ridiculed in public. They do not have a chance to defend themselves, and the press will make headlines of what has been said here. I want to make it clear that the hon. Member has the right to speak about such allegations, but it is very unfortunate that he has chosen open Council to make such a complaint.

I think hon. Members should examine the Annual Report of the Essequibo Boys' School for the year 1957 which was laid in this Council some months ago. I wish to assure the hon. Member that the complaints of cruelty to students in the Essequibo Boys' School will be fully investigated by the Government.

I want to refer to the reference made by hon. Members to the effect that this School is a dungeon; that homosexuality is practised, and everything that is miserable goes on at the School. I visited that School with the hon. Minister on my right some time ago. Everyone knows that in these institutions such things as homosexuality go on. The Headmaster has to try and rectify these things. It is known that in many of our High Schools and Boarding Schools such things go on. I know what is going on in Boys' Board-

ing Schools and Girls' Boarding Schools—

Mr. Burnham: Only boys—not girls. Girls cannot be guilty of that offence.

Mr. Benn: I agree that things are not working at the Essequibo Boys' School as we would like. We are not satisfied with the conditions in any of our institutions. We would like Queen's College, the Bishops' High School, and even this Council Chamber to improve. We want improvements everywhere, but we must have the money to make the necessary improvements. A new film projector was installed for the benefit of students some time ago. The boys do woodwork, leather work, tailoring, animal husbandry and agriculture. Hon. Members know that a band was started at the Essequibo Boys' School. The Presbyterian Priest in that area has assisted the boys in a considerable degree. A member of the B.G. Militia goes up there periodically to instruct the boys and direct them as to how the band should be operated.

In every Boys' School you will find misbehaviour. When the Headmaster of the Essequibo Boys' School feels that something extremely serious is being done by the boys he makes a complaint to the Ministry concerned. Only today I have recommended the discharge of one of those boys. The Medical Officer visits the school regularly and, as a result of his examination it was decided to release one of the boys at the school in the interest of the good running of the Institution.

The hon. Member for Georgetown South said that nearly 50% of the boys who are discharged from the Essequibo Boys' School usually return. I shall, with Your Honour's permission, quote from the report for 1958. Page 12 of the Report states:

"In 1954 50 boys were discharged and 7 returned.

In 1955 45 boys were discharged and 12 returned.

In 1956 44 boys were discharged and 9 returned."

Therefore it is not true to say that 50%

of the boys who are discharged from the School usually return.

On the last occasion when we were discussing the Motion moved by the hon. Member for Georgetown South for the establishment of a Borstal Institution, I said that the number of recidivists, that is the number of boys who leave the Essequibo Boys' School and get into trouble afterwards, is much lower than in any of the Institutions in England.

I do not regard what has been said as an attack on the present Government or on myself, but I regard it as an attack on an Institution that is doing everything possible to help these boys. The hon. Member for Georgetown South referred to this Institution as a dungeon. The hon. Minister on my right and I visited the Essequibo School, but none of these reports were made to us. Hon. Members should read our report. If the hon. Member for Georgetown South is prepared to accept what has been written in the Report issued by the Ministry, he will see what has been said about spiritual welfare, recreation, school reform, the boys who receive \$8 and other assistance on leaving the School, the Committee and the general cleanliness of the people concerned and so on.

This School is not a dungeon. Quite recently students from the Central High School in Georgetown went there and played games with the boys. The Report says that the boys played in a friendly spirit.

With regard to the question of the establishment of a Borstal, I was at pains on the last occasion to explain that every boy cannot be sent to a Borstal. The age of the boy and other things must be taken into consideration. I would ask the hon. Members who have such complaints to make about this Institution to speak to me privately rather than give the Institution a bad name.

The hon. Member for Georgetown South spoke about the policy in relation

to the School. I know that there is need for a considerable amount of improvement in that School, and I have been considering what type of training should be given to these boys. I find that the boys from Georgetown are being trained in gardening, agriculture, etc. I think that is wrong and we are going into the matter. I have recommended that a Committee should be set up to examine the working of the School, not because I suspect the Headmaster or feel that the boys have been ill-treated, but I feel that a Committee should be appointed to investigate matters there and make recommendations for improvements.

Some time ago the hon. Minister of Natural Resources and I were talking about this School, and I have recommended that the Committee be comprised of the Deputy Director of Agriculture, Mr. Case, Deputy Director of Education, and the Deputy Principal of the Technical Institute. The Committee will visit the school, discuss matters with the staff, and make recommendations. I repeat that while I appreciate the right of hon. Members to criticize the School in view of what has been happening there, I am very much sorry that such complaints have been made public without being discussed with me.

Mr. Jai Narine Singh: The hon. Minister spoke in sincere terms. I hope he did not speak seriously when he said that this School was intended as an institution of punishment. That is the gist of his—

Mr. Benn: On a point of correction: I do not remember having said so. I said that the punishment may have been severe, but I did not say it was a school of punishment. I did not discuss that matter at all.

Mr. Jai Narine Singh: Let us have it clear. The Boys' School at Essequibo was intended to be a reform school. We do not send babies there to be punished for years. That is the outlook of the Minister. If he was speaking with sincerity, I would ask him to reform his own

[MR. JAI NARINE SINGH]

outlook on the matter of the reform school. The Minister must also realize that on this matter of visits to institutions by persons in high office that officials meet and whitewash conditions before those visits, and maybe he was misled by what he saw.

I would ask the Minister to go a little way back into our history, especially since he is recommending Guianese History and Culture Week, and he will see that in 1909 a law, Chapter 84, was passed establishing an institution for the defention of young offenders, under the Young Offenders Detention Ordinance, thereby intending to start what is called a Borstal. Fifty years have passed, and I would sincerely ask the Minister to give his sincere opinion whether what he saw was a Borstal institution.

I would ask the Minister not to be led away by reports. Reports are not realities. Many of those which come before this Council are whitewashed reports. They will be put under fire, and so all reports whitewashing conditions will have to go, and realities will have to be placed before this Council.

The Chairman: That is a grave indictment.

Mr. Jai Narine Singh: I know that the Legislative Council has accepted whitewashed conditions in reports. These reports make things look glorious, with phrases like, "the sun with its beautiful setting..." That is how Government reports are written. When we look back into history we see that our forbears were perturbed with the problem, and they devised a way of carrying out reform. We should have some institution to give effect to this.

Mr. Campbell: It is very refreshing and edifying to hear the hon. Minister express such humble regrets at the charges made on this side of the Table about punishment and vandalism. He is to be commended for his extreme sadness over the matter. I am surprised, not shocked — I am shock-proof — at what

has been practised at this School. But I think it is a spiritual matter. Spiritual remedies should be applied, and the Ministers of Religion should step up their campaigns for the eradication of evil among these boys.

Mr. Jackson: The Minister has commented on my bringing this matter before open Council. I know he admits I have the right to do so, but he regrets I did not discuss the matter with him in private. Now in my opinion, apart from all the good things he said about this School — the steps being taken to make life there happy, and so on, it appears, as I have said this afternoon, that an investigation is needed. For if there is a condition which is scandalous at the Esse-qui-bo Boys' School, then it shows that all is not well there.

How would the Minister like to know that if, with the best of intentions, one of his sons became wayward and he was sent there, he would not be given the best training and opportunity to become a good citizen? I am not saying all this because I want newspaper headlines. I am saying it because conditions should be brought to the notice of the public, and my public opportunity is in this Council. The Minister said an investigation should be made, and I do hope it will be made as it ought to be. If it is to be made by the Head of the School, then I am certain there will be no clarification of this issue, and no justice will be done. I brought this up because an end must be put to this type of behaviour, and I want to know that when boys are there they must be given human treatment. No type of animal punishment should be adopted. They are human beings capable of being reformed, and you cannot reform them under these conditions.

Mr. Benn: I said there will be an investigation into the hon. Member's complaint, and I conceded that the hon. Member has a right to his complaint, only I was sorry that he did do it here. I do not want it to be felt that I want to hide matters if it can be helped, but this School suffers most. Boys leaving it are being refused employment.

There is a great struggle among them to get on. I have left my Ministry to go and beg people to give these boys employment. That is all I am saying.

I agree that the School needs improvement. I agree that everything needs improvement. Our very homes, I am certain, need improvement. The hon. Member last year complained that boys were being sent to church barefooted. I told him I would investigate it. He was informed that it was true and that it would be stopped. That had happened to boys who had sores on their feet.

The hon. Member spoke of the Ordinance which was passed 50 years ago. The Ordinance establishing the Essequibo Boys' School was passed on 22nd May, 1907. I still maintain that a Borstal is not a boys' reform school, and I did not say that boys are sent to the Essequibo Boys' School to be punished, even though I admit that boys there must be given a certain type of punishment. I do not agree that the type of punishment mentioned by the hon. Member is proper punishment, because we correct our children at home in a certain manner. About nine months ago when one of the boys in the institution behaved very badly I was asked whether he should be given a certain number of strokes with a cane and I suggested another form of punishment. I met the Assistant Director of Medical Services, Dr. Nicholson, who promised to go to the Essequibo School.

I am not white-washing anything, but whenever I visit the Essequibo Coast I drop in at the Essequibo Boys' School. I do not say that I am going there. I see the boys playing when I am passing and I casually drop in and walk around, or have a talk with the Headmaster. I am not saying that things are not white-washed, but I do not think the Headmaster makes all those preparations every time I go to the school. I wish to appeal to hon. Members and to the public in general to give the lads who come out of the Essequibo Boys' School a chance to live, a chance to become decent citizens, and not to pull down the institution in public.

I shall make an investigation into the complaints made by the hon. Member and I hope he will be satisfied.

Mr. Tello: I hope the hon. Minister will excuse my ignorance. I would like to know whether there is a Board of Governors attached to the institution. I quite appreciate his intention to make an inquiry but I wonder whether he does not see the need for the appointment of a Board of Governors to assist in the administration of the school. I think there is too much burden on him in view of his ministerial responsibilities. A Board of Governors would be useful in helping to restore these lads to the community.

Mr. Benn: There is a Visiting Committee of which the Social Welfare Officer is Chairman.

Mr. Tello: I do not think that is exactly what is required.

Mr. Jai Narine Singh: I thought the Minister would have thrown some light on the question of a Borstal institution.

The Chairman: Is the Borstal institution you speak about the same thing we are dealing with under this Head? Is the Essequibo Boys' School called a Borstal institution?

Mr. Jai Narine Singh: No, Sir, I shall read the section of the Ordinance,

The Chairman: It is Chapter 84, the Young Offenders Detention Ordinance, Sections 6 and 7.

Mr. Jai Narine Singh: Section 7 reads :

"7. Where a boy sentenced to detention in the Essequibo Boys' School is convicted under any Ordinance before a magistrate of the offence of committing or inciting to, a breach of the rules of the school, or of escaping from the school, and the magistrate might under that Ordinance sentence the offender to imprisonment, the magistrate may, in lieu of sentencing him to imprisonment, sentence him to detention in the institution for a term not less than one year

[MR. JAI NARINE SINGH]

nor more than three years, and in that case the sentence shall supersede the sentence of detention in the Essequibo Boys' School."

I have brought this Section to the attention of the Minister and the Government in order that they might see that even if the community is satisfied with the way in which the Essequibo Boys' School is being run, there is still a missing link in the fulfilment of what is required of a reform institution. I am therefore asking the Minister to take into consideration the importance of an institution which would assist youngsters coming out of that school to lead proper lives. There is a serious gap, and practically every week we read pronouncements by Judges and Magistrates as to the necessity for some institution to take care of young offenders above the age of 16 years instead of sending them to prison. The hon. Minister knows that there is no such institution, and that young offenders above the age of 16 years have to be sent to prison.

The Chairman: Can youngsters above the age of 16 years be sent to the Essequibo Boys' School?

Mr. Jai Narine Singh: No, Sir.

The Chairman: Are your remarks then appropriate under this Head?

Mr. Jai Narine Singh: It is my opinion that they are appropriate, because one is tied up with the other. The Essequibo Boys' School is turning out youngsters a certain number of whom are recurring decimals. If the Essequibo Boys' School cannot take care of those youngsters then there should be some other institution to which they may be sent. I think the hon. the Attorney-General will bear me out on that point. If the law does not permit young offenders to be sent back to the Essequibo Boys' School after a certain age there should be some other institution to receive them.

Mr. Benn: Active steps are being taken to find a site for the establishment of a Borstal institution. Some months ago the Director of Drainage and Irriga-

tion, the Director of Agriculture and myself discussed the question of a site in the Boerasirie area, but it was deemed unsuitable by the Director of Agriculture, and a new site is being looked into. I would like hon. Members to know that the whole problem of a Borstal and a prison is a very serious one. Perhaps when we come to the estimates for the Prisons we will hear more about it, but we know that we need a new site for the Prison.

The Chairman: Please do not invite a discussion on Prisons, because that Head has to come up.

The Attorney-General: I would just like to say what a pleasure it gives me, as one who is interested in the question of dealing with young offenders, to know that the Minister takes such an interest in the matter. It is very reassuring for me because I feel that it is extremely important that there should be a Borstal or some institution of that kind in British Guiana without any delay. The reason is that the greatest deterrent to committing an offence is the fear of going to prison. That is held up before all of us, and it is a dreadful fear. It is really a fear of the unknown. If a youth between the ages of 16 and 21, irresistibly adventurous, commits some offence, and if the only place to which he can be sent is a prison, it is not likely that he would be sent to prison for a long time, and prison in small doses is not such a bad place.

One of the primary objects of a Borstal is that he can be sent to an institution which is not a prison but a place where he will be disciplined, and worked hard in the hope that he will go straight, but he will always keep before him the fact that he has not been to prison but has been to a school where he has been disciplined and possibly taught some useful trade. I feel sure that if we can keep these youngsters out of prison by sending them to another institution, the very important deterrent of a prison will still be before them and will enable them to avoid committing further crimes. I am

therefore very glad to hear the Minister say that he is actively pursuing the matter and endeavouring to select a site for a Borstal very soon.

Mr. Gajraj: I would like to say how very pleased we are on this side of the Table to hear the statement from the hon. Minister that he is pursuing this matter of a Borstal Institution and that it has reached the stage where Government is looking for a suitable site. A year ago we seemed to have been encountering opposition from the Government regarding the erection of a Borstal Institution. I remember having heard the hon. Minister of Community Development and Education say that the results of Borstal Institutions in the United Kingdom were certainly not as good as that of the School at Onderneeming. We will not dispute anything now because we are all on the same side. We want a Borstal Institution to take care of youngsters between the ages of 16 and 25 who have been referred to in the Ordinance by the hon. Member for Georgetown South.

I am a member of the Probation Committee over which the hon. the Chief Justice presides. I can assure hon. Members of this Council that the question of juvenile delinquency certainly occupies a great deal of our time, and we are of the opinion that the provision of a Borstal Institution is absolutely necessary. Now that we are moving in that direction I want to congratulate the hon. Minister of Community Development and Education for what he has told us today.

Mr. Jackson: I beg to withdraw my motion.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

The Chairman: The Question is, that Head 13 — Essequibo Boys' School — be carried out at \$98,943.

Agreed to.

Head passed.

FINANCE — FINANCE SECRETARIAT

The Chairman: The question is, that Head 14 — Finance — Finance Secretariat — be carried out at \$44,959.

Agreed to.

Head passed.

FINANCE — STATISTICAL BUREAU

The Chairman: The question is, that Head 14A — Finance — Statistical Bureau — be carried out at \$23,391.

Agreed to.

Head passed.

FINANCE—ACCOUNTANT GENERAL

The Chairman: The Question is, that Head 15—Finance—Accountant General —be carried out at \$128,029.

Agreed to.

Head passed.

FINANCE—CENTRAL REGISTRY

The Chairman: The Question is—

Mr. Jai Narine Singh: I beg to move the reduction of Sub-Head 1, item (1)— Clerical Establishment, \$22,967—by \$1. I understand that the Central Registry is immediately below this Council Chamber.

The Financial Secretary: I think the hon. Member refers to the Accountant General's Department, but he should not use this Head for that purpose.

The Chairman: You will have to deal with the matter under another Head. The question is, that Head 15A — Finance—Central Registry —be carried out at \$24,683.

Agreed to.

Head passed.

FINANCE—LICENCE REVENUE

The Chairman: The question is, that

[THE CHAIRMAN]

Head 16—Finance—Licence Revenue—
be carried out at \$66,374.

Agreed to.

Head passed.

FINANCE—INLAND REVENUE

COMMISSIONERS OF INLAND REVENUE

Mr. Burnham: I beg to move the reduction of sub-head 1, item (1)—3 Commissioners of Inland Revenue— by \$1. As hon. Members are, perhaps, aware quite recently the collection of estate duties has been transferred to this Department which was formerly known as the Income Tax Department, but is now known as the Inland Revenue Department. Last year this point was discussed in Finance Committee, and the Financial Secretary undertook to go into the matter and see what could be done. Since nothing has been done, I consider it my duty to bring it to the Government's attention once more.

The responsibility of the officers whose duty it is to look after the collection of estate duties is great. Furthermore, apart from the responsibility, the ability, special and technical training and knowledge necessary are also great. Those who have had any dealings with estate matters will know how complicated they can be and will know that any officer who is responsible for that section of the Department has to be coming in contact, if not conflict, with many lawyers from time to time. I believe it is common knowledge that the general tendency on the part of the person making estate declarations or declarations with respect to estate duties is to under value the estates. I think it is accepted, quite obviously, that an ordinary member of the clerical service will hardly be competent to take on the responsibilities of looking after the collection of estate duties.

It seems to me, therefore, that it is a failure on the part of the Government to recognise the importance and responsibilities attached to the post. The Officer concerned appears in the Estimates merely as an Inspector of Taxes rather than an Assistant Commissioner of Inland

Revenue. As I see it there are two divisions so to speak in this Inland Revenue Department; that division which is primarily concerned with the collection of income tax, and the other division which is primarily concerned with the collection of estate duties. Those of us who have practised, appreciate that the latter division is usually the more contentious division. Save in very rare cases there are not many petitions against income tax levy — those petitions are concerned with big companies but it is a different thing altogether with estate duties.

I think it is miserly on the part of the Government to adopt what I may describe as a penny wise and pound foolish policy. If the status of the person responsible for that division is going to be so low, then he can easily be attracted to another Department where he can move on in the Public Service. I feel that Government should recognize this fact and provide for the appointment of a second Assistant Commissioner of Inland Revenue who would be responsible for the collection of estate duties. The officer who is now responsible for the collection of estate duties may or may not be efficient but it is always necessary to have a man with specialized training, experience and background. This is purely a technical subject, and I must say that I am particularly disappointed that, after a year and a promise from Government that this matter would be looked into, we come back here with a duplicate of last year's Estimates with respect to this particular Department. I would like to hear what promise Government will make this year and whether it is intended to keep any promise that is made.

The Financial Secretary (acting): I should like, first of all, to explain to the hon. Member that this is the first I have heard of his proposal. The hon. Member is aware that on the basis on which the Inland Revenue Department is organised, one section is now devoted to the collection of estate duties and it is under the supervision of an Inspector of Inland Revenue who is the exact parallel to the other section of the Inland Revenue

Department which deals with the collection of income tax from traders and employees.

I am sorry that the promise given last year was not kept but, to my knowledge, the matter has not been fully investigated. I can assure the hon. Member that I will bring it to the notice of the Financial Secretary (Mr. Essex), and I am sure he will investigate it.

Mr. Hubbard: I have been very disturbed over the extent to which the promotion of gambling is becoming big business in this country, and I would like to ask the Financial Secretary if he is satisfied that the income from the promotion of gambling is fairly returned to the Inland Revenue Department, bearing in mind the very considerable sums which find their way overseas? Our funds are sent abroad for gambling purposes.

This is a very important question, and I confess that I have been very deeply disturbed at the unscrupulous way in which it has been dishonestly suggested over the radio and in the newspapers that money spent on gambling is an investment and a way of easy living.

I cannot but deprecate the fact that persons claiming good status in this community would go on the public radio and persuade housewives to take money out of their savings or house-keeping funds and send it abroad to gamble.

I am against the principle of promoting gambling by advertisement. In a young country such as ours where the need is for hard work, initiative and enterprise, it does no good when responsible people make it their business to sap the vitality of our community by gambling and using every public means of propaganda to suggest that gambling is a means of easy living.

I hope that the Government and the Financial Secretary and his aides in the Inland Revenue Department will make every effort to ensure that an end is put to this drift of our funds overseas. I do hope also that decent people will raise their

voices in protest against this very rotten tendency to use public means of advertisement to persuade people to gamble.

I myself would not wish to restrict any person's right to gamble, but let him find the gamble and not let the gamble find him. It is very dreadful that at this stage of our progress, when we need to inculcate in people a desire for work as a means of success that we should be bombarded with sales propaganda inviting them to dissipate their small earnings in the hope of some reward which can only come to one in several millions.

Mr. Gajraj: I have never found myself in this debate in such full agreement with anyone as I now have with the hon. Member who has just spoken. I am in full agreement with his condemnation of the great degree of publicity given to encourage gambling on a wide scale such as we see now. We have all heard of the vast sums of money going out of this country in bets, and in pools, and I have heard many citizens ask if in the taxation proposals of Government some effort had not been made to tax betting as well, because if people feel satisfied to take a portion of their hard-earned savings to place it in bets, then, surely the Government has a right to get some of this money rather than its going out of British Guiana without any benefit at all to this country.

Mr. Jai Narine Singh: On this matter of gambling, I think the entire community is disturbed. It seems to have become a national industry. Many a person in good standing in this community, and I know of two cases, have become insolvent as a result of gambling. With this heavy amount of money leaving British Guiana in gambling, one would have thought that the Inland Revenue Department would have suggested to Government some steps it could take in getting revenue.

At one time I thought that Government would have had a public lottery as part of its revenue-raising machinery—as a matter of fact I tabled a motion on this

[MR. JAI NARINE SINGH]

subject early in 1958, but it never came up for discussion because the Government never thought it fit that it should. But coming back to this matter of gambling, and to the head, Deputy Commissioner of Inland Revenue, I support the view of the hon. Member for Georgetown Central that the officer, whoever he may be, in charge of this Department, or this Section should have some better designation and remuneration, and it is a matter that Government should not delay for another year. If this matter does come back before us again, I hope the Government and the Financial Secretary would be telling us that it is receiving attention.

The Financial Secretary: On the point raised by the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Hubbard, I think I can assure hon. Members that the outflow of money from this country by way of gambling is of very deep interest and concern to the Financial Secretary, not merely from the viewpoint of the tax that might be collected from such a source, but also from the general viewpoint of the practicability of putting some form of control on it.

Members will appreciate that it is not a simple thing to find a way of taxing revenue of that kind because it is difficult to find an effective way of controlling the source; some of it goes through local agents but a great deal of it goes direct. However, I can assure Members that it is not something we have been ignoring but we have been considering it and making inquiries abroad with a view to devising some practical system of ensuring that a greater part of the money spent in that way accrues to the common good.

Mr. Burnham: I ask leave at this stage to withdraw the Motion.

The Chairman: If there is nothing more to be said under this Head, then the question is, that Head 17 —“Finance —Inland Revenue”—be carried out at \$138,206.

Agreed to.

Head passed.

The Chairman: The question is, that Head 18—“Fire Protection”—be carried out at \$458,069.

Agreed to.

Head passed.

FOREST

CONSERVATOR OF FORESTS

Mr. Fredericks: Under Head 19 —“Forests”, I move the reduction of sub-head 1, item (1) —“Conservator of Forests”—by \$1. A Government Department is, like a business, sometimes blessed with an efficient head. Sometimes it is unfortunately saddled with an inefficient one. Also like a business a Government Department is sometimes so limited in scope that it is burdened with heavy administrative costs. It then ceases to be an asset and to contribute to the best interests of the country, but rather to be a millstone around its neck.

I do not propose to indicate at this time into what category the Forest Department falls, as I intend at a later stage to move in this Council a motion that the Forest Department be investigated, at which time Members would be afforded the opportunity of a full-dress debate on this Department.

During the last Budget debate, in 1958, I suggested that the Forest Department be amalgamated with the Lands and Mines Department in the interest of economy and efficiency. As far as I know, nothing has been done, and we have not been favoured with any information in this respect from Government. It may well be that good savings could have come to Government if such an amalgamation took place. It is my view that savings of at least \$250,000 may be possible if such an amalgamation is accepted by Government. That is the figure which, as Members know, Government hopes to get from the proposed increase in the excise duty on Banks beer. I earnestly commend to Government that the question of the amalgamation of these two Departments be pursued, and that at

some later stage it should tell this Council what has been done in that direction.

Mr. Jai Narine Singh: I think we should have some indication from the Minister of the duration of the new utilization plant for forest products that has been set up in Kingston. I reserve my remarks for another subject.

Mr. Burnham: I do not propose to be more caustic than the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Fredericks, who is certainly better qualified to discuss this Department, but it is my impression that there are certain methods and approaches in this Department which are antiquated, and that the approach with respect to our forests is not as enthusiastic or as scientific as it should be. There seems to be a good deal of red tape and too much concentration on administration and the working out of the form and the details to be put on applications. There is more concentration on that than on pursuing a modern and progressive forest policy. It is my information, which I have no reason to doubt, that new ideas are anathema, and frowned upon by those in high places, but this is a very important Department so far as the economy of British Guiana is concerned.

We have our minerals, our sugar, rice and timber, but what is the policy of the Department with respect to mora? I mention mora for this reason. I read in the newspapers that Dutch businessmen want so many thousand railway sleepers. Letters come to various individuals making inquiries as to how many railway sleepers can be supplied, but when you make inquiries either of local millers or of the Forest Department the reply usually is that they are unable to supply such large orders. I am not saying that it is the fault of the Department; it is a fault which seems to have existed for a long time. If the Department knows that mora is a very good wood for railway sleepers it knows, or ought to know, the growing habits of mora. It ought to know that it has to do something about protecting our mora forests, the rehabilitation of the areas where mora grows, but as far as my information goes the

Department does little or nothing about things like that. It is not interested, and the result is that an exceptionally good market (I think the Minister knows this) for mora in all parts of the world is lost to us, because of the backwardness of the Department or the absence of a policy in the Department.

In progressive parts of the world forest surveys are very thorough, and include trees of small girth, but so far as I understand that is not done in British Guiana. I see no reason to go into any great detail with respect to this Department when the Mover of the Motion, who knows more about the subject, did not go into great detail, but the strictures I have made and my observations are directed to encouraging Government in general and the Minister of Natural Resources in particular, to do something about what I understand is the old-fashioned approach and administration in this Department.

The Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Beharry): British Guiana has often been described as a country with great resources and wonderful potentialities. In describing this country as one having great national resources, I would like to draw the attention of hon. Members to the fact that the forest of British Guiana is one of the most important resources we possess. In the circumstances, we should endeavour to exploit these resources for the national good of the country.

I do not agree with the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Fredericks, that the resources of the forest of this country are not as important as other resources for which special departments have been established in order to make sure that they are carried out for the benefit of the country. I would like hon. Members to review this most important matter and ask themselves whether they do not think that we should maintain a Forestry Department in the interest of the Community.

Mr. Fredericks: On a point of correction. I never suggested that we should not maintain a Forestry section, but I am saying that the Forestry Department

[Mr. Fredericks]

and the Lands and Mines Department should be amalgamated.

Mr. Beharry: I am emphasizing the importance of our resources, and I feel that it is necessary to maintain this Department in order to make sure that our resources are properly utilized and exploited. I know that there will be some criticism, because wherever there is activity on the part of man there is always room for improvement. Perhaps there is room for criticism with respect to the Forestry Department. Like other Departments, the Forestry Department could be improved. This Department is the most recent of all the Departments in Government. This Department was at one time merged with the Lands and Mines Department, but the Government of the day thought that they should be separated in the interest of the country. What the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Fredericks, is advocating now is the practice of the past. The previous Government felt that the forest resources of this country were so important that a separate department should deal with the forest resources.

This Department is doing valuable work. Perhaps more could be done, but I am quite satisfied that a lot has been done during its period of existence. The type of lumber that we harvest in the forest has become world famous today. We have been shipping timber not only to the U.S.A. and the U.K. but to other European markets. As the hon. Member for Georgetown Central has said, one reads in the newspapers quite regularly of merchants visiting British Guiana because they are interested in the type of lumber we are producing. I cannot agree with the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Fredericks, that the Forestry Department and the Lands and Mines Department should be merged. I feel that the Forestry Department should be kept separate and it should concentrate on exploiting the various varieties or species of wood.

With respect to the remarks made by the hon. Member for Georgetown

Central, it is true—inquiries have been made from time to time—that our famous “mora” is good for making sleepers, but I do not think our loggers are able to compete with Brazil which is supplying sleepers at a cheaper price than British Guiana. I understand that Brazil has been able to sell sleepers cheaper than British Guiana because most of the payments are being made in hard currency. Government does not log sleepers, but our loggers say that it is unremunerative and uneconomical to sell sleepers at the price importers are offering.

On one occasion we were offered a large order to supply nearly \$½ million worth of mora sleepers. It was an order that was supposed to be going to East Pakistan, I understand. In order to assist in making our country famous for its timber, I called a conference with our loggers who said that it would be unprofitable to fulfil the order. I want to assure the hon. Member for Georgetown Central that we are doing everything possible within our limitations to make improvements. The Department is a very young one in relation to the vastness of our forest, and if we were to relate the size of our staff to the vastness of our forest resources we would readily agree that sufficient money has not been spent in exploiting the resources of our forest. Nevertheless, I repeat that we are doing everything possible, within our economic limitation, to further the exploitation of the forest in British Guiana.

Mr. Fredericks: Mr. Chairman, I said earlier on, and I say now that I do not intend to review the inaccurate statements made by the Minister of Natural Resources. I said that the Ministers are not fully conversant with their different Departments.

Mr. Burnham: Oh, oh!

Mr. Fredericks: The Minister has said that greenheart is world famous, and I would add that it is so in spite of the Forest Department. The amount of money this Department seeks to spend in 1959 is approximately \$463,000. Royalty

from timber accruing to Government should be approximately \$360,000. These figures speak for themselves.

Mr. Beharry: Mr. Chairman, this is very important. It has become the common practice and part and parcel of debate in this Legislature for Members on the other side to make themselves important with their knowledge by accusing this side of lack of knowledge—

Mr. Burnham: Not without justification sometimes.

Mr. Beharry: Criticism should be made, but derogatory criticism does not do a Department any good. But it is fashionable for Members to speak of their individual knowledge. The repository of knowledge belongs, perhaps, only to a few Members of this Council. The hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Fredericks, observed that greenheart was world famous even before we had a Forest Department. Let him tell us what other woods our loggers have made famous in this country of so many woods. The exploitation of woods has not been properly done. Not that I blame the loggers, but can they claim that they have been doing a national good? If they were exploiting the 50-odd species of woods, which include hardwoods, in our forests, then I would suggest that there is justification for certain criticisms. I blame past Governments for the fact that there has not been proper exploitation, nevertheless, there are species of wood which have been made famous through the Forest Department.

The Chairman: I understood the hon. Nominated Member, Mr. Fredericks,

to say that he would take the opportunity to initiate a full-dress debate on this subject. Do you withdraw—

Mr. Gajraj: No, Sir; I do not think I am ready to do so.

The Chairman: We will have to go back to that, because I suppose you may take some time.

Mr. Gajraj: Yes, Sir.

The Chairman: We will have to leave it at that. The Chief Secretary will probably announce before we leave the programme that Government intends to pursue next week; in the case of sittings, you may have already agreed on that. Anyway, when we go back into Council the Chief Secretary will no doubt repeat what he said.

Council resumed.

ADJOURNMENT AND PENDING BUSINESS

The Chief Secretary: Before I move the motion for the adjournment, may I repeat for the benefit of Members who were not here that next week it is proposed to sit on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. and on Thursday from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. It is proposed at those sittings not to go on with the Appropriation Bill, but to deal with the Valuation of Property Bill and the Land Registry Bill, which I think are Nos. 5 and 9 on the Order Paper.

I move that Council do now adjourn until Tuesday next at two o'clock.

Council adjourned accordingly.