

**THE
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES**

OFFICIAL REPORT

(VOLUME 6)

**PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE NATIONAL
ASSEMBLY OF THE SECOND PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA UNDER THE
CONSTITUTION OF GUYANA**

20th Sitting

2.00 p.m.

Thursday, 28th December, 1972

MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

Speaker

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

Members of the Government

People's National Congress

Elected Ministers

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

(Absent)

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

(Absent)

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

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

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

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

The Hon. B. Ramsaroop,
Minister without Portfolio and Leader of the House

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

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

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

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

The Hon. A. Salim,
Minister of Local Government

Appointed Ministers

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

The Hon. H. Green,
Minister of Public Affairs **(Absent)**

The Hon. H.O. Jack,
Minister of Mines and Forests **(Absent)**

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

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

Dr. The Hon. K.F.S. King,
Minister of Housing and Reconstruction

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

Parliamentary Secretaries

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

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

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

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

Other Members

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

Members of the Opposition

People's Progressive party

Dr. C.B. Jagan,
Leader of the Opposition

Mr. Ram Karran
Mr. R. Chandisingh
Dr. F.H.W. Ramsahoye, S.C.

Mr. D.C. Jagan, J.P., Deputy Speaker (Absent)
Mr. E.H.G. Wilson
Mr. A.M. Hamid, J.P. Opposition Whip
Mr. G.H. Lall, J.P.
Mr. M.Y. Ally
Mr. Reepu Daman Persaud, J.P.
Mr. E.M. Stoby, J.P.
Mr. R. Ally
Mr. Balchand Persaud
Mr. Bholu Persaud
Mr. I.R. Remington, J.P.
Mr. L.A. Durant
Mr. V. Teekah

United Force

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

Independent

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

OFFICERS

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

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

The National Assembly met at 2 p.m.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair.)

Prayers

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER**DEATH OF THE FATHER OF MISS M.C. ALLICOCK,
OFFICIAL REPORTER**

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, it is with regret that I have to inform you that the father of one of our reporters, namely Miss Allcock died suddenly last evening and I am sure you will wish me to record on behalf of this honourable House our condolences.

Equally, because of her absence, there will be a very great strain on the two reporters who will be carrying on today's business and I will ask your especial consideration that because of this strenuous burden which the two reporters will have to carry that they will receive your co-operation and your assistance in making the work as easy as possible under the trying conditions. I am sure and confident that members will give this support without fail.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS

The following Paper was laid:

Amendatory Agreement No. 1 between the Government of Guyana and the United States of America for A.I.D. Loan No. 504-L-007 Water Supply Improvement. (Dated - October 3, 1972). [**The Minister of Finance and Trade**]

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

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National Assembly

2.10 - 2.20 p.m.

Assembly resolved itself into Committee of Supply to resume consideration of the Estimates of Expenditure for the financial year 1973, totaling \$277,712,944.

Assembly in Committee of Supply.

HEAD 59 - MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND RECONSTRUCTION

Question proposed that the sum of \$1,464,045 for Head 59, Ministry of Housing and Reconstruction, stand part of the Estimates.

Mr. Chandisingh: Subheads 9, and 13.

Mr. Sutton: Page 175, subhead 1 Item (26). Page 126, subheads 8, 11, 12, and 15.

The Chairman: Hon. Member Mr. Chandisingh.

Mr. Chandisingh: When the Hon. Minister of Housing and Reconstruction spoke in the Budget Debate, he referred to the 1830 rental houses which were available to those persons who could not afford to even bear the cost of owning their houses. I would like in this connection to say that the Government should not only think in terms of building houses, but of maintain properly the houses which it found when it came into office. Specifically, these rental houses the houses in the scheme, are getting into a very terrible state of disrepair, the buildings are becoming very dilapidated. In many cases the wooden ventilation walls, if that is the correct way of describing them, are rotting and have been doing so for a long time. Many of the tenants have been using galvanize to stop the holes and to keep out the rain. Only a few of these have been repaired with new concrete walls but many others are left and as I said, many of the houses are deteriorating very rapidly. We urge the Government to take action very quickly in order to repair those houses so that they do not fall into greater disrepair to the inconvenience of the persons who inhabit them.

In subhead 9, Materials for Maintenance of Government Housing Estates, we note that the concrete drains have not been completed. This is another area in the housing schemes where work is needed. We note that garbage disposal is not being effectively carried out. This involves sanitation, of course, and we have heard that in several of the areas, a whole month has passed by and nothing has been done with respect to the garbage bins which have been thrown out. Is it that the people are expected to take care of their own garbage disposal? Even if the

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Government expects the people to do self help in this respect, why is it that money is being collected specifically for the purpose of garbage disposal.

As a matter of fact in the case of hire purchase houses, when rent or installments on houses are paid, a separate amount, something like \$4, is set aside specifically for such maintenance work. Thus we call upon the Government to look into this question of garbage disposal. The members of the Government should observe that tall grass and bushes are taking over in many areas. Although this is so, nothing seems to be done for long periods of time despite the fact that money is being collected by Government from the persons concerned.

On Subhead 13, Transport and Mortgages, we note that last year – I think it was during the debate on the Budget or the Estimates – the then Minister of Housing told us that it was Government's policy to sell these houses wherever tenants who are renting them would like to become house owners. I would like to ask whether Government's policy remains the same in this respect or whether there has been some re-thinking.

For one thing I note that some people were making enquires about such purchases. They have heard nothing after several attempts were made to take the Government up on this option of purchasing. If this policy still remains in force I wonder what will become of the Government's policy, so to speak. The Minister previously said that there is not so much needs apparently to

build houses for rental because we already have something like 1,830 houses for rental and, with people moving out of those houses to go into self-help houses and hire purchase houses, space will be created for new people to get rental houses.

If the policy of the Government remains to see these houses, what becomes of Government rental houses and the policy with respect to those people who cannot afford to purchase their own houses and who will prefer and be more able to pay very small rental, from \$7 to \$14 and that sort of thing? This seems to be a contradiction and I would like the Hon. Minister to clear up these points.

Mr. Sutton: Subhead 1. Item (26), Investigation Officer. We notice that two Investigation Officers are being budgeted for. The Government has announced that its policy is to make a substantial increase in the housing thrust during 1973. We wonder whether it will be possible for two Investigation Officers to do the job properly in view of the fact that the Government has always said that every effort will be made in order to see that avoidable debts and avoidable situations are not incurred. It is clear that on the allocation of houses, rental or otherwise, proper investigation is necessary so that you can have some assurance that the persons who are taking over your houses do in fact meet the conditions which apply.

Is the Minister satisfied that in this most important field of investigation the two Investigation Officers will be adequate?

Turning to page 176, subheads 7, 8, 11, 12 and 15. With the exception of 7 they all are expenses or allocations in relation to housing estates. I wish to speak specifically on subhead 7, Rates and Taxes, Local Authorities. We note that the actual amount expended in 1970 was \$10,157. The actual amount in 1971 was \$22,390. The Approved Estimate in 1972 was \$40,000. The Revised Estimates implied that only \$25,000 was expected to be spent but again for 1973 the estimate is \$40,000.

Would the Minister clarify for us what is there real position as far as this allocation is concerned? Is this sum of \$40,000 an allowance paid by Government to the local authorities for Government buildings that Government occupies? Exactly what are we to understand by "Rates and Taxes, Local Authorities"? How far does the Government's liability extend? Is it for buildings that they use, or make use of, or for buildings that are handed over for use by the Local Authorities? What is it? For some time now the question has been raised by Local Authorities as to the taxable position of Government owned building and properties.

Does this mean that Government is slowly moving into the situation where all Government owned property within the Local Authorities will pay taxes like every other concern?

I turn to subheads 8, 11, 12, and 15, which for the purpose of convenience will be taken together. In connection with the Government Housing Estates, are we to understand that the sums here budgeted for are to cover expenses before the houses which they made available on these estates are ready for occupation? Is it right to conclude that when the houses are ready for occupation and the rent or the cost of these houses is computed that all these expenses are taken into account and whether rent and/or hire purchase amount is paid it is expected in the normal real estate manner that these expenses will be recoverable by Government. Is it a subsidy or is any portion of it to be regarded as a subsidy in order to reduce the cost to the persons concerned?

Finally, the point taken by the previous speaker as to the Government's policy in respect of rent being paid by persons on Government estates is a very important point. We hope the Minister will answer it very clearly because, as one understands the Government's thrust into housing, the intention is that in time every single citizen, irrespective of the condition or earning bracket in which he was born or finds himself will find it possible to own his own house, particularly people who normally find it difficult to own their own property. Government should protect them to the extent that after paying rent for 20 or 30 years they own the houses in which they live.

Will the Minister state categorically that the system of using rental houses, if it still exists, is a passing evil and that, in all the housing estates which Government owns, rental as such will in time disappear and the people who occupy these houses will know that if they continue to occupy them eventually there will be owners of the houses which they occupy no matter how long a period it may take. If the housing is low-cost housing we feel that this is the only way that low-cost housing could be made available to the type of person that needs housing so badly but the seven and ten and eight and twelve thousand dollars bracket it will take a very long time to provide for the people in the seven to twelve thousand bracket unless Government introduces a scheme to cover 40, 50, or 60 year which is most likely beyond the life span of a normal wage earner of the person responsible for the family. They will not be able to earn these houses. Should we not have at this time a definite statement to where rental will begin and should measures not be taken to see that rental will stop?

The Minister of Housing and Reconstruction (Mr. S.S. Naraine): I will answer the questions according to the subheads and items as they appear in the Estimates.

The Hon. Member Mr. Sutton raised the question of two Investigation Officers. He asked whether the number is adequate. In the past, the Ministry operated with one Investigation Officer. Because of the increase in the volume of work during this present year provision has been made of another Investigation Officer and that is reflected in the 1973 Estimates.

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We feel that the two investigation officers would be adequate to cope with the work. However, I would like to draw to the Hon. Member's attention, and we will come to this when we discuss the Capital Estimates, that there is money provided for staff on developmental work and should the need arise for additional persons to be taken on to assist, maybe on a short term basis to get rid of the heavy volume of work, then we will use that item to take on people on a

short term basis. But on the permanent establishment, it is not the intention to have more than two officers at the present moment.

Subhead 7, Rates and Taxes, Local Authorities. This sum to be paid on Government buildings relates to the rental housing in the various local authorities and the sum provided here would be the rates and taxes that would be levied under the Municipal and District Councils Act. I should explain that this sum as shown here would not cover all rates and taxes with respect to houses owned by the Government in the whole country. It will take a little while for the assessment of these properties and for the local authorities to gear themselves to make the necessary arrangements for assessments and for the receipt of these various rates and taxes, so this sum of money is what is estimated would be required for the year 1973. It is not intended as any subvention in relation to houses in local authority areas for the purpose of maintenance or any such matter.

In relation to subhead 9, Materials for Maintenance of Government Housing Estates, the Hon. Member Mr. Chandisingh raised a number of matters: maintenance of houses and the adequacy of the repairs, deterioration of houses. I would like to state quite emphatically that it is not Government's intention that buildings should get into a dilapidated condition. As a matter of fact, already the Ministry of Housing and Reconstruction has embarked on a programme of reconditioning a number of buildings and some of these have been done at Wismar, tow sets at Laing Avenue, in the Sussex Street area, and in New Amsterdam, and this programme of reconditioning in addition to normal maintenance will continue so that the buildings will always be kept in good repair.

So far as concrete drains are concerned, in most of the housing estates concrete drains are constructed where the effluent of septic tanks drains. The other drains are not presently concreted and I have no doubt that in the process of time and as the need arises for better conditions, concrete drains may apply throughout the entire housing areas.

I should mention that even in old Georgetown there are still a number of earthen drains working quite adequately so it is not the intention to undertake expenditure that may not be absolutely necessary at the present moment. In relation to general sanitation and garbage disposal these matters really related to subhead 8, Wages, Government Housing Estates, and those persons, who are employed on weeding parapets, clearing drains, and all sorts of things, are all paid from here.

Sir, you will notice that a substantial amount, \$525,000, is provided for this purpose and I think that members may not quite appreciate the enormous area which the Ministry of Housing presently maintains. If we take just the Georgetown area, the area maintained by the Ministry of Housing and Reconstruction is about equal to what might be described as ole Georgetown. It is a large area and provision is made for garbage disposal but I have not had any serious complaints in this respect. I have an open mind on the matter and I am prepared to look at it again.

In relation to subhead 13, Transports and Mortgages, the position is what I stated last week when we were debating the Budget. It is true that Government would like to see every person owning the roof over his head but we equally have to understand that this cannot take place in one day. We have set a target to house the nation by 1976, that is, everyone will have reasonably adequate accommodation to live in. The question of having each individual occupant of a house owning it, could not necessarily be done by 1976, because the position is, and Hon. Members know this, that a large number of people are presently renting the houses from private persons, and before any Government can undertake a task of having each person owning the roof over his head, it means that the houses in private hands will have to be sold to the occupants of the house.

We intend to house the nation by 1976 and some may have to continue in rental houses. Our programme is to use for the present moment the rental houses so that persons can move from rental houses to either aided self-help hoses, or to houses which they will construct themselves, or houses which they will purchase, so that new people can move into the rental hoses, and so the

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process will go with a view to having the nation housed by 1976. The question of the Government houses being sold eventually is something which is engaging the attention of Government. The Government would not wish to perpetuate a system of being landlords and eventually these houses will pass onto someone who will purchase them, but it cannot be done at the present moment.

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If we did this we would not be able to embark on our programme in a very practical manner.

In relation to the items raised by the Hon. Member Mr. Sutton on subheads 8, 11, 12, and 15, the amounts there are not paid for the maintenance of facilities in relation to houses not yet sold. These amounts are used for the maintenance of rental houses with provision of lights and sanitation in housing areas controlled by the Ministry of Housing and Reconstruction. This amount is provided in the Estimates to carry out these necessary maintenance services and the persons, either through rental or through hire-purchase arrangements, pay sums of money varying from \$4 to \$6 per month for the services which are provided through these expenditures.

I think that is about all the questions that were raised.

Head 59, Ministry of Housing and Reconstruction - \$1,464,045, agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

HEAD 60 – MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND RECONSTRUCTION TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING

Question proposed that the sum of \$206,187 for Head 60, Ministry of Housing and Reconstruction, Town and Country Planning, stand part of the Estimates.

Mr. Chandisingh: I wish to ask a general question on all heads.

Mr. Sutton: Subhead 1, items (5) and (6)

Mr. Chandisingh: In view of the Government's proposed expanded housing programme which presumably will involve the layout and planning of several new areas, does the Minister consider that, with the staff shortages in this Department, such surveys will be properly carried out and expeditiously done? In other words, is it a practical proposition?

I understand that certain qualified staff in this Department are not available and really I do not think there is a Deputy Town and Country Planning Officer I believe there are other vacancies.

Mr. Sutton: Subhead 1, item (5), Chief Building Inspector and item (6), Building Inspectors. Would the Minister say whether a high degree of duplication will exist on the question of passing plans to permit buildings, particularly in the towns and to a lesser extent in the rural areas? We were told on previous occasions that efforts were being made to streamline the situation to end the duplication of work between the Mayor and City Council of Georgetown and the Housing Department both of whom have to approve plans. This situation resulted in the confusion which we all know existed for a long time. Has any progress been made in streamlining this operation in order to avoid plans being held up for the not uncommon period of three, four, five and six months? The Minister will be aware that there have been cases going up and down for nearly a year.

And finally, as far as rural applications are concerned, that is, applications outside of the established urban areas we note that eight Building Inspectors are budgeted for under subhead 1, item (6). We will have to ask whether these eight Inspectors with the Chief Inspector, who no doubt co-ordinates the reports of the Building Inspectors, are adequate to serve the whole country.

I speak now of a case on the West Coast of Berbice where a person's application was actually pending for several months and he had to take a chance because he was advised by the man in the area who told him, "I have not got the final authority but I see no reason." When you apply for a mortgage and get approval and if you don't pick it up you have to go through the process all again.

Is the Minister satisfied that eight Building Inspectors can serve rural areas throughout the country? Perhaps this would also apply to the urban areas where duplication has been taking place for some time. Could he state that a reasonable time, say, three months could be locked forward to in the foreseeable future for people to get their plans back as far as erection of buildings and major renovation of buildings in rural areas are concerned.

Mr. S.S. Naraine: Mr. Chairman, a question was asked about the ability of the staff to cope with the increased volume of work. I feel it is a very good question. It is true that there are a number of vacancies. We are doing everything possible to fill these vacancies. But the Ministry, because of the inactivity in carrying out programmes in past years, has been able to accumulate a large number of layouts approved and published. These layouts are ready for implementation of programme.

We are therefore starting with an advantage in having this work, which has been done several years ago, available to us. But there is a distinct disadvantage of shortage of staff. What we propose doing is that since layouts are available, and therefore the plans for implementation are available, then physical surveys, that is, surveys to actually make the layout on the ground, will be done as far as practicable by our own staff. Where they cannot cope with the volume of work it is intended to give out some of this work to local private consultants in the surveying field. As a matter of fact we are also hoping to use local consultants in the private sector in carrying out further surveys in relation to programmes for 1974 and onward.

But we feel reasonably secure in our programme for 1973 and I do not anticipate any great difficulty. I feel that there is adequate manpower in the fields we require within Government and the local private sector for us to undertake the task. .

In relation to streamlining the system for dealing with applications, I would not like to say anything more now, than that this matter is being pursued very actively and it is hoped in a short while to make an announcement as to what the Government proposes to do to streamline the system and also to reduce the delay which some people experience in having their applications approved.

I would however like to state that I feel it would be unfair for the Hon. Member Mr. Sutton to ask me to give a time of two months or three months or six months when all applications will be processed because, if an application has not been found to be in order, it may have to be amended, it may have to be returned to the applicant, adjustments may have to be made, and this happens several times because of the reluctance of the applicants to make changes on the plans. These factors sometimes cause undue delays in dealing with applications.

The eight inspectors can carry out the inspections needed for private applications because those applications for buildings to be constructed by the Government, buildings to be constructed by schemes sponsored by the Government, the buildings to be constructed by persons or institutions applying for tax concessions, these will all be dealt with en bloc in each case, and therefore the need for looking at individual applications will not arise. In other words, particular persons may want to put up 50 buildings on a particular piece of land. That will be treated as one application, not 50 applications, and this will reduce considerably the time for processing such applications.

I understand his concern about the matter but I would wish to assure him that everything possible is being done to have the whole process streamlined and shortened considerably in the interest of the housing programme.

Head 60, Ministry of Housing and Reconstruction, Town and Country Planning - \$206,187 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 178.

DIVISION XXV - MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND RECONSTRUCTION

Question proposed that the sum of \$4,075,000 for Division XXV, Ministry of Housing and Reconstruction, stand part of the Estimates.

Mr. Chandisingh: May I speak on the Head as a whole.

Mr. Sutton: Subheads 3, 13, and 14.

Mr. Chairman: The Hon. Member Mr. Chandisingh.

Mr. Chandisingh: The Hon. Minister of Housing and Reconstruction in his contribution in the Second Reading made a rather gallant effort at reducing the credibility gap in Government's housing programme. I cannot say, however, that this gap has been eliminated entirely since much of the estimation on the part of the Ministry for constructing 8,000 housing units in 1973 depends very heavily on private financing.

He has given us the various sources from which the financing is expected to come but I would like to point out that a lot of this is based upon mere hope, even though one may expect that private operators will play some part in this whole operation, but still a lot of it, over \$20

million of this \$41 million programme in all, is expected to come from the private sector. Furthermore, in Government's estimation of its own housing programme, a lot depends on the three times turnover of the roughly \$5 million that Government hopes to put into housing next year, so that, to a large extent still there is a gap in the question of credibility with respect to this housing programme for 1973.

I would wish the Hon. Minister to give us a little explanation as to how he expects the \$5 million to do the work, so to speak, of \$15 million during 1973. Furthermore, although we are not discussing the whole programme now, I daresay that the Hon. Minister has done a lot to try to fill this gap for the coming year, but we still are left in this honourable House in the dark with respect to the other figures which at the moment going up to 1976 still seem to be rather of the order of magic. Nevertheless, I should like to deal with some specific questions now.

What proportion of the houses that Government expects to construct will be within the range of what we regard as low income families, also what is the position with respect to the private sector financing of house building? Would the Hon. Minister give us some indication of what the Government has in mind on this, because our whole point has been from time to time to show that the Government has not been helping those who are in the greatest need for help from Government, apart from a few self-help projects, and so it is important that we have this sort of picture of the housing programme because not only do we want to know that there will be a housing programme but we want to know to what extent is provision being made for the really low-income people whose needs are greatest.

I should like if the Hon. Minister also can give an explanation of the term "housing units". There still seems to be some confusion over this business. When we understand that Government intends that \$65,000 houses or housing units will be completed by 1976, certainly we and the public generally get the impression that this refers to either individual houses, detached or semi-detached houses, or apartments. if the Government intends to erect flats for

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example, big buildings with separate flats, but at least we expect each unit will be a unit of accommodation, so to speak, either in terms of flats or houses.

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We would like to know exactly what the term 'housing unit' means.

The Chairman: I think the Minister was at pains to explain what he meant by that during the Budget debate.

Mr. Chandisingh: I am sorry but I may have lost that point. Will he explain this question again?

I would also like to point out that in relation to the question of rental houses it does seem, from what the Hon. Minister said just a few minutes ago, that the Government has changed its policy with respect to the selling of these rental houses. The Minister was a bit devious in this respect but the gist of it seems to be that they are not prepared to sell these houses now because they are needed.

Of course, we have no quarrel with this s we take the position that the Government should have houses available for rental. And not only should it have houses available for rental but that it should also build houses which would be available for rental. On this point we wish to take issue with the Government since it seems that the Government does not intend in this housing programme, certainly not for 1973, to build additional houses which will be subsidised but Government and which can be rented to poor families that have need for housing but may not have the means to pay the higher rentals involved.

This is just a side comment that the Government, not only in respect of housing, but in other fields seems to be changing its policy from time to time with the appearance of a new Minister and this does no good for any policy.

The Hon. Minister indicated that in this figure of \$8,000 houses would be included houses that are repaired. In other words derelict houses, as we call them, to which repairs and extension will be done. I wonder again if this is not trying to pad the whole list, or pad the number of housing units that the Government is presenting to the public, that is, by regarding little extensions and simple repairs as new housing units.

It this is the case – I am not saying it is – it would be a rather poor show in terms of Government's policy. I would like to ask whether the Minister can say with any definiteness that in this programme Essequibo will be taken care of. I noted in his general remarks in the Second Reading that he indicated that certain self-help projects will be started in North Ruinveldt, New Amsterdam, Bartica, Linden and so on. If I remember correctly he said that Essequibo will also be done if all goes well. I would like to point out that Essequibo in the field of housing has also been left behind because I hardly think that, in the last eight years, there has been more than one self-help project carried on at Essequibo – I believe it was at Reliance on the Essequibo Coast. As we know this is a place where there are a lot of derelict houses. There is a great need for housing on the coast. We would wish to know what will be done in the case of Essequibo.

The final point I would like to make on this question is with respect to the housing of sugar workers. I would appear from all that is being done, or not being done, that sugar workers are really being given a raw deal. The Minister indicated that a million dollars will be used by the Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Fund Committee to provide houses for sugar workers.

Mr. Chairman, we are aware that there are many areas on the East Coast and East Bank where there are available lands which the sugar estates are ready to give up for housing purposes. There lands are not being taken up and housing construction is not proceeding. As a matter of fact the Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Fund has indicated up to quite recently that there is not enough money to carry out these projects. With the great need for at least 8,000 more houses for sugar workers, why is it that the fund has so many millions of dollars invested in Government securities? Why is it that these funds, five million dollars or what have you, cannot be utilized together with other funds to provide houses on the basis which the P.P.P. Government was able to do by arrangement with the sugar estates and that is to acquire these lands and sell them cheaply at a nominal figure?

The proposal was that the workers should be charged one dollar per house lot. Incidentally, up to now this has not yet been done. We were promised some sort of legislation but up to now this has not yet been done. We agree that the Government has now moved up to stop estates from speculating in the sale of housing land. As a matter of fact, we had made this point to the Government at the time. We are happy to see that this is being done and even though the Government has moved to stop speculation in house lots we find that nothing is being done to provide these lots for sugar workers. It seems that the Government now has full control and has required that the people form themselves into co-ops. In the formation of such co-ops a lot of political pressure is being put on people. We say that there should be removed entirely any political pressure and involvement in the question of distribution of those lands to sugar workers.

As I mentioned earlier, from Little Diamond going up to and including Covent Garden and Prospect we understand that there are areas of land available and that the Minister even recently went there. We would like to know what is being done in this respect.

We would like to know that the Government unfreezes its policy of not distributing the land or allowing the sugar estates land to be passed over to the Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Fund Committee and thereby being handed over by way of house lots to the sugar workers who

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are in very great need. We call upon the Government to take action in this respect immediately. As a matter of fact, we know that several delegations have visited the Minister and are awaiting some word from the Ministry.

With those remarks I wish the Hon. Minister may favour us with some suitable reply.

Mr. Sutton: Just a few questions in order to clarify one or two areas of doubt in people's minds. The question of Self-help Housing under subhead 3 —

Mr. Chairman: I will not permit any debate on that.

Mr. Sutton: In view of the fact that there is no allocation in 1973 I have to presume that that is not open for discussion.

The Chairman: That is perfectly correct.

3.10 p.m.

Mr. Sutton: Going to subheads 13 and 14, Housing Fund, and Mortgage and Finance Company, we note that the Housing Fund is intended for the development of building sites on which houses will be erected and, presumably, made available for sale or rental as the case may be. Is the Hon. Minister in a position to say whether the Mortgage and Finance Company, which is envisaged by Government at the moment, intends to operate within a certain level, specifically for low-cost housing or long-term housing with a view to making mortgages available or less difficult for them to be available, and to reach an income bracket which is not now being served by the mortgage company?

We bear in mind that in the Budget statement on this matter, it is specifically mentioned that neither the Mortgage and Finance Company nor the insurance company, which was spoken about, was intended to destroy any other *bona fide* competitor operating in this field. One wonders whether the Government envisages the Mortgage and Finance Company doing more in a field or operations which, possibly, it considers is unsatisfactory or inadequately handled by the present mortgage finance operators. Perhaps the Hon. Minister would tell us something about this.

Subject to correction, but I am under the impression that the Government projected the need to 1976 of 65,000 houses, which will need an average rate of \$13,000 per year. Although this matter came up before, I do not know that specific figures were mentioned. Using a \$7,000 house for the benefit of the small man, over a period of 20 years it would mean a capital involvement of \$350 per year which, on the basis of capital alone, is approximately \$30 per month. Of course, interest and service charges will have to be included.

Except Government intends to operate on a minimum of 20-year mortgages, in a field between \$6,000 and \$8,000, it looks very difficult, as my predecessor would prefer to put it, a credibility gap of how the Government is going to succeed in this operation. Perhaps the Hon. Minister would like to give us a practical example so that the average person will be able to understand not only what they are aiming at, but how this figure which falls at \$7,000 per house, for \$78 million per year, if in fact a total of \$30,000 per year. The Hon. Minister, although he has given us some figures still that point has not been clarified in detail so that we may be able to follow how their hopes for this programme could be attained.

Mr. Naraine: Mr. Chairman, the Hon. Member Mr. Chandisingh raised the question of how we will use \$5 million to do \$15 million work and I thought I had gone through this in some great detail use the money three times for the year. The position in relation to what proportion of the houses will be in the low income bracket in relation to the 4,000 units that Government

intends to build in 1973, is 75 per cent will be in relation to low-income bracket and 25 per cent in relation to the middle-income bracket.

Housing unit definition, again I thought that we had gone into it in some great length but obviously the Hon. Member will realize that every family unit would not require the same size of unit. It could very well be that a pensioner with just his wife may require a room with a little toilet and bath attached, or may be a family with eight or nine grown-up boys and girls who may need a three-bedroom house; so units will vary according to the particular size and structure of family. I thought I had explained that, but probably I did not explain it sufficiently.

On the question of the change of Government's policy on selling rental houses, I think the Hon. Member wilfully misinterpreted what I said. I did not say that the Government has changed its policy but the Hon. Member will realize that in many of the Government's estates where we have semi-detached houses sharing one piece of land, present legislation will have to be changed before any policy to sell such houses can be implemented. I believe it is called the condominium act in some countries; this will have to be introduced before such things can be done. Furthermore, it is not Government's intention to deal only with Government's rental houses in relation to having the occupiers of these houses owning them, but the Government intends to examine and have discourse with private owners of houses where people are renting, to pursue the question whether they will not also be in a position of purchase the place where they presently live. I do not understand how the Hon. Member could misinterpret what I said.

In relation to derelict houses, as the Hon. Member was speaking, a thought struck me. It is true that man reproduces in houses but houses in themselves cannot reproduce, and therefore, when they do not grow in time as man grows, when a house becomes old and derelict, there is one thing you can do. It is either to get rid of it and put another one in its place, or to put it in good habitable sanitary conditions so that people can live under good conditions once again. I cannot see how we can discount in our housing programme derelict houses. They must be part

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of it. Many of these houses are unoccupied, and those that are occupied cannot be described as adequate housing units.

In relation to the Essequibo district, I would like to assure the Hon. Member that Essequibo is very much part of the 1973 programme. I can mention three areas that we are moving into very shortly, Reliance, Henrietta-Richmond and Dartmouth. There may be others that may come later.

In relation to housing of sugar workers, I do not understand the statement of the hon. Member in relation to political pressure being exercised, because the Government has made a clear statement that it intends to house the nation by 1976. It did not say it will house one shade of political view by 1976, and I can only consider that the hon. Member will be conceding that by 1976 there will be no member in his camp because, by pressure or otherwise, they will all be in one camp since that is the only way we will house the nation by 1976 according to his argument.

On freezing of land to the Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Fund, I have no knowledge that the Government is preventing the sugar estates from selling land to the Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Fund Committee.

3.20 p.m.

As a matter of fact only recently I have had discussion with that Committee and the sugar estates in relation to the handing over of land for the fund to pursue a programme of housing sugar workers. I understand that there is some limitation in terms of financing. This is a question I am pursuing with the Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Fund Committee to see how ways and means can be worked out whereby they can participate to a greater extent in the programme of housing the nation. As I understand it about 500 or so sugar workers will benefit from housing in 1973.

There was another question which was raised by the hon. Member Mr. Sutton. The answer to the first part of his question as to whether the mortgage finance bank will be concentrating initially on low cost housing with a long period of repayment is Yes. But I would like to disillusion the hon. Member concerning \$7,000 as the cost of low cost housing. In the Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Fund Committee those workers get \$2,000 and it is expected that people will use some of their own savings towards the construction of houses.

They do construct reasonable adequate accommodation for themselves. As time goes on these can be improved on, but the point I am trying to make is that it is not necessary to put out at one go \$7,000 on a house. As a matter of fact, in the aided self-help housing being provided by the Government the materials supplied for those houses is invariably only \$3,000.

Division XXV, Ministry of Housing and Reconstruction - \$4,075,000, agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Assembly resumed.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, I am informed that, by agreement, it is proposed to proceed with the Motion standing in the name of the Minister of Finance and Trade.

HOST COUNTRY GUARANTEE AGREEMENT WITH U.S.A.

“Whereas Resolution No. XXIV passed by the National Assembly on the 17th July, 1969 authorised the Government to enter into a Host Country Agreement with the United States of America acting through the Agency for International Development (A.I.D.) for guaranteeing payments to A.I.D. of any amounts which A.I.D. may have had to make under and by virtue of Contracts of Guarantee with the following financing companies, namely:

Bankers Life Insurance Company of Nabaska, Nationwide Life Insurance Company, Central Life Assurance Company, Farm Bureau Life Insurance Company, Indianapolis Life Insurance Company and Life and Casualty Insurance Company; for long term mortgage financing which the said companies agreed to provide Guyana

Securities Limited, a company incorporated and existing under the Laws of Guyana, in an amount not exceeding in the aggregate the sum of \$4 million (US) for the establishing of housing projects in Guyana;

AND WHEREAS the said financing companies have provided to Guyana Securities Limited funds in the sum of \$424,620 (US) and will be no further involved in the Guyana housing projects;

AND WHEREAS Guyana Securities Limited desires to replace the said financing companies by the Federal Home Loan Bank of Boston, Massachusetts, United States of America which will provide mortgage financing for the continuation of the projects of an amount not exceeding \$300,000 (US) at a lesser rate of interest;

AND WHEREAS the United States of America acting through A.I.D. will issue its Guarantee of repayment of the said amount to be borrowed by Guyana Securities Limited from the aid Federal Home Loan Bank of Boston in accordance with terms and conditions of a Contract of Guarantee to be entered into between the Government and the United States of America:

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly do authorize the Government to enter into a Host Country Guarantee Agreement in the following form with the United States of America acting through A.I.D. and to charge the mortgagor a guarantee fee:-

GUYANA

HOST COUNTRY GUARANTEE AGREEMENT

GUARANTEE AGREEMENT dated as of _____, 1972

between Guyana and the United States of America acting through the Agency for International Development (A.I.D.).

WHEREAS _____, a
Company duly registered and existing under the laws of Guyana (Borrower) wishes to build housing projects in Buxton, Rosehall, New Amsterdam and Mackenzie, Guyana;

AND WHEREAS Federal Home Loan Bank of Boston, Massachusetts, United States of America, a corporation organized and existing under the laws of the United States of America (Investor) and Borrower have entered into a Loan

Agreement dated as of 1972 (Loan Agreement) providing for Investor to make loans not exceeding the aggregate principal amount of \$300,000 (US) to Borrower at a rate of interest of seven and a half per cent (7½%) per annum on the unpaid principal balance in order to provide the long-term mortgage financing for the housing projects;

AND WHEREAS A.I.D. has issued its guarantee of the amounts to be borrowed under the Loan Agreement in accordance with the terms and conditions of a Contract of Guarantee dated as of _____ 1972, (Contract of Guarantee):

NOW, THEREFORE, Guyana and A.I.D. hereby agree as follows:

ARTICLE 1: Guarantee Guyana, pursuant to National Assembly Resolution No. _____, Dated _____, 1972 and all other appropriate laws, regulations, decrees and administrative acts hereby unconditionally and irrevocably:

(1) Guarantee that, if A.I.D. makes any payment to Investor pursuant to the terms of the Contract of Guarantee, Guyana shall promptly pay to A.I.D. an amount in United States Dollars equal to the amount of such payment to Investor pursuant to the Contract of Guaranty;

(2) Waives any right to any notice of non-payment or non-performance by Borrower under the Loan Agreement and under any other agreement to which Borrower is a party, and waives any notice, presentment, demand, diligence or protest to which Guyana, as guarantor, may otherwise be entitled under the law of Guyana.

Provided, however, that without limiting the generality of the foregoing, if A.I.D. receives notice from Investor pursuant to Section 7.01 (b) of the Contract of Guarantee to the effect that payments due under the Loan Agreement have not been made, A.I.D. shall forward a copy of such notice to Guyana at the following address:

Ministry of Finance
Main Street
Kingston
Georgetown, Guyana,

And further provided that such forwarding or the failure to so forward shall in no way affect or impair the Guarantee expressed herein.

- (3) Waives any requirement that A.I.D. its successors and assigns, in the event of any payment by A.I.D. pursuant to the Contract of Guaranty, first make demand upon or seek to enforce rights or remedies against Investor, Borrower, or any other person before demanding payment under, or seeking to enforce payment under this guarantee;
- (4) Covenants that this guarantee will not be discharged except by complete performance of the obligations contained in the Contract of Guarantee and this guarantee;
- (5) Consents to any modification of the Loan Agreement, the Administration Agreement, the Contract of Guarantee and any other agreement, and of any attachments and annexes thereto as may be agreed to by Borrower, Investor, Administrator of A.I.D., and consents to any waiver, consent compromise, release or indulgence which would have the effect of increasing the obligations of Guyana under this guarantee to guarantee any amount paid by A.I.D. pursuant to the Contract of Guarantee in excess of the principal amount of \$300,000 (US) and interest as provided in Contract of Guarantee in excess of seven and a half per cent (7½%) per annum, may be made without the written consent of Guyana;
- (6) Covenants that all payments by Borrower of the principal of and interest on the loan made pursuant to the Loan Agreement which loan is evidenced by the Notes marked by A.U.S. as Eligible pursuant to the Contract of Guarantee (Eligible Notes), are and will be exempt from and without deduction for, any and all taxes, levies, imposts, deductions and withholding whatever imposed, levied, collected or assessed with respect thereto by the Government of Guyana or by any political subdivision or taxing authority thereof; and
- (7) Covenants that the full faith and credit of Guyana has been pledged for the due and punctual payment and performance of this guarantee.

ARTICLE II. **Agreement by A.I.D.** In consideration of the foregoing Guarantee by Guyana A.I.D. hereby covenants that it will perform its obligations under the Contracts of Guarantee in accordance with its terms.

ARTICLE III. **Assignment:** When Guyana pays under this Guarantee to A.I.D. its successors or assigns, the entire unpaid principal balance of the loan made pursuant to the Loan Agreement and evidenced by the Eligible Notes, and will unpaid interest thereon, A.I.D. its successors or assigns, will assign to Guyana all of its right, title and interest in and to the Loan Agreement and the Eligible Notes.

GUYANA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The Minister of Finance and Trade (Mr. Hope): Mr. Speaker, I would like to move the Motion standing in my name for a Host Country Guarantee Agreement with the United States of America. The Motion is very explicit. It hardly has left out any of the relevant facts. However, I will briefly recap some of the points made in the Motion.

I should mention however that there has been some amount of dissatisfaction expressed by prospective owners of these houses and this will be the final set of houses that will be constructed by this particular company under this particular scheme.

The programme of housing which is being implemented by the Ministry of Housing and Reconstruction will cover the shortfall after this company has ceased its operations on the basis of this particular scheme.

Question proposed.

Mr. Chandisingh: Mr. Speaker, here again it seems as if we see another fiasco. It is rather a shocking state of affairs to know that the Government after undertaking to guarantee such large sums of money for housing construction. I think originally the figure was something like \$4 million (U.S.) – has now found itself in the position where it has to come into retrieve a bad situation.

It seems that this is just another fiasco like the T.U.C. housing project which we discussed only a few days ago. Of course, the hon. Minister did not give us any indication in some detail which I think we are entitled to have.

The Chairman: What he did say was that the explanation is embodied in the Resolution as well as in the annexed Agreement.

Mr. Chandisingh: This is what I am pointing to, that is, the Resolution itself does not give the point I am making. We are told in the Resolution that there is a change from the original insurance company in the United States but what we would like to know is why? In other words, what has happened? What has taken place to result in this change over? Why did not these companies come forward with the full sum of money that they promised? Is the Government satisfied with this arrangement? I understand that the company – I take it, Guyana Securities Limited – will no longer continue to build houses. There must be some reason for this.

It was said that there is some dissatisfaction by the people concerned. Certainly we are entitled to know more about this. Government should not seek to gloss over such mistakes in its activities.

The Chairman: Hon. Member Mr. Chandisingh, as I understand it, we are merely substituting another set of people.

Mr. Chandisingh: Not entirely. As you will see the original project was for \$4 million (U.S.), that is, \$8 million (Guyana) and it says here, "And whereas the said financing companies have provided to Guyana Securities Limited funds in the sum of \$424,620 (U.S.) and will be no further involved in the Guyana housing projects."

Mr. Chandisingh continued

What has taken place –

The Chairman: The next paragraph goes on to say Guyana Securities Limited desires to replace the said financing companies by the Federal Home Loan Bank, and so on.

Mr. Chandisingh: Well, this is understandable, sir, but what I want to know is why, and I think the hon. Minister is quite capable of answering the question himself, sir, and perhaps I may continue if you do not mind. We see also it is said that a lower rate of interest will be charged on this sum of \$300,000 U.S. from the new financiers. Could we know what is the new rate of interest and how does it compare with the old rate of interest?

Would the hon. Minister please indicate, if he has the information, who are the directors of this Guyana Securities Limited? This will be useful to know since if there is dissatisfaction with the company, the Government must have originally gone into all its bona fields, its plans and costing, and all that business. I think the Government should come clean to us here and give us all the information which will enable us to judge the whole thing. Let us not have any more of these fiascos. Let the Government properly investigate before it goes in for these deals particularly with United States financiers and companies. Our experience with them has been very shabby indeed.

Mr. Sutton: Just a few questions on this question of guarantee by A.I.D. The Government is obviously doing what it can in order to raise capital in order to give momentum to its housing project. Nothing is wrong with that. I speak specifically of the previous T.U.C. housing project in which sub-contractors went in and suppliers were told, this is a gilt-edged situation, it is guaranteed by A.I.D., it is guaranteed by Government, it is impossible to lose any money, and people on that score gave credit. But the contractors who were employed by the

T.U.G. Limited were told that the Government is only responsible for what the T.U.C. did but it is not responsible for the debts created by the contractors employed to do the job.

For the benefit of the uniformed, the Minister perhaps would like to tell us how does Guyana Securities Limited operate, what is it, if the shareholders are controlled by Government, or if it is a Government arm, in other words, for us to be satisfied that the Guyana Securities Limited was a necessary co-operation in this exercise and Government is satisfied that everything is taken care of in the light of previous example.

Mr. Hope (replying): Mr. Speaker, I am a little bit surprised that the hon. Member Mr. Sutton at this stage wished to deviate into some amount of irrelevance. I think the hon. Member does one wrong thing. I am not sure that he takes himself seriously. Ask questions and don't listen for the answers. Secondly, he is one week late. We discussed this matter of the T.U.C. last week. On this question, none of the circumstances surrounding the T.U.C. scheme is present in this one and therefore I am not sure what was the relevance in the assertions that the member was making but I will now turn to answer the more relevant questions raised by the hon. Member Mr. Chandisingh.

This is not a fiasco. I am not sure that the hon. Member was not talking with his tongue in his cheek when he said it was a fiasco. The Government did sign a Host Country Guarantee that was to benefit the original lenders. Since then, there was a change in the original lenders and therefore the new lenders had to have a similar agreement to cover them. As a matter of fact, those lenders had this guarantee with the Government and therefore the Government of Guyana is guaranteeing the U.S. against any payment it made.

The reason for the change is simple. The original lenders wished to increase their rate of interest from 8 to 8½ per cent. The Government was vigilant enough to observe this and was interested enough to forestall it. In the circumstances, the company proceeded to seek other lenders and they found the new lenders who were prepared to lend money at 7½ per cent, a

substantial reduction which was going to benefit the mortgagors. These are the facts and it appears that the members on the other side are a little bit surprised to understand now that there was a fiasco.

What we have done, the original lenders were able to lend just \$424,620 U.S. so that is in fact what the Government is guaranteeing against the original lenders and the new lenders the Government are now guaranteeing \$300,000. So the total amount of the Government guarantee on this scheme would be the total of \$424,620, plus \$300,000.

The company, Guyana Securities, is a locally-incorporated company. It is not a locally-owned company. There is however a management and I am now informed that the New Building Society are the managers for the scheme. Who the directors are, I frankly do not know, but what I am certain about is that the scheme was under constant observation by the Government, it is not a fiasco, nothing has gone wrong. What is really happening is that the Government, having formulated a new programme for housing, finds that it could now build houses under its supervision cheaper and probably get money at a cheaper rate. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion carried.

3.40 p.m.

APPROVAL OF ESTGIMATES OF EXPENDITURE, 1973

Assembly resolved itself into Committee of Supply and resumed consideration of the Estimates of Expenditure for 1973.

Assembly in Committee of Supply.

HEAD 65 – MINISTRY OF TRADE

Question proposed that the sum of \$3,269,305 for Head 65, Ministry of Trade, stand part of the Estimates.

Mr. Ram Karran: I should like to enquire whether the hon. Minister of Finance and Trade would explain to the House subhead 12, Expresses, National Specifications Board.

Mrs. DaSilva: I wish to speak on subheads 14 and 16 on page 191. The sum of \$1,200 is being provided under subhead 14 for Expenses, Price Control Board. Yesterday I spoke about the poor quality of the condensed milk coming in from Barbados. It was reported in the Press this morning and many people have called and spoken to me about it. They have asked if I could not try to put forward a case for condensed milk.

I have been trying to find out the prices of the brands that formerly were imported from Holland. Prices have gone up in recent quotations by 50 new pence but condensed milk is controlled at \$22.08 a carton with the retail price being 48 cents a tin in Georgetown.

Could the hon. Minister not go into this matter? For example, there is a brand of condensed milk of a far better standard being produced in Trinidad. The milk coming from Europe carries a 15 percent duty, plus 3 percent Defence Levy, 3 percent for the External Trade Bureau, which automatically adds on 21 per cent to the price of that milk. Milk coming from Trinidad will enjoy the treatment offered to goods coming from Carifta countries and will only be required to pay the 3 per cent for the External Trade Bureau.

Could the hon. Minister say whether the price could be discussed with the people who import condensed milk? Condensed milk is a very important part of the diet of the people who

spoke to me. I am not talking about people who can afford to pay but about poor people. Could the Ministry not go into the matter of importing condensed milk from Trinidad which would be far cheaper than the milk from Holland?

Government stands to lose nothing because there is no revenue received from goods imported for Barbados just as there is no revenue on goods from Trinidad and the milk would be cheaper.

Has the Government considered this question and tried to see if they could increase the price of condensed milk and allow it to come into this country? It is no good having an inferior brand of milk with people wasting their money when for a few cents you could get a better product. People would rather pay three or four cents more than pay 48 cents and have to throw the milk away.

Incidentally, I would be grateful for an explanation as to how Barbados could qualify for this Carifta special treatment. I do not think that Barbados has enough land space to rear cows. The milk must come from some country overseas. I understand that it comes from New Zealand. I do not know what criteria are used to give preferential treatment. Perhaps the hon. Minister could explain.

There is one question I wish to ask on subhead 16, Subsidy – Flour. The amount to be provided is \$3 million. I have been made to understand that the estimated collection of revenue from the increase in the duty on liquor is going to be \$9 million. Would the Minister be prepared to say if this is correct or would he be prepared to give an estimate of the expected revenue from the increased duty on rum, gin and vodka. If we are spending \$3 million and collecting \$9 million what will happen to the other \$6 million?

Mr. M.Y. Ally: I should like to speak on subheads 14 and 16 on page 191.

With respect to subhead 14, Expenses, Price Control Board, there is no legend to show us in which direction the Ministry is heading. There was a price control list issued in March 1969. Since then there has been no printed form by which small shopkeepers could be guided. There have been several typewritten papers and it is difficult to know how people could be guided by these.

The Chairman: Hon. Member, Mr. Yacoob Ally, I am surprised to hear you say that. Do you call publications in the Official Gazette typewritten papers?

Mr. M.Y. Ally: If you were a shopkeeper, sir, I do not think you could use the kinds of paper that the Ministry is issuing.

The Chairman: I am not a shopkeeper.

Mr. M.Y. Ally: You should be interested when the small man is going to jail. For any simple offence the Government is ready to put people in jail. This is what we take notice of. Despite that you are alleging that the Government is doing so well.

The Chairman: I am not alleging anything. You are saying that publications in the Official Gazette are on a scrap of paper, which is not so.

Mr. M.Y. Ally: You are saying that the official price is printed in the Official Gazette. One of the items controlled is cocoa powder. We find that there is a controlled price for the 4 oz., 8 oz and 15 oz. tin. What happens to the 7 oz. tin?

The Chairman: That is not controlled.

Mr. M.Y. Ally: The public is at a loss. It can be sold at \$5 or \$10.

In the case of orange juice, there was a controlled price for the 10 oz, 19 oz and 46 oz tins. There was no control over the 10½ oz. tin.

Hon. Member: "Don't buy it!" You say not to buy it, but what happens to the buying public?

These things indirectly encourage black market. Again, with seasoning, there is no control over the 5 grammes packet.

The Government is spending \$1,200. There is a printer; something substantial could be printed so that shopkeepers and the public could be guided.

At this point I would like to congratulate the Government for heeding the advice of the People's Progressive Party and the W.P.O. and subsidizing flour. Had the W.P.O. and the P.P.P. not prodded the Government the price of flour would not have been subsidised.

3.50 p.m.

Mr. M.Y. Ally: I think we should congratulate the Government for heeding that advise of the People's Progressive Party. Any help and assistance the Government needs, it can always depend on the People's Progressive Party. I see there is no arrangement for any more vote for the E.T.B. I would like to find out from the hon. Minister if the E.T.B. is a paying concern because instead of helping the country, we still find shortages and people capitalizing on these shortages. I made the point already where the E.T.B. should be controlling the commanding heights of our economy in the field of importation, but what do we find? Instead, the E.T.B. is colluding with merchants to short import, and any short import must naturally result in black marketing. (*Interruption*)

The Chairman: I ask for some co-operation today. It is only one reporter who is assisted by the Editor.

Mr. Y. Ally: We find that instead of the E.T.B. trying to keep the cost of living down, the cost of living is still soaring. Whilst there was a big hue and cry about imported fruits, to keep the price controlled, we found that the price of raisins and currants in the market was \$4.80 a pound. I feel that the E.T.B. should try to get advice and this is where we come in again to try to seek co-operation with the People's Progressive Party. Try to get more in the know-how of balancing trade.

There is a simple rule in trade, the law of supply and demand but it looks like this cannot work with the E.T.B. If we can satisfy the law of supply and demand, surely, there would be no controls as we are trying to make a big mountain out of a molehill. If there is more supply, there would be no necessary control that we can call upon to control people because people can have everything that they want. I made this point where this complex they have in Regent Street should be the medium where we should be wholesaling things to retailers. But, no! Government itself wants to be retailer. You cannot have it two ways. We either try to control the goods or try to control the law of supply and demand or we have to keep on with this high cost of living.

Dr. Jagan - rose --

The Chairman: Hon. Leader of the Opposition, I think you must be more vigilant.

Dr. Jagan: Sir, I would like to speak on subhead 7, Licensing Division Salaries and subhead 12, Expenses, National Specifications Board, and to make a general observation. Earlier this year, the Government imposed restrictions on the importation of printing supplies, newsprint and printing equipment. When the Order was made, the Government gave an assurance to the T.U.C. that these restrictions will affect the functioning of the free press in Guyana. As a result of delays in the Ministry of Trade in giving approval to applications which

were made for the importation of newsprint, one newspaper, the *Mirror*, was forced first, to limit the size of its publication, and secondly, to close towards the middle of this year.

Again, in the latter p[art of this year, the Government delayed the signing of these applications made in June. They were not approved until November, as a result, the news paper was forced to close again and it seems that there is a studied policy on the part of the Government not only to deny newsprint but also to refuse to grant permits for the importation of Equipment. Applications for these were made early this year and up to now these have not been approved.

I would like the Minister to give us a straightforward answer. What is the reason for these delays? If the Government, as has been claimed by more than one spokesman, is not interested in stifling the press, in permitting freedom of expression in Guyana, then how come these decisions are taken at administrative level which virtually give the lie to what the Government spokesmen have been saying? The country must know. This House must know whether the Government's policy is to shut out criticisms, to deny those who do not toe the Government's line the opportunity to be able to give vent to their feelings and their views through the medium of printed matter. The Hon, Minister must tell us. I know he is a reputable ex-civil servant. He is not a politician. We can understand the chicaneries of politicians. Let us hope he has not fallen into this position. Let us get a straight-forward answer from him on this question.

On the question of National Specifications Board, for a long time we have been hearing of a standards bureau. Perennially, we are hearing from this Government that it is about to be formed. Now we hear that it may be co-ordinated with the Caribbean under Carifta. We have no objection to that. But I think something must be done and done quickly because a lot of things which are not permitted to be sold, for instance, in the United States, are dumped in Guyana's markets because we do not have standard specifications or we do not have an organization which can deal effectively at this level to protect the consumer.

As a dentist, I know that a lot of advertisements are made here which would not be permitted in the United States, for instance, by Colgate, withal the magic formula they have to put a sheen on the teeth which will prevent tooth decay.

4.00 p.m.

A lot of rubbish is allowed to be put on the unsuspecting public and these things must not be allowed. These companies cannot get away with them in the United States, for instance, where they originate. Why should we allow the people to be defrauded like this? This thing is long overdue.

My colleague referred to other things which should have been done in respect of smoking for instance. In the United States advertisers are forced to carry certain statements on the packages. They are not allowed to do certain things, to advertise on T.V. and so on. But here we allow all these things to happen and the time has come when the consumers must be protected.

This matter is very urgent and I would ask the Minister to give it some serious consideration under the Food and Drugs Act. It is important to put out regulations quickly and to set up the necessary machinery to protect the consumers of Guyana.

Mr. Hope rose –

The Chairman: Are you going to be very long in your reply?

Mr. Hope: If I may answer the questions not entirely in order I should like first of all to make reference to the observation with regard to alleged delays in the issuing of licences for printing equipment.

(Interruptions from outside the Chamber.)

The Chairman: Hon. Leader of the House, it is with great regret that I have to mention again the behavior of the House, particularly today.

I mentioned earlier on the shortage in the reportorial staff because of the death of the father of one of the reporters. We are very understaffed and this noise is affecting the single reporter we have in the House at the moment. If the noise continues I shall have no alternative but to put the questions in block or suspend the sittings. Could you please make sure that we have order in future.

Mr. Hope: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. As I was saying, the hon. Leader of the Opposition raised the question of alleged delays in the issuing of licences for printing paper and equipment. He asked the question whether the intention of the Government was to stifle or the suppress criticism or deny freedom of speech – He did not use those words but words of that ilk – to members of the Opposition or people who do not necessarily agree with the Government.

I thought that those who are more qualified than I to answer the question did answer the Leader of the Opposition on this same question three or four weeks ago. The point that was made then was that there was no such intention. As a matter of fact, all sections of the Guyanese public have always enjoyed, and continue to enjoy, absolute freedom of expression within the law.

The question, however, is quite clear. The Leader of the Opposition says there is a question of denial of freedom of expression. I recall not very long ago seeing an issue of the Mirror. I see issues of the Guyana Graphic every day; I see issues of the Evening Post every day; I see issues of the Chronicle every day and, of course, of the Mirror when it publishes. I saw an issue of the Mirror as recently as today, so that, in fact, there is no evidence at all that there is any suppression of freedom of expression.

The other question that was asked was whether I would give a straight answer as to why there are delays. My answer is that I am not aware that there are delays. (*Interruption by Mr. Hamid.*)

The Chairman: Hon. Member Mr. Hamid, apparently I do not speak English.

Mr. Hope: They do not understand English, sir. I remember as late, or as early, as last week I received as Competent Authority an application from the Business Manager of the New Guyana Company asking for permission to borrow paper from others who have paper to lend. This was a week or so after the firm got its normal permission to import paper. The letter was dated. I received it the following day and I replied on the same day giving the permission of the Competent Authority for the New Guyana Company to secure paper by borrowing. So far as I know there has been no delay. I am not aware of any delay.

The member asked me about equipment. As Minister of state I can say that I have never seen an application from the company for importation of printing equipment. He has asked for a straight answer and I hope he realizes that he has received a very straight answer.

On the subject of the External Trade Bureau, I am not sure what question the Hon. Member was really asking. He was very difficult to follow. What I can say is that the External Trade Bureau has been an instrument for implementing Government's policy of taking a measure of control over external trade and of ensuring that prices in a world situation, where prices are rising, are kept as low as possible.

The E.T.B. is a new organization. It may have problems and I am sure that if the members of the Opposition recognise the problems in the External Trade Bureau the Government itself is certainly in a position to recognize the problems.

What the Government is doing in fact is taking steps to remedy these problems. As I said, the External Trade Bureau is doing a difficult job as well as it could be done in the circumstances. There is room for improvement and action is being taken to ensure that that improvement is in fact made.

4.10 p.m.

Reference was also made to a price control list. My advice is that every so often the Ministry of Trade prepares and distributes roneoed copies of the price control lists. Those lists are available in Georgetown free of cost to all shop keepers and traders, and they are available in the rural areas through the District Commissioners.

A question was raised buy one hon. Member asking about the subsidy on flour. I am not sure what the question was about because when we came to this House and imposed certain taxation and said that the Government intended to subsidise flour, I think the discussion was quite detailed as to what we were doing and why we were doing it, with some figures given. Perhaps the hon. Member was not here. However, the question was raised, I think, of a \$9 million expected revenue on rum and I think the question I heard was in view of that level why did the Government impose further taxation to subsidise flour. As I said, I am not sure what the question was all about, but –

The Chairman: The question as I understood it, hon. Minister, was that the level of subsidy derived is \$9 million and there is a \$3 million rise in the cost of flour. What will Government do with the excess?

Mr. Hope: Apparently, you too misunderstood her question.

Mrs. DaSilva: I asked the hon. Minister if the subsidy on flour is \$3 million. I was here; I know what explanation was given about the flour. But the point I was trying to make, I

asked the hon. Minister that I understand that the expected revenue to be received from the increase on the prices of rum, vodka, and gin will yield in the vicinity of \$9 million. They said that is to offset the cost of flour but we are only using \$3 million for the flour. Could the hon. Minister say if it is correct that \$9 million is the anticipated amount to be received from the levy?

The Chairman: I think the hon. Minister was at pains to explain that the amount raised was just enough to offset the rise in the price of flour. If hon. Members would only pay attention.

Mrs. DaSilva: Sir, I was seeking information because we understand it is \$9 million and we want to know what happened to the other \$6 million.

Mr. Hope: When the Motion was debated, I said then that the expected additional collection on rum was going to be in the region of \$3 million, just about enough to meet the subsidy. This \$9 million the member is talking about, I do not know where she got the money from. She did not hear it from me in the House and I think if the hon. Member wants to quote such figures, at least she should quote me and not some other person.

The subsidy on flour is going to be financed almost exactly by what we expect to collect from the additional imposition on alcohol. I am further advised by some of the producers of rum that there has been some weakening, but they themselves feel the trade will pick up again and I feel fairly confident that we will get the money for financing the subsidy on flour from the additional imposition on rum.

The question of condensed milk, the problem here is that the Government is anxious to ensure that a staple commodity like milk comes into the country at the cheapest possible price in order to keep the cost of living down. It may well be that this particular brand of milk has exhibited certain undesirable qualities. The E.T.B. can certainly secure quotations and would do this from other suppliers. However, my advice is that this may well entail higher prices. Despite

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that, I think that the Ministry of Trade does intend to examine this whole question of the condensed milk.

On the question of the National Specifications Board —

The Chairman: I think we had better take the suspension now. It is 20 minutes after 4. Let the House resume and we will suspend for 30 minutes.

Assembly resumed

Sitting suspended at 4.20 p.m.

4.45 p.m.

On resumption --

Assembly in Committee of Supply.

The Chairman: Hon. Members, may I once more appeal to you for your co-operation to assist the Hansard reporters in their arduous task. They have always been willing and they have always given us every assistance when called upon to do so. May I now appeal on their behalf for your assistance, Hon. Minister of Finance?

Mr. Hope: One final point, Mr. Chairman, refers to item (12), National Specifications Board. My advice is that it operates as a sub-committee of the National Scientific Research Council which has recently been established by Government. Its major function is to supervise the questions of quality and quality control of articles produced locally and imported.

Dr. Jagan: I want to make one observation in respect of the Minister's reply. I am surprised that the Minister could tell this House that he is not aware of an application made for printing equipment almost a year ago. However I hope that he will soon be aware of it so that we can have expeditious action on this question.

The Chairman: You will send him a copy of the application?

Dr. Jagan: There is another point which he mentioned which needs to be commented on, that is the alacrity with which he said he moved to permit the company to be able to buy newsprint from other sources in Guyana. The Minister did not tell us about the alacrity with which the other arm of the Government, the coercive arm, moved so that the other companies would not lend the *Mirror* any newsprint, so that the one thing was cancelled. In other words his alacrity is given this permission so quickly was virtually cancelled out by the other arm of the Government.

The Chairman: He was only speaking in respect of what he is responsible for.

Dr. Jagan: I am telling you how the thing works because one must be able to distinguish half-truths from plain lies and see how they operate.

The Chairman: Certainly the Minister was not speaking a half-truth in this sense.

Dr. Jagan: That is why I was bringing in the other arm of the Government to show how it operates and to show how the two things when added together become a negative. The Minister, I hope with the same alacrity, approved the applications which were put to him for news print to be imported from Trinidad because he told us a little while ago he is reading all the newspapers and the *Mirror*. He referred to the *Mirror* but he must know and he should have told the House that the *Mirror* is only being printed on week days on a four-page basis and the reason is that his Ministry refused to grant the original licence in time. I hope that he will move with

alacrity to approve immediately the application which is on his desk and which he knows about. I am not referring to the application for equipment b the application for a licence to import newsprint from Trinidad so that the newspaper can be produce on the old basis as before.

Mr. Ram Karran: I must say that I am disappointed in the hon. Minister's reply to the question on subhead 12 on which I asked a question and with which my colleague and friend dealt.

The Chairman: Your colleague and Leader.

Mr. Ram Karran: And friend as well. Since 1969 the Government has been telling us that it is going to set up a Bureau of Standards. Nothing has been done about it while the people are poisoned – I say poisoned advisedly – by things produced in Guyana and poisons imported from abroad. How is the Government going to house the nation by 1976? It is going to house them in tombs by 1976 if we do not do enough to ensure that we have – not the research that his colleague told us about, not the spending of \$20,000 under this Head, but the spending of some money in the Analyst Department so that the Department can test, can examine through some Bureau or some Specification Board, no matter what it is called, as provided for under the umbrella of the Food and Drugs Act.

Why did we go to the trouble, sitting until midnight, to pass that Bill? We were told by the then Minister of Health that it was necessary and important that we should have this legislation to protect the lives of the community. That Bill has been passed and yet we see things manufactured in Guyana without any specifications on them as should be done, because the Government has not taken the trouble to make the necessary legislation and orders to enforce these things on the people even though we might be stumbling along to set up a Bureau of Standards or something equivalent to it.

We had actually passed some money in this House for the Technical Institute and we were told that was a small beginning to the Bureau of Standards so far as engineering things were concerned. Why is the Government holding its hands? It reminds me of my friend the hon. Minister Mr. Cheeks who when he was the Minister of Local Government told us that some invisible hand was holding his and preventing him from enacting legislation to bring order in some of the thing that Bookers was doing. Is Bookers behind the Government? If this is so and the Government lets us know, we are going to agitate against Bookers, we are going to help the Government to see that a Bureau of Standards or some equivalent organization is set up in the country and we are going to initiate, if the Government wishes to do so, money for the setting up of such an institution for the protection of Guyanese people, for the babies, the mothers, for all of us. We do not want the nation to be housed in tombs by 1976. We want them to be healthy and virile and we offer the support to the hon. Minister if he will give us the assurance that the Government will spend money in the direction.

Mr. Hope: I just want to make one remark relating to the question of so-called "alacrity" with which approval was given to the company to borrow paper. The Opposition Leader said that another arm of the Government proceeded to negative. That I do not know of. I do not know whether consistency has ceased to exist in that party because what I was told last week was that the company voluntarily did not take advantage of that permission because paper landed in Guyana from Trinidad and I signed an import release to permit that paper to be cleared from the Customs. So what the Leader of the Opposition had said is not very consistent. I signed the papers last week.

Dr. Jagan: Since the hon. Member intervened perhaps I had better inform him to put the record straight. What the Minister signed was an application or some kind of permit, that the Customs was waiting for ten rolls which were the balance of a shipment which came in June. The ten rolls will not be sufficient to tide the company over. The new newsprint application which the Minister approved will come sometime in late January.

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I personally spoke to the Managing Director of the Guyana Graphic, and to one of the directors of the *Evening Post*. I tried several times to get in touch with Mr. Wilkinson from Guyana Printers Ltd. But up to now I cannot get him. He is obviously hiding. The Minister is really misinforming the House.

The company obviously needs more newsprint right now but it cannot get from the other newspapers because of the long arm of the Government and that is why it is now applying for another permit to get a further supply from Trinidad. This application is now before the Minister. It is therefore not true to say that because the Minister facilitated the company to get these ten rolls the company did not try to get from the other companies operating in Guyana.

4.55 p.m.

Dr. Jagan continued

The other companies are afraid. This is the whole problem, because pressures have been put on them.

Mr. Hope: I do not know whether the Hon. Leader of the Opposition misunderstands me, and I do not know what is truth of the matter which exists within his party. I can only say what a member of his party told me as the reason why they were no longer and voluntarily not taking advantage of the offer. I am not concerned with the *Chronicle*. I am not working with the *Chronicle* or the *Graphic*. I am not attempting to mislead the House. I would not. All I am saying is the fact. I gave authority, as applied for, for the New Guyana Company to borrow rolls of paper from other local companies. Subsequently, I was told by a member of that party that they did not take advantage of that permission because paper had since landed for them from Trinidad. That is all I am saying, what I was told, but what the Opposition is saying is something else. If there is any inconsistency in that party, that is his problem.

Head 65, Ministry of Trade - \$3,269,305 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 194.

HEAD 66 - MINISTRY OF FINANCE

Question proposed that the sum of \$266,966 for Head 66, Ministry of Finance, stand part of the Estimates.

Mr. M.F. Singh: Page 194, item (17), Responsibility Allowances. I should like the hon. Minister to explain the situation here. It is somewhat confusing. Apparently this head appeared first in the Estimates and the actual expenditure in 1971 was \$20; then the Approved Estimates for 1972 showed \$10; but the Revised Estimates, which is the sum that they expect to spend for this year, show \$13,264. Yet, in 1973, again the sum of \$10 appears, not a token provision of \$1, maybe it is a token provision of \$10. Is the hon. Minister satisfied that this is really giving a realistic impression?

If the Government is going to spend \$13,264 in 1972, should it not provide something in the region of that in 1973, unless the situation will change? If the situation will change, perhaps I would go onto ask the hon. Minister, will he please explain the responsibility allowances, to whom are these responsibility allowances payable? For example, in 1972, who received this \$13,264, on what basis? Has the Government a fixed policy on people, these people above their head? How many of them received, in what proportion, and what sums, and will they receive it again next year?

As I am on my feet, I may well ask the question, the same question in relation to item (19), Duty Allowances. To whom are the duty allowances payable? The sum of \$480 was

provided in 1972, revised in 1972 to \$600, but now we are back to the same principle, now back to \$480. In the one case it was a token provision of \$10. In this case, it is a provision of \$480.

Overtime allowances, item (18), perhaps one can understand a token provision. In 1972, there is the estimated actual of \$1,336 but they have gone back to \$10 in the Estimates for 1973. One can understand that in respect of overtime allowances but we find it difficult to understand the variation in respect of responsibility allowances and duty allowances.

Mr. Hope: The responsibility allowance is an allowance which is payable when a circumstance develops. It is payable on the authority of the Public Service Ministry. No one knows when the circumstance will arise. What therefore is usually provided is a token provision. Public Officers indifferent circumstances will probably get a responsibility allowance but that will not last more than a few months so that there is no basis on which to make an estimate, because the circumstances that occur in one year will not necessarily recur in the following year. In fact, by the time the year is ended, those circumstances may have disappeared, so what is usually provided is nothing more than a token provision, and the \$10 put there is a token provision.

I cannot say the duty allowance is a different matter. Here again, it is received by an officer after the Public Service Ministry has examined his case or circumstance and has given the necessary permission. I think there are one or probably two officers in the Ministry who are probably in receipt of a duty allowance. These are very junior people. Duty allowances are provided where overtime in other circumstances would have been payable. The person has to do work way and beyond the official hours but normally, overtime is not payable, and in those circumstances a duty allowance is paid. That, again, is paid after the Public Service Ministry has examined the circumstances and has recommended it.

Head 66, Ministry of Finance - \$266,966 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 195 and 196.

**HEAD 67 - MINISTRY OF FINANCE
ACCOUNTANT GENERAL**

Question proposed that the sum of \$1,974,338 for Head 67, Ministry of Finance, Accountant General, stand part of the Estimates.

Mr. Ram Karran: May I raise a short question on subhead 1 item (1).

Mr. Jagan: Subheads 10, 18, and 20

Mr. Lall: Subhead 21.

Mr. Sutton: Page 195, subhead 1, items (15) and (16).

Mr. M.F. Singh: Subhead 12.

Mr. Ram Karran: May I in the first case draw the attention of the House to the transfer of the various offices of the Ministry of Finance to the building in Lamaha Street and the Avenue of the Republic and the confusion that exists in that building which, though new, is still inadequate, except of course it has expensive tiling and ceiling. To my mind, a complete waste of the taxpayers' money. Not only that, but the frequent changes of Ministers, today you are here, tomorrow you are there, and the other day you are everywhere.

5.05 p.m.

The Government does not seem to have made up its mind as to how the Ministries are to be composed so that there is a waste of taxpayers' money and a waste of paper I hope that the

Government has reached the stage, after eight years, where it know exactly where it is going, what Ministries to set up and who to attach to which.

The observation I made under this same Head is this: At the beginning of the Second Reading debate I made reference to the fact that the Government has spent a lot of money for the employment of special hands for the collection of fines and so on. In 1973, however, we notice on folio 6 that the amount that the Government expects to collect in 1973 is the same amount that was in the Approved Estimates for 1972, which is slightly higher than the revised estimate for 1972. All that the Government expects to collect is \$650,000 although it has gone to the expense of employing a lot of staff for the serving of writs and what not.

I should like to point out to the hon. Minister, under the Head, Accountant-General, that there are a number of constables who are employed with the Government to collect and deliver summonses to those young men who owe affiliation dues to mothers. Although these men have been taking their work very seriously and have been distributing the necessary documents, when they go to Mr. Barnwell they are told that the Government has no money to pay. These amounts are paid through the Accountant-General's office and cannot be paid unless the Registry authorizes payment. Most of these people are told that no money is available and they cannot be paid. It is shameful.

The other day the hon. Minister asked this Council to pass a measure whereby the Government could pay some of the small people involved in the T.U.C. housing scheme. The Government cannot woe these workers even though, technically speaking, they are not employees but are on some kind of contract. These constables work day and night. In fact, most of their work is done in the night because absconding fathers keep out of the way in the day. When they have finished that work they go to Mr. Barnwell and are told that there is no money. In one case over \$100 was owing to these people.

I would like to ask the hon. Minister to ensure that these things do not recur and that payment is made to these persons when they submit their documents.

Dr. Jagan: Sir, I refer to subheads 10, 18, and 20 because they seem to be related. They deal with expenses for Conferences held in Guyana or abroad and expenses for Official Missions and Visitors to Guyana. This country is spending a fantastic sum under these subheads. Let us compare the position with the year 1964. I have the estimates here and I was just getting out the figures. Where we now have the sum of \$45,000 to be voted under subhead 10 for Expenses for Commissions, Committees and Conferences held in Guyana it was \$13,000 in 1964.

Subhead 18, Special visits and Representation at External Conferences, has a provision of \$475,000. In 1964 the vote was \$92,000 and may I remind the Government that the P.P.P. used to be criticized for wasting taxpayers' money. This year the sum is \$475,000. Perhaps the Minister will tell us the reason for the increase from \$200,000 last year to \$475,000 this year.

The provision for Expenses of Official Missions and Visitors to Guyana, subhead 20, was a round \$5,000 in 1964. Now it is \$20,000. This is how money is being wasted and squandered and this is why little things cannot be done to help the poor people, the small man.

I am sorry that I have to keep referring to things like beds in hospitals. Why cannot some of this money be spent for those things? The back-benchers who have to deal with the people should question these amounts and really see to it that some stop is put to this extravagance.

You must begin to question whether some of these are not in the nature of joy rides. Or is it that the fantastic allowances which are paid now to Ministers and others have caused expenditure to increase so much? I assume that this is the reason. Perhaps the Minister will be good enough to tell us what is the *per diem* allowance paid to Ministers when they go abroad to Conferences.

Mr. Sutton: May I refer to items (15) and (16) of subhead 1. Item (15), Machine Operators, Grade III, has a provision of \$20,596 and item (16), Accounting and General Clerks, shows \$43,520. Looking at the actual figures for 1970, 1971 and 1972, it would appear that some attempt is being made to mechanise the accounting processes of this department.

One would feel that if that is so there should be a reduction in the number of clerks involved because as the machine operators become efficient one would expect the accounting clerks to be absorbed in other directions.

Apparently this could be Government's intention. When we look at the figures for the accounting clerks we see that the actual amount expended in 1970 was \$46,000. The actual amount in 1971 is \$61,315 and the approved estimate for 1972 was \$42,746. It would appear that the Ministry expects an amount of \$55,451 to be spent for that is the sum shown under the Revised Estimates. Although there is a steady climb upward the Ministry still budgets for \$43,520 in 1973.

Would the Minister be good enough to tell us if that is so because the Ministry expects that the training of machine operators will at last show a dent in the number of clerks. If not, why budget for an amount which is obviously smaller than the amount you need if one is to judge from the amounts that have so far been spent?

5.15 p.m.

Mr. M.F. Singh: I am speaking on the next page, subhead 12, Loss of Public Money and Stores. We note in the 1972 Approved Estimates, the sum of \$5,000 was provided, Revised Estimates \$20,000, and the Estimates for 1973, \$20,000. It would appear as though the Government feels that loss of public money and stores will rise from the figure in the Approved Estimates, \$5,000, to the figure that was the estimated revised in 1972, \$20,000, and that increased figure of \$20,000 will again occur in 1973.

I have spoken time and again recently, of frauds, particularly in the post offices by postmasters, and in other government departments. The hon. Minister of Works and Communications, Mr. Desmond Hoyte, accused me of being inconsistent. He said I criticized the increase in the number of policemen at the post offices while criticizing their increase in the number of frauds in the post offices. I did not reply to him then but I take the opportunity now of saying I did not know that you used policemen to police the accounting system in the post offices. I thought it was more a question of examining the accounting system.

What is it that permits these people to indulge in these frauds over a relatively long period? The recent cases have shown that frauds have been committed over a long period and suddenly by a little slip, as usually happens, the person is caught up with. What I would like to ask the hon. Minister, what has been done with in recent times to examine the accounting systems generally in Government departments to reduce the incidence of fraud? Obviously, there must be something wrong with the accounting system somewhere along the line. Has anything been done to streamline that system? As long as human nature remains what it is, we know we cannot totally eliminate it.

In respect of subhead 18, Special Visits and Representation at External Conferences, I share with the hon. Leader of the Opposition his apprehension at this large sum, \$475,000, being provided. I will not repeat what the hon. Leader of the Opposition has said except to say that in my view and in the view of a lot of other people, charity should begin at home and our first priority should be to improve the lot of the small man in Guyana rather than spending on these special external visits. Let us do things to really make the small man a real man in Guyana. There must be some amount spent, but certainly not \$1/2 million.

On Subhead 24, Overseas Service Aid Scheme, the sum of \$81,200 is provided. I would like the hon. Minister to tell us how many people are involved in this scheme, how the scheme operates. There are a lot of different figures listed for different things.

Mr. Hope: Sir, let me answer the questions not entirely in order, but at random. The question was raised about the amount provided for loss of public money and stores. The fact that the money is there is no encouragement for thefts and frauds. As the member of the Opposition observes, even though \$20,000 was provided in 1972, only \$5,000 was spent. *(Interruption)* Perhaps the hon. Member did not hear me. I said although \$20,000 was provided originally in 1972, the Revised Estimates indicate that only \$5,000 would be spent. *(Interruption)* Though the Government would obviously not encourage frauds, if frauds occur, the vote has been provided for the financing of that fraud, in a sense. But these refer to very junior people. Where there are other kinds of frauds mentioned by the hon. Member, the post offices and so on, I think there is a special reserve fund, the public officers default fund, which provides the money to meet any losses occurring.

We have in fact been able to identify frauds. It is for this reason that they have been kept to a minimum. It is not a fault of the accounting system because the accounting system reveals the fraud, but what may have happened is the fraud may have taken place and was discovered afterwards. The accounting system threw up the discrepancy but what we are talking about is expenditure which runs into more than \$200 million, and what we are talking about is a fraud, unfortunately of \$20,000. I can assure the hon. Member that the Government has improved its auditing department and is making every effort to ensure that frauds do not occur. But we are dealing with human beings and you do come up against a situation where they cannot resist the temptation to steal. *(Interruption)* If the hon. Member wants to justify it like that, perhaps, but we do not justify it at all.

The other question relates to the monies which have been spent on certain heads for dealing with travelling expenses, special visits and representation at external conferences, and an attempt was made to compare what was spent in 1973 with what was in 1964. The situations are not the same; 1964 is not 1972. The Hon. Leader of the Opposition constantly reminded us that in 1964, Guyana was not independent, and at least in that he is right. We are dealing with an Independent Guyana which has established external relationships, and of all kinds, and I do not

think that any member who is responsible will want to tell this House that Guyana in the circumstances of a small country existing in the world today, must be insular and must not seek to establish relationships with other people abroad.

5.25 p.m.

This is the price that we have to pay for our independence. We have established relationships, we have to spend. Obviously the Government has used a pruning knife on this thing. In fact expenditure has been kept to the minimum, but when you have Conferences – Commonwealth Ministers Conferences relating to the Non-Aligned Movement, Conferences relating to the establishment of an E.E.C., Conferences relating to the deepening of Carifta – is it surprising that we would have external representation? These must put up the cost.

Perhaps the hon. Member has forgotten how financing takes place. This vote finances all external visits that take place everywhere in the Public Service.

Dr. Jagan: “Tell us why the increase from \$200,000 to \$475,000.”)

Finally, a question was asked about the per diem allowance of Ministers. Ministers get a per diem of \$60 (G.). Perhaps the hon. Member when he travels abroad travels on a free ticket with free accommodation but Ministers have to pay for their accommodation. I expect the member will not know this but the most ordinary hotel in New York, costs no less than \$20 (U.S.) per day plus tax and that is just per room. If one really recalls that and realizes that, one will recognize that \$60 per diem is a most economical figure.

Secondly a lot of talk went on about half a million dollars for external representation and about spending the money on the small but the per head cost is less than 60 cents. It is 60 cents for a whole year.

Then the hon. Member Mr. Ram Karran attempted a large number of unrelated –

The Chairman: He said “observations”.

Mr. Hope: - observations. I do not intend to observe them except to say that I have noted what he said. I want to say one thing. The Member constantly said, to mislead the House, that the Ministry of Finance is now housed in sumptuous quarters. This, of course, is obviously an over-statement to the most reasonable observer. In fact, the Ministry in this building was over-crowded, so over-crowded that you could not expect people to work efficiently in those quarters. What we have now is quarters which permits them a little more elbow room and surroundings which are a little more pleasant so that they can do their work with efficiency.

Dr. Jagan: The Minister avoided me even though I was trying to heckle him. Since I get up formally he will hear me now. I would like him to give us an explanation why the vote for Special Visits and Representation at External Conferences has increased from \$200,000 to \$475,000. The increase is more than a hundred per cent. There must be some explanation for this extraordinary increase.

Mr. Hope: I mentioned before that we have the E.E.C. negotiations coming up.

Head 67, Ministry of Finance, Accountant General - \$1,974,338, agreed to and ordered to stand part of the estimates.

HEAD 68 - MINISTRY OF FINANCE CUSTOMS AND EXCISE

Question proposed that the sum of \$1,879,386 for Head 68, Ministry of Finance, Accountant General, stand part of the Estimates.

Mr. Ran Karran: I would like to speak on subhead 1 (1) and on subhead 8.

Mrs. DaSilva: I would like to ask two questions on the Head, Customs and Eccise.

Mr. Feilden Singh: I wish to speak specifically on item (23) on page 197.

Mr. Ram Karran: Sir, the hon. Minister was just referring to his own office which I can describe as being above standard in Government departments. I wish to draw the hon. Minister's attention to the question I asked last year about the old building we used to call the Queen's Warehouse on the Atlantic which has been baptized "State Warehouse". What is the Government doing about this building and what is the Government doing about that building in Main Street in which the Customs Department is housed?

I am afraid that one of these days Beryl Simon is going to pull those buildings down as she threatened to the other day. Something has to be done about them. You cannot have people working under cramped conditions, conditions that will bring ailments to them.

And may I point out that there is congestion at the G.P.O. where the Customs section is housed. There is congestion not only during the Christmas season but throughout the year because of the inadequate space.

I recall that years ago parcels of books coming to people were delivered to their homes. Today every little parcel has to be checked. I do not know if they are checking for dope or for guns. In the old colonial days when there was greater need for fear these parcels were delivered to homes. They checked and delivered every single thing.

The other day the Minister was telling us about his grandiose plans for building the post office. You cannot go to any post office; even though you are living in Lochaber you have to come to Georgetown to get these things because the Customs forms are sent to your home.

We are independent now and we should have better facilities. I hope that in a short while the hon. Minister will be able to tell us how the small man and the poor man can get some ease.

While we are on this Head I would like to refer to subhead B, Revenue Protection, and to remind the House again and the hon. Minister, who is new, that we have raised this question previously. Hon. Members have raised this question about Revenue Protection. A lot of this money goes down the drain. I hope that the hon. Minister will make a check as to how this money is spent, to satisfy himself that it is really spent in the best interest of the people.

Mrs. DaSilva: As we all know, many Guyanese have relatives abroad in England, Canada and the United States. Would the hon. Minister give a brief resume of the position with regard to Christmas gifts or any gift coming from these countries, I am talking about countries we trade with – England, Canada, and United States. People are very confused as to the position. Very often a kind relative would be willing to send a gift but persons write and say, “Don’t send it because it is banned and I can’t get it; the Government will take it. I would be glad if the gentlemen of the Press would listen and clarify it for me and for the ordinary Guyanese who do not know what can come in, what can or cannot be done.

5.35 p.m.

If a friend from any of those three countries mentioned sends a fruit cake, for example, which contains fruit which is banned, it may contain wine which is also banned, would a person be allowed to receive it? The second question I would like to ask the hon. Minister on this matter is, could he tell the House – I would like the press to give this a lot of publicity for the sake of people who have turned down good unsolicited gifts – what happens to the goods that are seized from countries with which we do not trade, say like Portugal? Do these gifts go to the poor, the orphanages, or if they know the name and address of the sender, do they return to sender or what do they do with them? I would hate to suggest that they eat them in the Customs Department.

Mr. M.F. Singh: Page 197, item (23), Porters and Handymen. When one reads the legend, it states: "Overprovided in 1972," meaning that in 1972, \$30,000, was provided in the Approved Estimates and in the 1973 estimates they reduce that to \$24,832. The figure in the Revised Estimates for 1972 is way over \$30,000; it is \$41,043; the actual expenditure for 1971 is \$43,460, and the actual expenditure in 1970 is \$45,282. Why is the Government providing in 1973 \$24,000? What is the explanation? It does not make sense.

Mr. Hope: The hon. Member has belaboured a very simple point. The allocation is an error, it should not have been there at all.

To answer the question about the importation of prohibited goods, I think the hon. Member is repeating her question. Obviously, she expects to get a better answer from me than she got from a previous Minister this same week. The entry of no goods would be denied unless the law has prohibited the entry of those goods. I repeat, the entry of no goods would be denied by the customs authorities unless there is a law prohibiting the importation of those goods into Guyana.

I also say, even an unsolicited gift is an importation, so that if the particular goods came to you from Canada, for example, if the customs denies the entry, they are prohibited goods. Coming from Portugal, the goods may not be prohibited goods, but trade between Guyana and Portugal is prohibited and therefore unsolicited goods are really an importation and, as such it is against the law.

In fact, the customs will destroy the goods and, further, the person so importing the goods is in fact liable to a fine. The customs authorities just seize the goods. I think the customs authorities are being lenient because the law provides in those circumstances for a fine to be imposed. I would suggest that the friend should be advised that prohibited good cannot be allowed in the country merely on the assumption that they are unsolicited gift. I hope I have made myself quite clear.

The hon. Member Mr. Ram Karran, he is slightly inconsistent. He says that we have too much space in one Ministry and then he wants to belabour the Government for having a section of the post office overcrowded. If a section of the post office is overcrowded, this is expected. The affairs of a Government are a dynamic thing. They grow and if they outgrow their space, then adequate space will have to be provided, but then adequate space is not just enough, because growth takes place and when you change you have to leave place for more growth. That is the normal reaction to a growth situation.

I do not think the hon. Member was in fact referring to anything which can be described as bureaucratic. He was talking about parcels. The Customs building, in this year's estimates, provision has been made for work to be done in the Main Street head office as well as to extend it to provide more space for the public, as well as to rehabilitate the warehouse on the sea wall. I think sir, those are all the questions.

Mrs. DaSilva: On a point of correction and clarification. I would ----

The Chairman: If it is on the gift, I am not allowing that. It has been explained clearly on two occasions.

Mrs. DaSilva: I do not wish to contradict the hon. Minister.

Head 68, Ministry of Finance, Customs and Excise - \$1,879,386 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 199 and 200.

MINISTRY OF FINANCE

HEAD 69

INLAND REVENUE

Question proposed that the sum of \$2,296,107 for Head 69, Ministry of Finance, Inland Revenue, stand part of the Estimates.

Mr. Lall: Subhead 8.

Mr. Ram Karran: Subheads 8 and 12.

Mr. Balchand Persaud: Subhead 1 item (3).

Mrs. DaSilva: A general question.

The Chairman: The hon. Member Mr. Ram Karran.

Mr. Ram Karran: On subhead 8, Refunds of Revenue, I would have thought that with the introduction of the P.A.Y.E. system by the Government some years ago, we would have reached the stage, at least this year, in the eight year of the P.N.C. Government's reign, that refunds would have been automatic. The hon. Minister will confirm that hundreds of thousands, and this is no exaggeration, of the taxpayers' money lie with the Government.

The Chairman: More than hundreds of thousands, \$1.2 million.

Mr. Ram Karran: No. This is probably what will be paid out. I am telling you about the amount that is not paid out.

People are waiting to get their money and they cannot. As in the case of Mr. Barnwell, you go there and in two or three months' time you are told that there is no money. You cannot go on like that. In many countries of the world where the P.A.Y.E. system exists, payment of

refunds is automatic. The taxpayer receives his cheque at home. I wonder whether the Government is moving to that stage where people will not have to be treated in this manner.

It will be recalled that the hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs and Attorney-General (Mr. Ramphal), before he got the title of Minister of Foreign Affairs, had indicated to the Select Committee set up by this House to deal with abortion, matrimonial causes and divorce, that the Government was thinking of giving to women who were living with men and not legally married to them the right to succession.

I wonder whether the Government is thinking in the same direction in so as income tax returns are concerned, because a large part of our community, particularly the Indian community, those working on sugar estates, are not given the allowances as if they were legally married.

It is a severe hardship on people who earn a very small income where man, wife and children have to work in order to bring in enough money for the house to be run. While the law at the moment does not permit them to be treated as I suggest, that is, as if they were legally married, I do not think the Government will be stretching itself too far to make an exception in this case where women living with men but not married to them are given the allowance of \$600 per annum.

We are moving – according to the Government we are there already – to the position where the small man is being made a real man and this would be one move on the part of the Government to make the small women real women by allowing them to earn the allowance as if they were legally married. We live in a community where the common law wife is a fact and it happens in a large section of the Guyanese community with people of all races.

I strongly urge upon the hon. Minister to give some consideration to this question.

I move on to the question of the toll gate. I notice that since 1970 sums of money to the tune of nearly \$500,000 have been spent under subhead 12, Expenses, Operation of Road Toll Systems. We know that the toll gate on the road to Linden is used but we have seen the structures on the Corentyne road attended by policemen at all hours of the day and night at a tremendous cost to the taxpayers of this country. If it is the Government's intention not to pursue this it is time that the policemen be removed or the structures demolished. It is no use spending all this money when the Government can get nothing from them.

Mr. Balchand Persaud: I have chosen this Head to make a short observation and to ask the hon. Minister a question.

The Government has been seeking provision under various subheads and items by token provision of \$10 and \$100. The Revised Estimates show that in 1972 the sum of nearly \$2.2 million was spent on these different subheads where token sums were allocated.

I wish to ask the hon. Minister whether this is another technique of the Government to hide the actual expenditure on the Current Estimates for 1973 so that the Government can show a surplus on the current account of \$439, 639.

5.45 p.m.

Mrs. DaSilva: In these very hard days practically every wife is a working wife. Would the hon. Minister care to tell us if any consideration is being given to the question of the assessment of a working wife's income separately? How soon does he propose to consider the matter? As it is now a working wife's income is added to her husband's income and that automatically pushes him into a higher bracket before the deduction is taken off.

I understand that in many countries of the world working wives have their incomes assessed separately. This business of putting the wife's income onto the husband's and placing

them in a higher bracket practically nullifies her efforts and the energy she puts into trying to earn extra money to keep her family to help buy school books, milk or anything else you can think of, for her children.

There is a short ancillary question. It is well known that if the Inland Revenue department owes you money and you owe it an amount, you cannot offset one against the other. You have to pay what you owe or pay interest on it.

Could the hon. Minister say what is being done to speed up the refund of money that is due to people? Some people have been waiting for years for a refund. Can he say what is being done? Also, would he say if it would not be worthwhile to offset the amount owed by the person with the amount owed by the Inland Revenue Department to that person?

Mr. Lall: Mr. Chairman, I should like the hon. Minister of Finance and Trade to know that the sugar workers, especially those who are paying income tax on the P.A.Y.E. system, are going through terrible difficulties to get refunds. I am asking the Minister whether a system cannot be worked out so that sugar workers could be repaid as early as possible when funds are over-deducted.

Last week I drew to the attention of the Minister concerned that deductions were made from the pay packets of workers at Uitvlugt who received a production bonus. Code numbers are given to the workers there and the estate authorities are aware of the code numbers. A man was supposed to have an allowance of \$3,600 and money was deducted from his wages after he had earned only \$2,000.

I have drawn this to the attention of the Commissioner of Inland Revenue. The Minister invited the Commissioner to his office and the Commissioner said he did not give the estate authority permission to make the deduction. When I contacted the estate authority I was told that

under the existing law the authority would be going against the law if it did not make a deduction.

I am asking the Minister to see that certain amendments are made so that the system could be easier for workers. I may say that last week the workers at L.B.I. received their bonus and no deduction was made. Therefore, I would like the Minister to have a word with the sugar companies because this is causing a lot of inconvenience to sugar workers. They must be precise on what they are doing.

5.55 p.m.

Mr. Hope: The point raised by the last speaker would be looked at by the Commissioner. As we know, sir, as the member knows, it is a question of law and the law does not discriminate.

May I state with regard to a separate assessment for working wives, I do not think the member is aware of the arithmetic of the situation. If a working wife were to be assessed separately, she would get an allowance of \$800 – personal. If she is assessed together with her husband as presently, she will get \$600 as an allowance plus a working wife's allowance of \$400, so by virtue of her being assessed together with her husband as one, she gets on her behalf an allowance of \$1,000. That was the position since 1970.

The Chairman: She was raising the point that when a woman's income is assessed with that of the husband, it puts his assessment in a higher income bracket.

Mr. Hope: This is a question of tax policy, sir, and as you know, a fiscal review committee sat in 1970. It took representations from a wide cross section of people. This same matter was raised and the Committee decided that they will not recommend a change, and the situation stands at that now. It is a question of pure tax policy.

The refunds of revenue, what is being done now is that the refunds are being speeded up. My advice is that the taxpayers are getting their refunds much faster now than in the past. In fact, it appears that the hon. Member does not have very recent experience of paying taxes because I am also advised that refunds are posted as soon as they become available and what the department has been doing speeding up these refunds. But there are difficulties. If a taxpayer's P.A.Y.E. is deducted, but he does not submit his form on time, he would not get a refund because the refund is based on the assessment, and the assessment is based on that information. Similarly, if the employer does not honour his legal responsibilities adequately, and submits inconsistent information in regard to what was in fact deducted, a delay occurs and very often this is the root of the delay.

Finally, the Member raised the matter of the toll gate on the Corentyne. I can assure him that something will be done soon. Another question was raised as regards actual expenditure. I do not know how the Member got his addition. I am not sure with what reliability one should accept his assertion of \$2 million. Even if one accepts that, this says nothing about actual expenditure. Actual Expenditure comes two years after. I said earlier on another item that we project on some sound basis, and if there is no sound basis to project, you cannot project. In those circumstances, you can only recognize that a situation would arise where you may have to make a payment and then in that case you make a token provision. These are situations which cannot be accurately projected. If we spend more with regard to these items, there are numerous other items where you spend less, so in fact it balances out.

Mr. Balchand Persaud: Just a small observation. The Government shows a surplus of \$439,639, which means that the expenditure which is projected, based on the 1972 Estimates, will be \$2.2 million.

The Chairman: The hon. Minister has replied that they under estimated and overestimated, so it balances.

Mr. Balchand Persaud: This indicates there is a surplus in the current account.

Head 69, Ministry of Finance, Inland Revenue - \$2,296,107 – agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 201.

HEAD 70 - MINISTRY OF FINANCE

POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK

Question proposed that the sum of \$72,945 for Head 70, Ministry of Finance, Post Office Savings Bank, stand part of the Estimates.

Dr. Jagan: I would like to ask the hon. Minister what is the position now with the Post Office Savings Bank generally. I refer to this because I have not seen any recent reports as regards the amount of savings. How is the Post Office Savings bank doing since the National Co-operative Bank has come into being?

As I understand it, the National Co-operative Bank gives a much higher rate of interest on savings than the Post Office Savings Bank. I understand that as a result, a lot of the funds were raided, so to speak. In other words, people made transfers from one bank to another. If this is so, then Government should examine it because we notice that the expenditure under this Head is increasing quite significantly over a period of time. Perhaps the hon. Minister will tell us what is the real position, whether the business of the bank is increasing or whether it is diminishing, and if so, by how much.

Mr. Hope: Sir, the hon. Leader of the Opposition once had a facility for statistics and he then would have observed that the decline of business in the Post Office was an event which took

place before the establishment of the co-op bank. In fact, the co-op bank has nothing to do with a decline in the business of the Post Office Savings Bank. What has been happening, and one recognizes clearly, that the business of the Post Office Savings Bank has been declining for a number of years and the growth of branch banking in the rural districts has been substantially responsibility for this.

6.05 p.m.

In addition to this, the commercial banks offer an accommodation of service which the Post Office Savings Bank cannot. They give loans. The Post Office Savings Bank does not and because of this, too, the business naturally tends towards the commercial banks.

In addition to that, the Post Office Savings Bank at the moment is offering a similar rate of interest on savings deposits as the commercial banks. The same 3½ per cent is offered by all banks. There is no difference as far as I know in the rate of interest offered by the Post Office Savings bank and the commercial banks, including the Co-operative Bank.

In fact, the Co-operative Bank has nothing to do whatsoever with the decline in business of the Post Office Savings Bank. As I said before, the study of statistics will indicate that the deposits in the Post Office Savings Bank have been declining for years before the Co-operative Bank came on the scene.

Recently we have been looking at this question of the future of the Post Office Savings Bank. We have not yet concluded our examination but it is something which at the present time is attracting our interest and attention.

Dr. Jagan: I wonder if I could just make one observation. The Government has stated that its objective is to miniaturise the commercial and private banks. The Minister also said a moment ago that the interest rate on savings is the same. But one must appreciate that lots of

people get high rates by making time deposits and this probable is another factor why you may have a decline.

I refer to the Government's philosophy of minaturising the banks and I would like, in connection with that, to remind the Minister – perhaps the Minister knows that in the P.P.P.'s time information was given to the Treasury. I found it out for myself that in some countries the Post Office Savings Banks or the Post Offices were taking on banking functions.

I had asked that this should be examined. Of course you know we could not nationalize banks or anything in our time and this was what we were thinking of in order to circumvent this question of not being able to nationalize, in other words, to use the Post Offices all over the country as virtual banking concerns. (*Interruption*) When you are run a truly national Government and you run it through democracy then you will have the co-operation you are talking of. Since the Government says this is its philosophy why is this not being done today?

I ask this question because this is in keeping with their philosophy. The Treasury knows about this enquiry which was made long before the P.N.C. came into office. What have they done about it? What we hear now is perhaps the closing down of these banks. Maybe the co-operative bank will be going into the country and trying to compete with the other banks.

Mr. Hope: Quite frankly, I do not understand the thrust of the hon. Member's comments. The facts are that what the Government has done is to think a little bigger than the previous Government did. What the previous Government was probably thinking of was a banking department within the post office department. What the present Government has done is to set up a separate banking system outside the Post Office Department so it can grow and bring to fruition Government's policy of miniaturizing the foreign commercial banks in Guyana. The fact is that this bank which has been set up by the Government, the National Co-operative Bank, has been expanding not only in terms of its financial resources but in terms of its branch banking

facilities and to the extent that it has been able to do this, to that extent it has made the Post Office obsolete as a banking institution.

In addition to that, in order to facilitate the flow of savings into the bank the co-op bank is using the Post Office as its agent for collecting savings and for dispensing of withdrawals.

In fact, what we have done is a little bit bigger than the previous Government was contemplating. It is a separate institution.

Head 70, Ministry of Finance, Post Office Savings Bank - \$72,945, agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates

HEAD 71 - MINISTRY OF FINANCE

PENSIONS AND GRATUITIES

Question proposed that the sum of \$888,355 for Head 71, Ministry of Finance, Pensions and Gratuities, stand part of the Estimates.

Mr. Ram Karran: I wish to make an observation on subhead 9, Special Allowances to Non Pensionable Officers with 20 years' service and over and subhead 10, Gratuities to Non-Pensionable officers and Employees and their Dependents.

I wish to draw to the hon. Minister's attention the fact that there is severe uneasiness among a group of men who, according to the law, contracted to serve the Government until the age 60. They have all their plans in life, they got their children at their convenience to be able to maintain them satisfactorily up to the age 60, they made plans for their mortgages because they expected to be earning to the age 60.

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I wonder if the hon. Minister will give some attention to this fact rather than arbitrarily decide that these people, who have contracted to work to age 60, should go off at age 55. The Government should have a high moral standard and it cannot arbitrarily cause so much uneasiness, so much pain and despair to so many people just because its policy is to miniaturise this or to miniaturise that. The time is long past for that. For a Guyanese native Government to do that to its own people is shocking and, indeed, disgraceful.

Dr. Jagan: I should like to make another observation, that is, that the general inflationary trend in Guyana is obviously creating difficulties not only for the ordinary working man but for the people who are in receipt of pensions.

If we look at the total amount being expended we will see that pensions and gratuities have increased from \$3.3 million in 1964 to a little less than \$5.7 million in 1973. The is less than 100 per cent increase. But when we compare other things like personal emoluments there is an increase from \$28 million to \$72 million. The percentage increase is far more. I just refer to that as one example.

In other words I am making a plea for the Government to do something about this whole question of rates for pensioners, generally, because people who entered the service many years ago and contracted to work for a long number of years expected that when they retire, they will have a certain amount of money which will maintain them at a certain standard of living to which they had got accustomed. We know today the value of the Guyana dollar is worthless and so I would ask the Government to give this matter some consideration. There must be a pro rata

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increase. The bureaucracy is increasing by 200 per cent, 300, 400 percent. You must have social services and pensions increasing at the same rate. This is how one would say that the poor

man is becoming the real man, but otherwise, the rich will get richer and the gap will widen as it is already widening in this country.

Mr. Hope: Pensions like all fixed incomes, do suffer when there is any measure of price increase but I should assure the hon. Member that the pensioners do get an interim relief as public servants who are currently working at the same rates. In fact, the intention really is to review their pensions as well when public service is not accounted for purely on the basis of an increase in rates of pay. It is accounted for largely by an expansion in the service. We must expand because earlier I said that we are no longer a colony and we are a country of growth. Growth requires expenditure not only on capital terms but current as well.

Head 71, Ministry of Finance, Pensions and Gratuities - \$888,355 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Pages 203 to 211.

HEAD 72 - MINISTRY OF FINANCE

PUBLIC DEBT

Question proposed that the sum of \$10,000 for Head 72, Ministry of Finance, Public Debt, stand part of the Estimates.

Dr. Jagan: I would like the hon. Minister to say –

The Chairman: I am only allowing a question to be asked on the \$10,000. Discussions on statutory provisions are not allowed.

Dr. Jagan: When are we going to have an opportunity to speak. This is a question of public debt?

The Chairman: That will have to come some other time. The Standing Orders provide for this. With all your years in this House you ought to be able to get what you want.

Mr. Ram Karran: Subhead 506, Management of Guyana Government Loans. That is statutory.

The Chairman: Only one Head I am allowing. If you will look at it carefully you will see \$4,619,152 Statutory.

Mr. Ram Karran: That must be an error in publication. Certainly they cannot call management of Guyana Government loans. Statutory. I do not know if the hon. Minister will explain now.

Mr. Hope: "It is statutory."

Dr. Jagan: Subhead 471, U.K. Loans.

The Chairman: No. That is statutory.

Mr. Ram Karran: I wish to speak specifically on Guyana Government Loans.

Head 72, Ministry of Finance, Public Debt - \$10,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Page 212.

HEAD 73 - MINISTRY OF FINANCE

REVISION OF WAGES SALARIES AND RELATED PAYMENTS

Question proposed that the sum of \$10,000,200 for Head 73, Ministry of Finance, Revision of Wages Salaries and Related Payments, stand part of the Estimates.

Mr. Ram Karran: I wonder if I can compound all of that. What is the position in the exercise that the Government announced since 1969, the job evaluation exercise? Would the hon. Minister tell us specifically when Government will be in a position, notwithstanding what is recorded here, to give the civil servants an increase in emoluments, bearing in mind that in the past, every five years, there was a revision in salary, whether it was the colonial Government or the P.P.P. Government? It is eight years since this Government has been in office.

I should like to know if the hon. Minister would take the house into his confidence and tell us exactly what is happening, because I know that a large number of civil servants are not only fleeing the country but they are leaving the Service, some of them are going into private enterprise, others are getting away from Guyana. The quality of the service has deteriorated. The Minister must admit that.

The Chairman: Do you wish to reply, hon. Minister?

Mr. Hope: Out of courtesy, sir, not out of necessity. I have made a statement in the Budget Speech and all the hon. Member is requesting is in fact stated in the Budget Speech. I recommend that he reads it again.

Head 73, Ministry of Finance, Revision of Wages Salaries and Related Payments - \$10,000,2000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

DIVISION XXIX
MINISTRY OF FINANCE

Question proposed that the sum of \$24,291,000 for Division XXIX, Ministry of Finance, stand part of the Estimates.

Mr. Roahan Ally: Subhead 5.

Dr. Jagan: Subhead 1

Mr. Ram Karran: On Subhead 1, 2 and 8.

Dr. Jagan: On Subhead 1, Loans to Guyana Electricity Corporation, I should like to ask the Minister if he could give us a statement as to the working of the Electricity Corporation.

I see here the sum of approximately \$18 million earmarked for loans to the Guyana Electricity Corporation.

The Chairman: I think you will have to say "to provide for expansion".

Dr. Jagan: I was personally involved in this operation when in the Government. My understanding from the report of Preece, Cardew and Rider – which firm did a 20-year projection – was that in the first 10 years of the working of this corporation a net profit of \$20 million would be made and in the second 10 years – we have not arrived at that – a net profit of \$40 million would be made, making a total of \$60 million in 20 years.

We have gone a long way since the take-over of the Demerara Electric Company. What has happened with all this expected profitability?

(Interruption) What is my friend talking about? Under the Preece, Cardew and Rider projections there was planning for rural electrification which should have been completed long ago. Let them read the report. Do not let the back-bencher who knows nothing about this heckle on the outside. Rural electrification should have been finished by now. At the end of 10 years, with all that capitalization, they should have made a net profit of \$20 million. Let them say whether that is not so. Let them tell us why it is necessary for the Government to come and at this stage and put up \$18 million to finance the corporation. I do not care what it is going to buy. I am only asking why it is necessary for the Government, at this time, to do so.

I should like, while I am on my feet, to speak on subhead 7, Capital Contribution to Caribbean Development Bank. The President, or Governor, of the Bank, Professor Sir Arthur Lewis, made a statement the other day which was published in the local Press that there was not enough money being contributed by the member Governments. He said there was obviously need for more money to meet the anticipated worthwhile schemes which the Development Bank has to finance but has not got the money to do so. He remarked, rather an adverse comment, that the Governments were not doing their bit. While they were calling on the rich countries to give one per cent of their gross domestic product or national income they themselves were falling far short of their contributions to a regional bank to help their region.

I would like to know whether the Minister, or the Government, has taken this criticism into consideration in trying to meet this question of regional development which it espouses so greatly. Perhaps the Minister will tell us something about it, whether this amount stated here, \$260,000 is all that we are contributing and whether this is considered to be an adequate annual contribution to the working of this Bank.

The Chairman: For this year or generally?

Dr. Jagan: This year.

Mr. Ram Karran: Subhead 1. I wonder if the hon. Minister will indicate to this House whether it is Government's intention to jettison all the reports and policies enunciated in the House about hydro-electricity. We have had enough surveys to go ahead to build hydro-electricity. We have had enough surveys to go ahead to build hydro-electricity. Preece, Cardew and Rider recommended very strongly that if we did not do it by 1971 that we would have to add an additional thermal plant. In the mid 1960s and late 1960s we have been alerting Government to this but nothing seems to have been done except that there was vague talk about hydro-electricity.

We note now that the Government is going to spend a total of \$18 million dollars and from a radio report the Government proposes to set up a number of thermal plants throughout the country.

I wish to point out that this is a waste of money if we are going to go into hydro-electricity because all these thermal points that are set up will become junk, they will be standing by and the taxpayers will have to pay for them. They will not in any sense be developmental unless the Government proposes to sell them as second-hand junk. Why is it that the Government, rather than moving to hydro, which is a cheaper means of providing hydro-electricity, is going to go the expensive way by spending \$18 million and goodness knows how much next year for the purchase of the thermal plant.

I cannot see the wisdom of this and I am sure that future generations are going to recognize the members of this Government as a most wasteful group of people thrown on our backs.

I notice that the legend for subhead 2, Forest, Agricultural and Industrial Development, states that this sum is "to provide for loans from a Private Investment Fund partly financed with U.S.A.I.D. loan funds." One would have thought that any sum under the Head – especially if connected with agriculture and industry – would have taken care of the things the hon. Member

Mrs. DaSilva was talking about, that is, the setting up of canneries and producing milk so that we will be able to get a better standard of these products and things so that we can get more of them. Rather than depending on importing and paying interest we would have real development.

I particularly wanted to speak on subhead 8, Capital Contribution to Guyana National Co-operative Bank. You will notice, sir, that whenever that name is called a great deal of sensitivity is aroused on the opposite side. Unless it is a mistake which the Government does not wish to admit, I do not know why the Government had to put the whole of the Loan, including the Management of Guyana National Co-operative Bank, completely out of the reach of members of Parliament.

I wish in dealing with this to observe that I have made a very careful examination of the information given. That information is that this alleged Co-operative Bank, it is no co-operative at all; it is only baptised "co-operative" to fool the public – (*Interruption.*) I had to draw attention to the fact the other day where it was giving big loans to people who were not producing. This bank gave a loan of \$65,000 to the late Mr. Kawall. When the property was examined for estate duty – and a very careful examination was made – the most they could get was \$48,000.

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You cannot go on like that and expect people to have confidence in this national institution. I do not know how many other people close to the Government are using this institution which we call a co-operative institution for the benefit of themselves. The management of this bank needs to be looked into and I appeal to the hon. Minister to do so as quickly as possible so as to ensure that the taxpayers' money is well taken care of. You cannot miniaturise other institutions that are run properly and have your own national institution, allegedly a co-operative institution running like a slat goods shop.

Mr. Reepu Daman Persaud: Subhead 5, Rice Rehabilitation Programme. I merely want to ask the Minister how the fund will be used in the suggestion programme for rice rehabilitation and to make the point that the rice industry definitely needs rehabilitating so that we can meet present day markets. What has been happening because of the fall in production is that Jamaica is now compelled to buy rice for four cents per pint more than they are buying in Guyana and they are buying from the United States. The United Kingdom had offered to buy rice from us, some thirty thousand pounds of rice and we have been unable to supply that market.

I want to close by suggesting that there be an increase by \$20 per bag for rice in the process of rehabilitation, because this sum is substantial. Unless this hon. Minister can tell us where this money will go other than to the farmer so as to assist in production, I want to call for an increase positively of \$2 per bag for rice in the so-called process of rice rehabilitation so we can meet our markets right in the Caribbean and supply other markets that are available to us at the moment, markets that we were unable to supply during the course of this year – the United Kingdom and Jamaica.

Mr. R. Ally: I wish to ask the hon. Minister whether he is aware that the Government cannot rehabilitate the rice industry without reducing the cost of production by making all agricultural machine spare parts, all fertilizers, not only for Star Bonnet, weedicides, insecticides, pesticides, all these things, also agricultural tools, cheaper. All these things should be not only duty free but Government should also increase the price of rice and give the farmers a fair grade.

The grading system today should be investigated. The Government has claimed that it gave the farmers an increase of \$2 per bag. This is not true. If one were to check at the Rice Marketing Board one would see that where a farmer formerly go Super grade, today he is getting Extra No. 1. This is the position. They really did not increase the price of rice because they are hitting the people in the grade. The Board should have a grading officer placed there by the farmers. At least two grading officers should sit there to see the grading of the rice.

Today, we see prominent citizens in Guyana, large rice farmers, turning over their rice lands to cane. Fraser at No. 19, Fung-A-Fat, Hanoman, instead of planting rice, they are planting cane. These farmers were well equipped with machinery, irrigation pumps, and what not. One of them is a big rice mill owner. Rice cannot pay and they are unable to maintain it. I believe that the hon. Minister will bear this in mind, what is the position of the small rice farmers today.

I wish the hon. Minister will also take this into consideration. Rice farmers are paying 36 cents for water transportation from Springlands, New Amsterdam, and elsewhere. I think the Government should look into this and do away with water transportation, and this will help rice farmers.

Dr Jagan: Subhead 5, Rice Rehabilitation Programme. I presume this is for the silos. This is not rice rehabilitation. This is rice white elephant. Go to the Essequibo, you will see that the one constructed at Anna Regina, having thirty two bins, only eight are occupied. The present rice production which has gone through the mill at Anna Regina is less than when Tapakuma Scheme went into operation.

One of the arguments for the Tapakuma Scheme was that it will bring more areas into rice cultivation and thus for that area to provide a minimum support for that mill. The mill was losing money because it was badly sited, it was too big. It was built under the McDavid regime. That area is producing less rice. The mill is getting less than it got even before Tapakuma.

The big silo at Anna Regina has eight out of thirty-two bins filled. And another silo is going up at Somerset and Berks. What they are going to do with that one is another question. This brings us to the important point made by my colleague, the last speaker. He said something far more fundamental has to be done. This was criticized from the very beginning.

All the Americans and all their experts, their varieties, their silos, were all criticized, and now that criticism has proved to be valid. The Rice producers' Association was said to be anti

Government, all kinds of things. Its grants were cut off from the Rice Marketing Board were reduced to a minority of three.

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This is why, because they were speaking the truth. This is the reward they got. The reward is now being seen and, as I said, less paddy goes to the Anna Regina mill than in the days before the Tapakuma scheme.

All the lands in the back, even the lands given to the P.N.C. supporters, are now idle. A lot of people got land at Dartmouth. All is idle and out of cultivation. I was there last week-end and this information was given to me.

Mr. Hoyte: "What are the figures?" 200,000 when the minimum throughput for that mill to break even is 300,000. These were the figures given when the Tapakuma scheme was sought to be implemented to bring more land and more paddy to help to pay the loans of the C.D.C.

This is a serious matter and I think we should stop wasting our money on that silo immediately. Whatever money we have already paid for the iron and junk, let it remain there and stop wasting more money. One is going up at Somerset and Berks. Save the money and spend it to rehabilitate the industry.

Mr. Hope: Most of the questions which have just been raised on rice industry were raised when the Minister of National Development and Agriculture was here and I am sure he gave all the answers to them. These are just repetitions.

With respect to subhead 1, Loans to Guyana Electricity Corporation, the hon. Member places great faith in the ten years' Projection of consultants. This particular corporation has been

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making profits. I am speaking entirely from memory here. The profits, within recent years, have been in excess of \$3 million per year. If the hon. Member wants a more precise answer he will have to give me a written question. I have given the answer so far as I can remember.

That particular corporation met with bad times in the years 1965, 1966 and 1967, but those who examined the accounts recognized that the corporation was a sound viable organization. What really happened was that the previous Government entered into a contract for \$9 or \$10 million of equipment on suppliers' credit and the corporation did not have the cash flow to meet those onerous commitments and obligations. The loan was too short term. After that problem was solved by the present Government in 1967 the corporation began to operate on an even keel and to make profits which are being ploughed back into expansion work.

The amount which is being voted this year for next year is really part of the expansion scheme which contemplated for the corporation. There has been a very thorough examination of the project. As I said earlier, it is going to be financed partly by the Guyana Government, partly by the United Kingdom Government, partly by Canadian Government and partly by the World Bank.

The whole thing was thoroughly investigated by the World Bank and what we have now is a viable, consistent project, consistent with regard to our intention to establish hydro-electric facilities. What we are doing now will be able to fit in quite neatly with hydro-power development.

The hon. Member also referred to a statement by Professor Lewis about the shortage of funds, but I would advise that the statements of Professor Lewis should not be read in a cursory manner. They should really be read a little bit more deeply and then he would really understand what Professor Lewis is about.

However, the Government's are in fact contributing. Certainly the Government of Guyana is in fact contributing its share to this particular bank and, as I said in my Budget Speech and as is recorded somewhere in these accounts – I think it is in item 11 which will supplement what is available in the Caribbean Development Bank. This, as I said, is for the lesser developed members of the Commonwealth Caribbean.

As usual, hon. Members made gibes about the Guyana National Co-operative Bank. Nobody is really hypersensitive about any criticisms if the criticisms are valid. The hon. Members asked that I take a look at the management but I would assure them that I have no problems with the management. We are entirely satisfied with the management.

I think that disposes of the questions.

Division XXIX, Ministry of Finance \$24,291,200, agreed to and ordered stand part of the Estimates.

The Chairman: Hon. Members, this completes consideration of the 1973 Estimates in Committee of Supply.

Assembly resumed.

Mr. Hope: Mr. Speaker, I have to report to the Assembly that the Committee of Supply considered and approved of the Estimates of Expenditure for 1973 with amendments. Four changes will therefore have to be made to the Motion, one to the Resolve Clause and three to the Schedule. These are as follows:

1. In the Resolve Clause the words "two hundred and seventy-seven million seven hundred and thirty-three thousand, five hundred and eighty-five dollars" are to be substituted for the words "two hundred and forty-four dollars."

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2. In the Schedule, against Head 14 – Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the amount under Current Expenditure to be “\$4,226,706” instead of “\$4,216,385”.
3. In the Schedule, against Head 33 – Ministry of Economic Development, the amount under Current Expenditure to be “\$1,719,714” instead of “\$1,709,394”.
4. In Schedule, the total amount under Current Expenditure to be “\$132,557,572” instead of “\$132,536,931”.

The Motion may now be put.

Motion, as amended, put and carried.

6.55 p.m.

APPROPRIATION BILL

PRESENTATION AND FIRST READING

A Bill intituled:

“An Act to provide for the issue from the Consolidated Fund of the sum necessary to meet the expenditure (not otherwise lawfully charged on the Consolidated Fund) of Guyana for the financial year ending 31st December, 1973, estimates whereof has been approved by the National Assembly, and for appropriation of that sum for specified purposes, in conformity with the Constitution.” (**The Minister of Finance and Trade**)

Mr. Hope: I understand that it has been agreed that after consideration of the Estimates today, we would proceed with the Appropriation Bill which is to provide for the issue from the Consolidated Fund of the sums necessary to meet the expenditure. The Bill has been published in an Extraordinary issue of the Gazette of today's date and copies have been circulated to members. With Your Honour's leave, I now formally present the Appropriation Bill to the Assembly and move that it be read for the First time.

Bill read the First time

SECOND AND THIRD READINGS

Mr. Hope: Mr. Speaker, I move that the Appropriation Bill, 1972 be read a Second time.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a Second time.

Bill read the Third time and passed as printed.

NEW YEAR WISHES

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, this is the last sitting of the House for this year and I wish to thank all of you for your co-operation and assistance during the year just ending. May I on behalf of the Staff of Parliament, my family, and myself, wish everyone of you and your family a year of peace, prosperity and good health.

Mr. Ramsaroop: In about two days and five hours' time, we will have expired this year and we would have embarked upon a new year. No one can doubt that during this year, at any reckoning, the legislative performance of this House has been impressive. I understand from the Clerk that we have had fewer sittings than we have had in previous years but that notwithstanding, we have a very impressive record of legislation before us. That legislation did not come out of thin air. It came because of the co-operation of all Members of this House, and I think it is my duty to express to all those Members, my and the Government's thanks for their help, their encouragement and assistance, in making this a successful legislative year.

It is sad commentary on our work that the Estimates did not provide for the celebration this evening in terms that are less dry, but I think correctness first of all will indicate that I extend to you and your family, the Government's wishes for a successful and prosperous 1973.

Today has highlighted the inadequacy of our reportorial staff and, therefore I wish to thank our parliamentary reporters for the sterling work they have done during the year with a depleted staff. I wish them all Godspeed in the ensuing year, happiness, peace and prosperity. I also would like to extend best wishes to the members of the press, who have worked so assiduously in getting out their reports so that the public can be informed of the deliberations and proceedings of this House. I think greetings go out to all Members of this House, who have performed in one way or the other during this year. I also wish to thank the other members of the staff of Parliament Office for what they have done during this year and to extend good wishes to hem for a happy and prosperous 1973.

There has been a bitter atmosphere sometimes in this House, but I think at the end of the day good humour prevails. Although we have disagreed vehemently, at no time have we misbehaved. I wish, finally, all Members of this House, and indeed, all Members of this House who may not be here today, good wishes for a successful and exciting and eventful 1973.
(Applause)

Mr. Ram Karran: I was hoping that within the two days and few hours left, that we would have, at least, I would have been trying to enjoy the occasion brought about by the passage of this meager time and to have forgotten the many incidents and non commissions, if I may use that word, or shortcomings if I may improve on it, if this House had not many adversary on the other side who referred to the productiveness of the House during this past year.

In trying to recapture the spirit of the past year, I cannot but help try to calculate the number of hours spent in this House, how many we devoted to Government's business and how few, if any at all had been devoted to the Opposition side. When that exercise, and, sir, I propose

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to carry it out with your assistance, is carried out, I feel certain that my hon. Friend across there, when he talks about productiveness, he can be only talking on a one-sided basis.

We know this Government believes in the philosophy of its adversary lying down first and getting up last all the time. I do hope that in 1973, and onwards, this Government will behave like a Government. Sir, I have often accused you of being a part of this denial of right in so far as the Opposition is concerned, and I hope you will give the necessary guidance and assistance, and perhaps, pressure the Government to see that the right thing is done. We hope that 1973 will be a better year for all Members of the House, all those who participate in these difficult times in our country's history. (*Applause*)

7.05 p.m.

Mr. M.F. Singh: Mr. Speaker, I would not wish to indulge in any double talk. Indeed, I would prefer not to refer to the past. I merely wish to genuinely offer, on behalf of the United Force, very best wishes for 1973 to yourself, to your family, to your very hard-working staff, the Clerk, Deputy Clerk, the Reporters, to the members of the Press, to all hon. Members of this honourable House and, indeed, to all the people of Guyana all our very best wishes for 1973.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you.

ADJOURNMENT

Resolved, 'That this Assembly do now adjourn until Tuesday, 2nd January, 1973, at 2 p.m. (**Mr. Ramsaroop**)

Adjourned accordingly at 7.07 p.m.
