

THE  
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES  
OFFICIAL REPORTS

/Volume 09/

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE SECOND SESSION (1982) OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FOURTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA UNDER THE CONSTITUTION OF THE CO-OPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA.

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16th Sitting 14:00 hrs Thursday, 1982-11-18

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MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (75)

Speaker (1)

\*Cde. Sase Narain, O.R., J.P., M.P.,  
Speaker of the National Assembly

Members of the Government – People’s National Congress (62)

Prime Minister (1)

\*Cde. Dr. P.A. Reid, O.E., M.P.,  
Prime Minister

Other Vice-Presidents (4)

Cde. S.S. Naraine, A.A., M.P.,  
Vice-President, Works, Transport and Housing  
Cde. H.D. Hoyte, S.C., M.P.,  
Vice-President, Economic Planning and Finance (Absent – on leave)  
Cde. H. Green, M.P.,  
Vice-President, Agriculture  
Cde. B. Ramsaroop, M.P.,  
Vice-President, Party and State Matters (Absent – on leave)

Senior Ministers (7)

Cde. R. Chandisingh, M.P.,  
Minister of Education  
Cde. R.H.O. Corbin, M.P.,  
Minister of National and Regional  
Development  
\*Cde. F.E. Hope, M.P.,  
Minister of Internal Trade and  
Consumer Protection (Absent)  
\*Cde. H.O. Jack, M.P.,  
Minister of Energy and Mines (Absent)  
\*Cde. Dr. M. Shahabuddeen, O.R., S.C., M.P.,  
Attorney General and Minister of Justice (Absent)  
\*Cde. R.E. Jackson, M.P.,  
Minister of Foreign Affairs (Absent)  
\*Cde. J.R. Thomas, M.P.,  
Minister of Home Affairs (Absent)

\*Non-elected member

### Ministers (7)

- Cde. U. E. Johnson, M.P.,  
Minister of Co-operatives
- Cde. J. N. Maitland-Singh, M.P.,  
Minister, in the Ministry of Agriculture
- Cde. Sallahuddin, M.P.,  
Minister, Finance, in the Ministry of  
Economic Planning and Finance
- \*Cde. Y. V. Harewood-Benn, M.P.,  
Minister, in the Office of the Prime Minister
- \*Cde. H. Rashid, M.P.,  
Minister, in the Office of the President
- \*Cde. R.A. Van West-Charles, M.P.,  
Minister of Health (Absent)
- \*Cde. K. W. E. Denny, M.P.,  
Minister of Labour, Manufacturing  
and Industrial Development

### Ministers of State (2)

- Cde. M. Corrica, M.P.,  
Minister of State in the Ministry of  
Internal Trade and Consumer Protection (Absent – on leave)
- Cde. R.C. Fredericks, A.A., M.P.,  
Minister of State for Youth Sports,  
in the Ministry of Education

### Parliamentary Secretaries (3)

- Cde. A.W. Bend-Kirton-Holder, M.P.,  
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of  
Works, Transport and Housing.
- Cde. D.A.N. Ainsworth, M.P.,  
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of  
Education (Absent – on leave)
- Cde. B. Bhaggan, M.P.,  
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of  
Foreign Affairs.

\*Non-elected Member

### Other Members (26)

- Cde. M. Ally, M.P.
- Cde. M. Armogan,
- Cde. B. Beniprashad, M.P.
- Cde. J.B. Caldeira, M.P.
- Cde. A.A. Chin, M.P.
- Cde. J.P. Chowritmootoo, J.P., M.P.
- Cde. O.E. Clarke, M.P.
- Cde. E. B. Davidson, M.P.
- Cde. H. Doobay, M.P.
- Cde. A.B. Felix, M.P. (Absent)
- Cde. E.H.A. Fowler, M.P.
- Cde. P. Fredericks, M.P.
- Cde. E.F. Gilbert, M.P.
- Cde. J. Gill-Mingo, M.P.
- Cde. A. McRae, M.P.
- Cde. J.M. Munroe, J.P., M.P.
- Cde. S. Prashad, M.P.
- Cde. R.N. Primo, M.P. (Absent –on leave)
- Cde. P.A. Rayman, M.P. (Absent)
- Cde. C.G. Sharma, J.P., M.P. (Absent)
- Cde. H.L.B. Singh, M.P.
- Cde. S.H. Sukhu, M.S., M.P.

Cde. B. Tiwari, M.P. (Absent – on leave)  
Cde. C. Vandenburg, M.P.  
Cde. H.B. Walcott-Nascimento, J.P., M.P.,  
Government Chief Whip  
Cde. R.E. Williams, M.P.

Members from the National Congress of Local Democratic Organs (2)

Cde. R. Bishop, M.S., M.P.  
Cde. B. Latchminarayan, M.P.

Members from the Regional Democratic Councils (10)

Cde. K.N. Jones, M.P. (Region No. 1 – Barima/Waini)  
Cde. K.V. Jairam, M.P. (Region No. 2 – Pomeroon/Supenaam) (Absent)  
Cde. C.A. Singh, M.P. (Region No. 3 – Essequibo Islands/West Demerara)  
Cde. W. Bipat, M.P. (Region No 4 – Demerara/Mahaica)  
Cde. H.I. London, M.S., M.P. (Region No 5 – Mahaica/Berbice)  
Cde. I. Chowritmootoo, M.P. (Region No 6 – East Berbice/Corentyne)  
Cde. N.R. Charles, M.P. (Region 7 – Cuyuni/Mazaruni)  
Cde. D. Abraham, M.P. (Region 8 – Potaro/Siparuni)  
Cde. A. Dorrick, M.P. (Region 9 – Upper Takutu/Upper Essequibo)  
Cde. D. Hinds, M.P. (Region 10 – Upper Demerara/Berbice)

Members of the Minority (12)

( i ) People’s Progressive Party (10)

Minority Leader (1)

Cde. Dr. C. Jagan, M.P. (Absent – on leave)  
Minority Leader

Deputy Speaker (1)

Cde. Ram Karran, M.P.,  
Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly

Other Members (8)

Cde. J. Jagan, M.P.  
Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud, J.P., M.P.,  
Minority Chief Whip  
Cde. N. Persaud, M.P.  
Cde. C.C. Collymore, M.P.  
Cde. S.F. Mohamed, M.P.  
Cde. I. Basir, M.P.  
Cde. C.C. Belgrave, M.P.  
Cde. Dalchand, J.P., M.P.

( ii ) United Force (2)

Mr. M.F. Singh, C.C.H., J.P., M.P.  
Mr. M.A. Abraham, M.P.

OFFICERS

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

PRAYERS

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

14:05 hrs

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER

The Speaker: Leave has been granted to Cdes. Corrica and Primo for today's sitting.

PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

PRIVATE BILL

Transport Service Georgetown/North West Region

Cde. Ram Karran (The Deputy Speaker): I beg to lay on the table a Petition from the residents of the North West District praying for the provision of better transport services for North West and move that the Petition be read

The Speaker: The Clerk will now read the Petition.

The Clerk read the Petition as follows:

Barima River,  
North West Region,  
Guyana.

October 22, 1982

The Honourable  
The Speaker and Members  
of the National Assembly of Guyana  
Public Buildings  
Georgetown

Comrades,

We the residents of the North West Region feel constrained to describe as dangerous, inadequate, unreliable and insanitary the vessel at present provided for transportation to and from Georgetown.

These conditions are so describable because the vessel is subject to frequent mechanical failures with or without warning, is leaky and is often shipping water (which has to be pumped out), and is also frequently over-crowded. The safety and very lives of the passengers and crew are thereby placed in jeopardy every time the vessel puts to sea.

Despite these conditions, the people, rendered desperate by the unreliability of the "service", to get their produce to market, 'take a chance' on occasion, and board it, because there is no alternative means of transport.

The sanitary facilities, already inadequate, are rendered intolerable when over-crowding takes place.

We therefore, hereby petition the Hon. Members to direct that immediate steps taken to correct these deplorable conditions and to provide a transport service for the people of the Region that is safe, reliable and adequate to the people's needs.

In firm expectation that you the Honourable Members of the National Assembly will readily agree that the necessary steps be urgently taken to fulfill the wishes of the residents of this Region we append our signatures hereunder to this our petition.

And your petitioners as in duty bound will every pray.

We are,  
Yours co-operatively,  
Sgd. Matthew Moonsammy  
Sgd. Carmel Moonsammy  
and 469 others.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS

The following Papers were laid:

- ( i ) Privileges Immunities (the Caribbean Community and the Caribbean Common Market) Order 1982 (no. 59) made under section 13 of the Privileges and Immunities ( Diplomatic, Consular and International Organisations) Act, Chapter 18:01, on 9<sup>th</sup> November, 1982, and published in the Gazette on 10<sup>th</sup> November, 1982.
  
- ( ii ) Privileges and Immunities (Caribbean Free Trade Association) (Revocation) Order 1982 (No. 60) made under section 13 of the Privileges and Immunities (Diplomatic, Consular and International Organizations) Act, Chapter 18:01, on 9<sup>th</sup> November, 1982, and published in the Gazette on 10<sup>th</sup> November, 1982. /The Minister, Finance, in the Ministry of Economic Planning and Finance on behalf of the Vice- President, Economic Planning and Finance./

14:10hrs

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS – FIRST READING

The following Bill was introduced and read for the First Time:

Premium Bonds (Amendment) Bill 1982- Bill No. 15/1982

/The Minister, Finance, in the Ministry of Economic Planning and Finance on behalf of the Vice- President, Economic Planning and Finance./

PUBLIC BUSINESSMOTIONAPPROVAL OF FINANCIAL PAPER NO. 3/1982

Assembly in Committee of Supply.

The Chairman: Cde. Sallahuddin.

The Minister, Finance, in the Ministry of Economic Planning and Finance

(Cde. Sallahuddin): Cde. Chairman, in accordance with Article 171 (2) of the Constitution I signify that Cabinet had recommended the following Motion for consideration by the National Assembly:

“Be it resolved that the National Assembly approves to the proposals set out in the Financial Paper No. 3/1982- Schedule of Supplementary Provision on the Current and the Capital Estimates- Advances made from the Contingencies Fund totalling \$22,652,322, for the period ended 1982-10-26.”

Thank you, Cde. Chairman.

Motion Proposed.

The Chairman: We will consider the Financial Paper as usual, that is, the items will be taken from both the Capital and Current Estimates in the order for which the Ministers are responsible. Items 1 to 8 on the Capital Estimate and items 13 to 16 on the Current Estimate. Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud.

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud: Cde. Chairman, I have a short question on item 1, Head 1, Office of the President and Cabinet, subhead 126- Semi- Skilled Operatives and Unskilled. The legend states: “Increased Costs.” If I read that in conjunction with “To provide for payment of salaries....”, it would mean probably increased salaries. As far as I am aware there have been no increased salaries.

The Chairman: Can you wait a minute. If you look through this Paper, you will see several provisions of that nature. I wonder if you could deal at length with it so that when you come up with it again you would not ask the same questions.

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud: In other words, what I am asking is, since there has been no increase in salaries, how the legend could ask us to vote money for in creases in salaries. It is as short as that. It will relate to all, that is, from items 1 to 7.

On item 8, Head 2, Guyana Defence Force, subhead 703 – Defence, the P.P.P. is on record, not that the party is against having an army but we feel in view of the severe financial constraints in which the country is functioning resulting in sufferings and hardships in so many

fields, particularly with respect to things that are essential, that the Parliament cannot at this time or should not approve money for the military and disciplined forces. One would have expected that the amounts voted in the original estimates would have been so administered that the Government would not have had to come back to Parliament this afternoon to ask for an increase of \$2 million dollars. While the information shows that the \$23 million was one of the original votes, that might have been a supplementary. But our information, looking at all the available records, shows that so far \$91.5 million was voted. This \$2 million will take it to \$93.5 million. We want to say that we are against the extravagance, we are against this vote and we feel that the Government should not come at this time and ask the Parliament for money for militarisation.

The Chairman: Page 2, items 13 to 16 also. Do you have any questions on that?

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud: On item 14, Head 13, Office of the Prime Minister, subhead 253 – Special Security Arrangements, the legend states: “To provide for increased cost.” Probably the Prime Minister will be disposed to tell us what kind of special security arrangements he is talking about, bearing in mind that we have already expended \$175,000 under this Head and this sum will take us to \$275,000.

The Chairman: Mr. Singh.

Mr. M.F. Singh: Mr. Chairman, item 1, Head 1, Office of the President and Cabinet, subhead 126 – Semi- Skilled Operatives and Unskilled. To supplement what the last speaker said, there is this tendency not to be realistic when Estimates are being prepared. Here we have item 1, the voted provision is \$115,000 and the supplementary provision now sought is \$101,500. That is nearly 100 per cent more now being sought. It is nearly as much as what was being requested. The legend states: “Increased Costs. To provide for payment of salaries to 1982-12-31.” Again, I am not aware of any increase in salaries for semi-skilled and unskilled. But more than that, I wonder how it is that people could be so unrealistic as not to realise that they will need as much as 100 per cent increase in a vote like this. Was it not known at that time? What is the reason for more nearly 100 per cent more being requested. Was it not known that there might have been an increase in staff? This legend does not really tell us anything particularly. This is why people call these things guesstimates instead of estimates, when one sees something as unrealistic as this.

Item 6, subhead 503, Electricity Charges. I think I am on record talking about this on several occasions whenever we discuss these matters – electricity charges. The voted provision is \$300,000 and the supplementary provision now sought is \$325,657, more than was originally requested. The legend states: “To provide for the payment of outstanding electricity charges.” No details have been given, but presumably I would expect that this is back payments for previous years included here. If that is so we should be told that. I want to make the point yet another time. I am really fed-up of making it but I think it needs to be made. When Electricity Corporation bills are not paid by Government departments, we the consumers have to bear the cost of increased charges because when they cannot get operating costs and they have to pay interest on bank overdraft, it is passed on to us because they have to break even at the end of the year. So that if \$325,657 is owing we have got to find the cost of it, we have to make up the difference. If they are short of this money and they have to borrow money for the banks, then the consumer has to pay. Of course, they would not cut off the electricity supply to

the Office of the President and Cabinet. They will cut off my supply. So this is why I make an appeal again for Government departments and Government agencies to pay up their bills to Public Corporations and Government-owned companies so that they can be given a chance to realistically plan on the basis of what is money owing to them and which they hope to collect.



(Mr. M.F. Singh continues)

I think it is laudible that this money has been paid because I presume it has been paid from the Contingencies Fund. But, I would have liked to know that it should have been paid a long time ago.

Mr. Chairman, item 7, other miscellaneous charges and the voted provision was \$50,000, the supplementary provision now sought is \$90,115. The legend – to provide for outstanding payments, remigration personnel. Well, we know that there has been a big fiasco about this. I am not going into any matter which is the subject of attention by the Court at the present moment. I am merely stating what we all know and what we all read the newspapers that there is a big fiasco in respect of this remigration scheme. That the head of that is now before the Courts. One wonders! Money has been spent year after year on this remigration programme. What really have we got out of it? What is the position? Can we have facts and figures, people who have come and who have really stayed, what it has cost this country? Because, I understand they get all sorts of benefits. Can we really say that we are doing the right thing here? Can we really say that the tax payers money is being spent properly on this remigration scheme? Can we really say that the scheme has resulted in skilled Guyanese really coming back here and staying here and giving of their expertise to the people of this country? We would like to be updated on this scheme and exactly how it is operating and what the benefits are? That is all Sir, thank you.

The Chairman: Cde. Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister: Cde. Chairman, for the Office of the President and Cabinet there is this increased cost. It seems as if increased cost is being mixed up with increments. This document has not said increments at all, but that office has been employing semi skilled workers and unskilled workers in our great attempt to minimise the cost. A very small amount has come out now to be included in the budget. At that time the work of movement of the President was not yet completed and it is that which has caused us to now have this supplementary to pay for additional work that has to be done to make sure that the Office of the President is properly completed and thus we have that increase.

Electricity charges – also we requested for supplementary because of some of the difficulties we now experience with our supply of power and so from time to time the Presidents' Office has to be given additional assistance so that it can be lighted all the time. It is not strange also to know that when the price of fuel increases these charges increase as well and you will find this charge being increased all through the system. Because there is an agreement that once the price of fuel goes up then these charges would change as it happens to all the people all over the country.

With regard to miscellaneous charges and re migration, there were some thirty people who returned and so the expenses had to be met. They came to Guyana, some of them with skills, some without skills. Some with experience to help in carrying out the thrust for the development of some of our areas especially in the farming communities.

The Guyana Defence Force does not only include just the Guyana Defence Force but also the Peoples' Militia and the Guyana National Service and with the increase of cost of things all over notwithstanding the effort of the Defense Force itself to make provision for some of its ration, there has been substantial increases to take these men along during all the activities they now have with the increase pressure and the increase threat from our neighbors in Venezuela. Cde. Chairman, it would not be possible to give all the details of – in that area because my

friends themselves do know that the less we say about our detailed expenses the better it is for us to know exactly what we can do in case of difficulties. Because if we should give out all the details then people who can analyse the information carefully will know exactly what we have, our weaknesses and probably our strength as well and so for that question we cannot give any further information.

On the other page Cde. Speaker, Office of the Prime Minister – Special Security Arrangements have to be made not only for the Prime Minister but for all other persons who need special attention at this time and it is difficult at budget time to put the exact amount because from time to time new things are happening and new arrangements have to be made so that we can give protection to the people and do not cause frustration and low moral in our country. Thank you.

The Chairman: Items 48 to 54 on page four of the current estimates.

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud: I am looking at page five Cde. Chairman – increase cost to meet relief payment to retrenched workers.

14:30 hrs

The Chairman: Which number?

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud: Page 3, item 52, Plant Maintenance and Hire Division. You gave the numbers 48 to 54. What I want to ask, Cde. Chairman, is this: Thousands of persons have been retrenched and many of them have been approaching us that they are not receiving any relief at all. In fact, many of them are very frustrated. Most of those to whom I have spoken relate to this particular Ministry, but when I look at the sum – this is one occasion when I feel that the sum is small. We on this side of the House are inclined to support the Government with a higher sum because this is an area where we must show concern and sympathy for those who have to maintain their families and those who had to face retrenchment.

Will the Cde. Vice-President give an indication whether a comprehensive survey was carried out to ascertain exactly how many have to be retrenched, how many are entitled to relief, how many have received relief, how many are still to receive and what is the yardstick used to give relief to these people.

We feel that we have reached that point of our history where we should actually call for a vote to help people in this country who are suffering, people who are without employment and people who are finding it extremely difficult to live, to exist. I do not think that Parliament would be doing an injustice. In fact, the Parliament would be keeping its fingers on the economic problems of this country. Based on these humane considerations, we would like a positive response from the Government this afternoon with respect to this item.

The Chairman: Capital Estimates, items 7, 8 and 9.

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud: Cde. Chairman, item 8, Acquisition of Property – to pay for property acquired by Government. This is very vague in that it gives one sum and probably relates to many properties. We would like to know what properties are involved and how much will be paid to each owner of the properties. What yardstick is used and that kind of thing.

The Chairman: Mr. Feilden Singh.

Mr. M. F. Singh: Page 4, item 49. This is a new subhead under the Ministry of Transport – Maintenance of Bridges. Quite a large sum is requested here - \$1,435,000. Presumably these bridges were maintained before. I wonder why it is that the Government is coming now for such a significant amount of money. Under what Ministry were these bridges previously maintained? What bridges are we talking about? There is the Demerara Harbour Bridge, the bridge at Linden and the Canje Bridge. Under what Ministries were these previously maintained and what is the sum requested for? Could we have some details of the equipment and spares, for which bridges and did they not have equipment and spares previously? We need to have some details.

Item 51, Plant Maintenance and Hire Division, subhead 124 – Other Technical and Craft Skilled. I merely want to supplement what the last speaker said. The legend here, “Increased costs. To meet relief payment to retrenched workers”, repeats itself throughout this Financial Paper. It is like a recurring decimal throughout this Paper, so I shall ask the question on this. Perhaps the Minister of Labour can tell us – he is not here but somebody needs to tell us what is the level of retrenchment of workers in the Public Service, what relief they have been receiving and what was the yardstick, as the last speaker said, being used? Are these persons still receiving retrenchment pay or any relief payments? What is the position? I have also heard of people who complained that they have been retrenched and received nothing. Presumably there are some people who received and some who have not. Could we have some details of this whole

retrenchment business which recurs throughout this paper?

I refer now to Capital Estimates, page 2, item 8, can be taken collectively and Capital Estimates, item 8, Acquisition of Property. I, too, would like to know what properties were acquired, each one individually and the sum paid by Government for each because there have been so many complaints about unrealistic values and irregularities in the acquisition of properties. Could we have some details on this please?

The Chairman: Cde. Vice- President, Items 49, 51 and 52 can be taken collectively and Capital Estimates, item 8.

The Vice President, Works, Transport and Housing (Cde. Naraine): Cde. Chairman, the item for maintenance of bridges is a new item. Previously bridges were taken as part of the voted provision for Roads but, as the hon. Member said, because there are the big bridges like the Canje Bridge and the Demerara Harbour Bridge, and a few others but not the Linden Bridge which is not maintained out of these funds – it was necessary to put this item in. The sum provided here will be spent mainly on the Demerara Harbour Bridge and this sum includes not only a provision for the physical maintenance of the bridge but also for the security measures pertaining to the bridge. It also includes a sum for the lighting of the bridge. Previously this was done by generators run by the Bridge Authority itself but electricity is now being provided by the Guyana Electricity Corporation.

This might appear to be a rather large sum because some bridge parts had to be procured and had to be paid for this year. These are rather expensive items.

The proposal is that we should continue to treat a number of bridges under this subhead although the smaller bridges and culverts will continue to be maintained as part of the road system.

Items 51 and 52. The relief payment mentioned here refers to payment that was made paid as a relief. In fact, it was to give the retrenched worker some money in hand to sort of bridge him over until he could do something else and earn some income. It was not intended to be severance pay or superannuation benefits. I believe those matters are now engaging the attention of the unions concerned, the Ministry of Labour and the Government as a whole. I know for a fact that all Ministries were required to put in certain returns to the Public Service Ministry relative to these superannuation benefits. This is a matter which is engaging the attention of the Government and the unions, but this relief sum is not a replacement of those sums which may be paid in due courses, but just as a result to give the worker some money in hand while he is seeking alternative means of livelihood.

On the capital item, the Acquisition of Property – the sum of \$900,000 which has been voted, along with \$258,000 now to be voted, will be used for the acquisition of a number of houses which were owned by Reed and Malik, contractors of the Tapakuma project. Part of the land is owned by the Church. These buildings and other facilities like lighting plant, water supply and so forth, were acquired at a cost of \$900,000.

Two other properties are going to be purchased this year out of the rest of the money. One is the building that used to house the Stella Maris School on High Street, Georgetown. That was purchased for \$188,000 and the property at the south-west corner of the New Garden and Charlotte Streets for \$120,000. The sums paid are based on valuation made by the Chief Valuation Officer and the Government is guided by those valuations in making a decision.

I would mention that in the case of the property at Anna Regina owned by Reed and Malik, we were able, after negotiation, to acquire this property for a sum even less than the valuation of the Chief Valuation Officer and in the case of the Stella Maris property. I myself had discussion with the owners of that property.

14:40hrs

(Cde. Steve Naraine continues)

In the case of Stella Maris I, myself had discussions with the owners of that property. They were told that if they had anything to tell me about valuation or any other matter pertaining to property they should do so. I have not heard from them since.

Mr. M. F. Singh: I know the Vice-President can answer only for his Ministry but I did ask did every retrench worker get relief payment? What yardstick was used? Did every retrench worker get money or was it only some people did get any?

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud: My question is that since I made the point that many people who have been retrenched and who are literally saying that they have been pushed around the Ministry. More confirm that the Union had something to do with the matter at the moment. I would like to know the people who have a legitimate claim in that they are workers and they are entitled to gratuity or superannuation benefits how early they are going to have their claims settled by the Ministry concerned.

The Speaker: I do not want to answer for the Vice-President. He said the matter is being negotiated. Cde. Naraine, you wish to answer?

Cde. Naraine: No, Cde. Chairman.

Cde. Narhada Persaud: On page 9, item 93. Now we noticed here that the sum of \$37,500 are being voted for the new subhead created to provide payment for unpaid accounts to Guyana Airways Corporation to charter airways to transport food supplies to Dominica in 1979. My question is why this account was not settled earlier since we note these supplies were transported in 1979. If not 1979 why not 1980 and why not 1982 a supplementary?

On page 3, item 13. We noticed here \$2,219,479 being sought this afternoon and the legend is the mix up of two matters. One is to provide payment in respect of loans guaranteed by the Government of Guyana by the Guyana Fisheries Limited and the other capital to transfer to Guyana Timbers Limited. These are two separate corporations and if we are going to ask for \$2.2M the House ought to know how much money will go to which corporation.

Mr. M. F. Singh: It seems all the questions I want to ask this afternoon have been asked already. I was going to ask why since 1979 this is being dealt with now. Am I to take it that this has in fact been paid because apparently we are dealing with advance form the Contingencies Fund. I presume it was paid this year. To go on to the item 94 – Inland Revenue Department, Voted provision \$77,800 Supplementary provision now sought \$18,996 – increased cost to meet relief payment to retrenched workers. What worries me is this is a department where I really admire the dedication of the workers. They are short-staffed, they are heavily pressed they have a lot of demands being made on them. They are badly housed, particularly the G.P.O Building. You go inside and the building smells. The people are just choked up in that building. I know there are plans to house the whole financial structure in one building. That building has been going up for ages now. This department is in different buildings all around the place. On the last occasion I asked I was told that there were several vacancies to be filled in this department - Inland Revenue Department. This department performs very creditably at the end of the year I noticed invariably they always meet their target for collection of revenue. Why therefore are we retrenching workers in this department? – Inland Revenue Department because obviously workers were retrenched. We are asking for relief payment to retrench workers. Why have we retrenched? I thought this particular department would have been an area in which one would fill vacancies rather than retrench workers. I would really like to know what is being done to help

those people to make life easier for them. They are far to taxed at the moment at the Inland Revenue Department. On page 3, item 13. Again this is a very, very large sum of money being sought for supplementary -\$2,219,479. I have it here. I repeat we want a break down. I know Guyana Timbers Limited ... I happen to know that the General Manager was fired, sent home and I think the Canadians are now running the show. Could we have an up date on this? There are two corporations, Guyana Fisheries Limited and Guyana Timbers Limited. Two Government companies. Could we have an update on both these corporations to find out how they are performing? What is being and what all this money is being used for and how it is divided between the two of them, particularly the Guyana Timbers Limited? What is the position now? We have read in the papers that private enterprise apparently is running the show now. Thank you.

Cde. Sallahuddin: With respect to item 93 the Ministry of Finance has discharged the responsibility shortly after the presentation of necessary bills and documents. One obviously must understand that the Accountant General's Department cannot discharge a financial responsibility until the necessary request has been made upon it. With respect to item 94 the legend is accurate. While it is true that in certain categories the Inland Revenue Department is recruiting among other categories it has been found necessary to reduce the number. The approach is to increase in those areas and to maximise the efficiency of tax administration. With respect to Item 13 of the Capital, Cde. Chairman, I will prefer with your permission to confine my remarks to the purely financial considerations and to say in reply to Cde. Narbada Persaud's question that the sum of \$2,100,000 was made available by way of payment to certain insurance companies to which the Guyana Fisheries Limited is indebted. The Balance therefore of \$119,479 went to Guyana Timbers Limited. Thank you.

The Chairman: Item 29 to 33 on the Current Estimates, and items 1 and 2 on the Capital Estimates.

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud: Sir, I wish to ask a short question on item 33, Head 32, Ministry of Fisheries, subhead 505, Professional Consultants. I observe from the information that the voted provision was \$25,000 and the legend states: "to provide for additional expenses in respect of three (3) Korean Technicians." The additional expenses are \$38,541 and this is more than the original amount voted. One would expect that if you prepare an estimate and at the conclusion of that thing or at some stage you need some more, you will ask for less than the original provision. In this case you are asking for more. Probably I can ask when the Minister envisages that we can continue our Fisheries operation without the help of an experts from overseas, bearing in mind that we would have been, I hope, developing our own skills, our own experience, our own expertise. And, whether the Government has anybody in training so that we can provide employment for our own people. It is not that we are against technical inputs from outside where we cannot find here.

On the Capital Estimates, I have a question item 2, Division 514, Ministry of Agriculture, subhead 4, Consultancy Services. This has to do with the Abary River Water Control Project which is the M.M.A. project. I have found that we have been expending exorbitant sums for consultancy services. I wonder if the people who are being consulted are local people, bearing in mind that this scheme was prepared by foreigners and then subsequently two of our experienced engineers amended the scheme and they have been proven to be very good on the scheme. As far as my information goes, at least one of those experts who worked on the scheme is available

and closely linked with the Government. I do not see any difficulty in obtaining advice from that person. The legend states: "Increased costs due to accelerations of works." I would like to pose the question, whether consultancy fee or consultancy payment will accelerate the work. My information is that the work on the M.M.A. scheme has slowed down considerably and the expected date of completion will not be realised. In fact, the completion of the scheme will be extended long beyond the date given this very Assembly. Those are the questions I think would be very pertinent for the Minister to answer this afternoon with respect to the scheme. Probably he can tell us, sir, when the scheme will be completed.

The Vice President, Agriculture (Cde. Green): Cde. Chairman, with respect to item 33, I think my good friend in fact answered the questions. This was a bilateral arrangement with the Government of the D.P.R.K. and the Guyana Government and, in fact, we acquired ten massive engines which we are putting to use. A team came which we did not budget for originally because it was a special discussion. In fact, we have trained about ten Guyanese who will be able to work these engines and to be effective in the fishing industry. We are, in fact, developing skills that are local.

With respect to item 2 on the Capital Estimates, the legend is accurate. As usual we seem to have mis-information in this Assembly. I do not know where he got information that we have slowed down the works. In fact, some aspects of the M.M.A. project are ahead of schedule and it is because we have had to re-arrange that schedule that we have had to ask for this sum this year to provide for the consultant's services. I may just repeat in this Assembly, Cde. Chairman, that we are making optimum use of all local engineering skills both for contracting and consulting services wherever and wherever possible.

The Chairman: Items 55 to 88 on the Current Estimates and items 10 to 11 on the Capital Estimates. Cde. Feroze Mohamed.

Cde. Mohamed: Cde. Chairman, item 58, Head 49, Ministry of Education, Social Development and Culture, subhead 121, Administrative. Because the legend is the same for several other items, may I take them together. What I wish to ask the Minister here is how many persons have been retrenched? I am particularly interested in the answer as it relates to item 61, item 75, item 77 and item 80. My second question is, how many of those retrenched workers have been given relief? If not all, with all receive, and when? Next, I wish to ask the Minister whether among the retrenched workers there are graduate and trained teachers, If this is so, how many graduate and trained teachers have been retrenched? My next question is, how many of the retrenched workers who have been given relief have since been re-employed by the Ministry? Lastly, can the Minister say, now that it is no secret that the education system has a lot of vacancies, whether priority consideration will be given to those who are retrenched?

The Chairman: Mr. Abraham

Mr. Abraham: Mr. Chairman, in respect of item 76, subhead 121, Administrative, we see that the sum of \$2,438 is being sought for administrative purposes for Secondary Schools Multilateral. This is to meet relief payment to retrenched workers. Sir, I speak specially in reference to the secondary school in St. Ignatius in the Rupununi and to say that due to the faulty administration of the St. Ignatius Children's hostel quite a number of children who have sat and passed the S.S.P.E. Examination just are not taking up their places in the school. Upon investigation I have been told that one of the reasons is due to the lack of facilities at the hotel; poor food or no food at all, the terrible mosquito situation, lack of mosquito nets and so on. I should really like if some investigation could be made into the running of that hotel.



**TAKE**

**14:50 – 15:00 HRS**

**MISSING**

The Chairman: Cde. Chandisingh:

(The Minister of Education) Cde. Chandisingh: Cde. Chairman, with respect to item 58- that the member required to know how many teachers were retrenched and he referred specifically to certain other items which he was particularly interested in. These figures are available, however, it may take a little while to go through to locate the figures more specifically so that perhaps what I can do - - -

The Chairman: Cde. Chandisingh if he asks a question, I would suggest to him to ask it in question form and so you could provide the answer. The trouble is you all do not give answers readily. If you will satisfy me that you will answer the question I would suggest to Cde. Feroze to put it in question form. I appreciate the difficulty that you would have now.

Cde. Chandisingh: I think if you give me the opportunity I think I will be able to answer him. 74, I think was one of them – that will involve primary schools. Primary Schools – the number – there are no teachers as far as I can gather in that particular item. Cde. Chairman, 75, the number would be 74 French teachers in all Cde. Chairman - -

The Chairman: Comrades, if you are interested in hearing the answer would you give the Minister an opportunity to consult his notes. It is not an easy question to ask or get an answer.

Cde. Chandisingh: Cde. Chairman, in all the number of primary school teachers who were retrenched amounted to approximately 371. For secondary something around 69 to 70. Nursery around 250, so that in all a little less than 700 teachers were retrenched from the system. Whether all were given relief – to the best of my knowledge all have been given the relief payment or should by now have received those payments. The relief payments are of the same order as described by my colleague the Vice-President for Works and Transport.

Whether graduates and trained teachers were among those who were laid off the answer is that some were laid off. The total number would be around 43 or thereabout and I should explain Cde. Speaker, that in certain cases persons' services were terminated – not just as part of the retrenchment exercise but as my predecessor announced in Parliament when we were discussing the estimates. There were some cases in which persons had been terminated because of inefficiency, indiscipline and for reasons of that nature. But, if you recall on that occasion it was stated quite clearly that certain areas would not have been touched. The hinterland areas for example. As a general principle trained teachers and qualified teachers would not have been retrenched but as I indicated there were a few cases in which some teachers' services were terminated not as part of the retrenchment exercise but as normal procedure in relation to teachers' performance and conduct. How many have since been re-employed who were given relief. I am not aware Cde. Chairman, how many have been re-employed. But in answer to the answer by the member Cde. Feroze Mohamed whether priority would be given to those retrenched. The understanding is that priority will be given to teachers who have been retrenched, given certain conditions and circumstances. Obviously, if certain teachers performance are not judged to be up to the standard required, naturally they will not be given priority but as a general principle we have indicated that whenever possible such teachers would be given priority.

On the matter of the St. Ignatius School in the Rupununi and the matters that the honourable member raised. I think he indicated that he would like the Ministry to look into the situation with a view to examining what are the problems. I would undertake to look into that matter to see what the problems are if any and will undertake to initiate whatever actions may be necessary to resolve the problem.

The Chairman: Items 7 and 97 to 141. Really 97 to 141 is a repetition of transfers and on the capital estimates 14 and 15.

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud: Cde. Chairman, on Item 14, Division 538 – Ministry of Regional Development, subhead 4 – Matarkai Development Authority, I would simply like to ask the question what is really taking place in Matarkai? Bearing in mind that originally this place was a state farm and one was expecting revenue to be reflected each year in the estimates. I perused the estimates for 1982 and I did not see any revenue coming into the country.

15:10 hrs

From time to time we have been approving money for National Development Authority. I think accountability for this particular area is very poor. I speak with reasonably good information. Will the Cde. Minister who is answering tell us exactly what is being done at Matarkai and exactly how this money will be spent. Why are we asking for an increase in the voted provision? To do that?

Mr. M. F. Singh: Capital Estimates, page 3, item 14, Matarkai Development Authority. I understand this Authority is a combination of the Port Kaituma area, Matthews Ridge and the Arakaka area. Originally the African Manganese Mine at Matthews Ridge was handed over fully and the Government attempted to make state farms there. They were a dismal failure. Over the years a lot of money has been spent in these areas. I would like to reiterate what the last speaker said. Could we have an up-date of exactly what is going on in these areas? For example, what revenue has this area earned so far for this year as compared with the kind of money we are spending on it? This will make over a million dollars to be spent this year. What are the returns from this area? How many people are involved? What are they doing there? Could we really say whether this money is being spent meaningfully there or whether in these days of shortage of money we should not rethink the project and perhaps move away into some other more productive area.

The Chairman: Cde. Corbin.

Minister of National and Regional Development (Cde. Corbin): Cde. Chairman, the original objectives Matarkai remain the same as was outlined when the Authority was established, and that is, to ensure that the complex becomes a very productive agricultural complex. There have been, naturally, problems associated with the development of agriculture in that community. I think they are not new to any country or society that attempts to transform miners into farmers. The intention, which remains the same, is to ensure that more productive work continues.

At the moment agricultural work is progressing in that community. With the advent of the regional system and the more direct involvement of the people who live in those communities, it is hoped that even more productive work will be done and that the Authority will soon cease to depend on the Central Government for funds.

With respect to revenue, I am not in position this afternoon to give the details but if a specific question is asked I promise the Comrades that I will get up all the details with respect to revenues which have been collected and the expenditure in that area.

With respect to the specific provision here, this is to provide certain basic spares for agricultural equipment, vehicles, the rehabilitation of some machinery and for the purchase of some equipment to pursue these objectives of agricultural development.

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud: One short question: Would the Minister tell us exactly what crops are being grown?

Cde. Corbin: At the moment there is a very large area under corn, some 200 odd acres. There is a large acreage under peanuts. Sorghum was planted. There is also cassava. I am giving some of the items, but at the same time when I am giving the response to the revenues which are collected I would be able to identify for what items this revenue was collected. There is agricultural production – corn, plantains, peanuts, which I have seen only recently under

cultivation in that area.

The Chairman: Item 89.

Mr. Abraham: Item 89, Minister of Trade and Consumer Protection, subhead 710 – Subsidies. The legend states: “Additional subsidy in respect of conveyance of foodstuff to Hinterland.” It is my information that the Aishalton Airstrip has been closed. Certainly if it has been, it would affect adversely the people who benefit from that airstrip. May I ask how early is it planned for the airstrip to be re-opened?

The Chairman: I went there less than two weeks ago by aircraft, so it could not have been closed. I don’t know who will answer that.

Cde. Corbin: Cde. Chairman, the situation is that at the Aishalton Airstrip it is true that at this particular point of time certain types of aircraft cannot land. Alternative arrangements were made for the aircraft to land not very far away at . . . Aircraft are landing there at the moment and food supplies are being taken into the areas.

The Chairman: Items 34 to 36 on the Current Estimates and items 3 and 4 on the Capital.

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud: Just a short question on the Capital, sir. Item 4, Ministry of Energy and Mining, subhead 13 – Capital Contribution to the Guyana Gold Board. Will the Minister who is answering say whether the Board has been constituted and who are the members of the Board?

The Chairman: Who will answer that? Cde. Green is not here. I think we had better adjourn the meeting.

Cde. Naraine: Cde. Chairman, the Gold Board is constituted. There is an office in the Bank of Guyana Building. So far nearly \$2 million worth of gold has been purchased and the gold is refined and sold, bringing foreign exchange to the country.

The Chairman: The questions are: Is the Board constituted? Who are the members?

Cde. Naraine: I am sorry. I was not given that information. We can give it later. I do not have it.

The Chairman: Items 9, 10, 12, 18, to 27.

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud: Only for clarification. Item 20, Attorney General, subhead 505 – Professional Consultants. The legend states, “To provide for increased contribution towards Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation.”

The Chairman: What normally happens: Certain sums are paid to the Commonwealth Development Fund and they send consultants and technocrats to Guyana.

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud: This is what is intended here? I will tell you why I raised the Question.

The Chairman: I won’t answer you. I am just telling you.

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud: What has happened is that in the original Estimates this item is there and when I asked the question of the Cde. Attorney General, he said it was a vote to have local consultants coming. You may recall I was critical of that and I was making the point that we should have greater legal development within the Government legal structure.

The Chairman: The legend here is different. The legend is: “To provide increased contribution towards Commonwealth Fund . . .”

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud: If that is so then it came under the wrong head. I make that point. I don’t know if I can get an answer to it.

Mr. M. F. Singh: Mr. Chairman, Items 18 and 19. I am not questioning the quantum of money being requested but the legend is the same in both cases, 18 and 19, to provide payment of increased allowances to legal officers. The heading in 18 is skilled, operative and semi-skilled. I am curious since the legend is the same. Are we talking about lawyers, legal officers, what?

The Chairman: . . .

Mr. M. F. Singh: This is what confuses me. The legend is the same for both 18 and 19. It is the same. So I wonder why it was we have the same legends on two offices. Who are the legal officers under semi-skilled, operative and unskilled? The same thing applies to 23 and 24, Official Receiver, other direct labour costs and it is to provide for payment of increased allowance to legal officers. Then benefit and allowances the same legend is that case. Both under Official Receiver. One under direct labour cost and the other under benefit and allowances. Of course 25 – Deeds Registry has the same legend, other direct labour cost, to provide for payment of increased labour cost to legal officers. I have no objection to legal officers having increased allowances. I think they deserve it. They very well do. What is the confusion about semi-skilled, operative?

Cde. Green: It is an obvious error by the typist. I wish to apologise. Somebody remarked that some lawyers can be considered semi-skilled. Therefore, Cde. Chairman, I wish to advise that so far as professional consultants are concerned increased cost refer only to janitorial and cleaning services, vehicle spares and maintenance and other direct labour costs. If you switch around Item 19 and remove the ditto it will come in line. We apologise.

The Chairman: What happens to the other items? The same explanation?

Cde. Green: That is the same error.

The Chairman: Item 28

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud: I am sure the whole country is aware that people have been waiting for a very very long period before they get an indication as to whether they can get a passport. Information coming out of the passport office one day said they did not have more than 12 books. I feel very strongly that if the Constitution guarantees freedom of movement, freedom of travel no impediment should be put by any administrative measure to restrict people from traveling. If that is one of the enshrined provisions in the Constitution why is it citizens have to wait for as long as one year or probably longer? You have three months, six months. Some of the people when you speak to them, come back so and so day. They have nothing more to tell you. We have queues all over the place and the longest is at the passport office. I want to ask, with the greatest respect, will people get their passports within a reasonable time. I am being very liberal. In many countries of the world you can apply for a passport and get it the same day. You have to tell people to wait one month and six months and one year. I think that is ridiculous. Parliament ought to be told what the position is so the people can be aware. When these things happen, Cde. Chairman you leave room for fraud because people believe you can pay and get. I am not pointing a finger against any member of the passport office. I have no intention of doing so but I simply want to ask this afternoon that you have enough books and let the people get their passports within reasonable time. This nonsense of waiting for months and years be stopped.

Cde. Green: Cde. Speaker, the legend explains that we are attempting this year to deal with a situation which occurred when the cost of the special paper which is used for passports like most things have gone up beyond expectations. We hope in fact that there will be some

improvement in terms of issuing passports. I just want to make a comment. We get up in this House and make all sorts of statements and talk of what happens all over the world. I will give a personal experience I had to respond to my good friend Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud. I was in London some time earlier this year and I saw a line almost a mile long and when I enquired it was a line to the passport office.

The Chairman: Items 37-40. Items 41-47 on Current Estimate and 5 and 6 on capital estimate.

Cde. J. Jagan: I want to speak on Item 46, although I do not see the Minister of Health here. It is stated that voted provision was \$1 ½ M and they are asking for \$1M more. This is not correct. The voted provision is \$1,750,000. I can remember at the time of the Budget debate that I asked how was it possible that the estimate for 'Dietary' for 1982 would be less than the revised amount for 1981. I made the point that food prices were going up and like most things my comments were brushed aside. Now we come here and we are told that precisely what was drawn to their attention in a fact that it was a physical impossibility for the amount estimated for 1982 to be less than the revised amount for 1981. There is someone very stupid or ignorant in the ministry who is making unrealistic estimates. I think that it is time that it is stopped. It is no use saying put up an estimate for X million dollars and cutting down on expenses when in fact they do not cut down on anything. In this case they are going to be spending the sum of \$2 ½M for Dietary and even with that expenditure it is pitiful and even criminal to see what patients in the public institutions have to eat. I would not like to see anyone here eating that food. They would not tolerate it. With all the various bans and shortages the sick people in public institutions I should say are suffering the most. They need decent food. They are not getting it. It is unpalatable. It is inadequate and unsuitable. [Cde.Green: "You tasted it?"] No, I would not taste it. I looked at it and it was so horrible. .

[Interruption]

The Chairman: I think we will not be able to hear what Cde. Jagan is saying if we go on like that.

Cde. J. Jagan: I do not think anyone here would be able to eat it either. So these are the only comments I wish to make.

15:30 hrs

The Chairman: Mr. Singh.

Mr. Singh: Mr. Chairman, page 4, item 43, Head 38, Ministry of Health – Central Administration, subhead 601, Local Travel and Subsistence. The original voted provision was \$20,000 and the supplementary provision now sought is \$25,000, more than what was originally asked for, and this was thought to be sufficient for local travel and subsistence. The legend states: “Increased Costs due to expansions of Health Services.” I really would like to know what this expansion of health services is. Where is this expansion of the health services which needs the additional \$25,000? Whose travel and whose subsistence it is going to be used to pay for and in what places and in what areas are health services being explained?

Mr. Abraham: Sir, on the same item 43, the legend states: “Increased Costs due to expansion of Health Services.” I am happy that Government intends to expand the health services but I should like to ask that special attention be given to our vaccination services in the country, especially as it applies, again to the Rupununi. About a little over a fortnight ago there has been an outbreak of yellow fever in Brazil, near to Lethem. Vaccinations have been administered, I am told, to the adults in the outlying villages, especially the villages along the Brazilian border. Unfortunately, I am told there is a great shortage of vaccines and as a result children are not being vaccinated at this time. Further more, it is my information that there were two deaths resulting from yellow fever in the Lethem Hospital. I should be very grateful if the Minister concerned would tell us if this is true. Secondly, I would like to ask, would the children in the Rupununi be vaccinated, and how soon? Thirdly, what steps are being taken to alleviate the present shortage of yellow fever vaccines and, fourthly, would the hon. Minister give us the present picture as it exists, vis-à-vis, yellow fever in the Rupununi?

The Chairman: Cde. Chandisingh.

The Minister of Education (Cde.Chandisingh): Cde. Chairman, first of all with respect to the remarks made by the Member of the dietary, I think the supplementary provision of \$1 million is a reflection of Government’s concern for ensuring that the diet of patients in our public hospitals is improved. I am informed that although savings have been made, for example by chartering planes to bring in beef from the interior, the Rupununi, which has reduced the cost per pound to the institution, despite all of these efforts to effect savings at a reduced cost, while maintaining an adequate diet level, nevertheless we know that costs, and even prices to some extent have risen.

The diet scale, even at the public hospitals, has been increased and improved. This is the information that I have. For example, the Minister of Health himself has increased and has seen to it that the diet scale is increased from four ounces of beef to six ounces. That is the sort of effort that has been made to improve the dietary condition at our public institutions. Naturally – and I cannot remember the day when, either on this side or that side of the Assembly, references have not been made to diet and I think that there will always be some measure of complaint over meals, the method of cooking, because I do not think it is possible to satisfy all people in this respect. But the best efforts are being made, have been made and are continuing to be made with respect to satisfying our people.

I should also mention that there is an increased number of patients and patients attempting to stay even longer in our hospitals.

With respect to item 43, Local Travel and Subsistence, the Member asked who would be



travelling and what is the expansion of the health services that we are talking about. Cde. Chairman, while not all of us would be satisfied with the expansion that we would like to see, I do not think we can conceal from view the fact that expansion of the health services has taken place. For example, there has been the construction of six new health stations, six new health posts, three new hospitals; one at Aishalton, one at Kumaka, and Charity is in the course of construction. In so far as the health stations are concerned, these are at Waramuri, Orealla, Sauriwau, Mocha, St. Cuthbert and Cane Grove. The health posts are at Melanie, Macushi, Sand Creek, I . . . . . Baramita and Mibicuri. There is also the extension of two hospitals, Leonora and Best. So that this is tangible evidence of what is being done and what has been done to extend our health services. Naturally, we would all like to see an even greater extension of the health services, but in relation to our economic stringencies, finance and otherwise, I think this is a marked effort to improve and extend our health services.

With the extension of these health services it is quite clear that more visits need to be paid from the centre in order to monitor those services. Thus, as a result of the increased visits, the costs will go up. The cost of boarding and lodging, even at hotels and guest houses, has gone up. This is why the amount of \$25,000 is shown there.

Cde. Chairman, Cde. Abraham did make some references to vaccinations in relation to yellow fever. The Ministry of Health has been actively engaged. A team has gone to the area and there is a special vaccination programme. This programme of vaccination is on-going. In so far as the Member's statement about two deaths from yellow fever is concerned, I am afraid I have no information on that score.

The Chairman: Item 37 to 40.

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

Cde. Ram Karran: I wonder if I can enquire from the Minister of Labour and Manufacturing if he will tell us under this new item advertisements how many people have been recruited for the year under this agency and why is there need for a new head t this time of such serious stringency. Which is the newspaper or the agency or the radio or what will be paid, will be authorized to advertise this thing? How many people will benefit from this?

Cde. J. Jagan: Item 40. The supplementary provision being sought is \$800,000 to meet payments and old age pension. Again I have to repeat the same argument, and again we have the ridiculous situation where the Government estimated \$9½,000,000 for old age pensions for 1982, whereas in 1981 revised estimates were \$10,000,000 and was totally unrealistic. No one in their right mind could expect fewer persons applying for old age pensions. Obviously, there would be more people who reach the age under the laws of aging in growth and the expectation of longer life of people. So therefore, it would be logical to assume that the amount required would be inadequate and because of the inability of that Minister to properly estimate we have had a terrible situation where old people have had to wait a very long time beyond the normal time to receive their old age pensions. You had people lined up at the country Post Offices and at the various places where social assistance is given. To my recollection, the money was paid two or three weeks late of the usual date. I think every effort should be made to reduce the problems the old age pensioners have in obtaining the money that is due to them. Many of them have had to return once or twice and several times have had to stand in lines in the sun. It is not very easy for old age people to go through all these hassles when they have so many people on top of it.

The Chairman: Cde. Denny.

The Minister of Labour, Manufacturing and Industrial Development – (Cde. Denny): Cde. Chairman, with regard to the question posed by Cde. Ram Karran, I would like to indicate that this new head has come about because of the Governments' concern and particularly the Ministries' concern for the retrenched workers. This head advertisements is designed to give information to the working people of this country so that they can know what jobs are available, mainly the retrenched people so that they can be re-absorbed in other avenues of employment. According to the statistics, we have found jobs for about 2,500 people.

With regard to the question asked by Cde. Jagan, may I indicate that the history has shown that this Ministry has shown great concern for our senior citizens. The mere fact that we have decentralized payments to Post Offices is evidence of the fact that we are really concerned and they do not have to come to the centre. What has to be recognized Cde. Chairman, is that – we give the undertaking as a Ministry that it is true that payments were affected about one week or two weeks late, but clearly put, it must never be felt that old people who have made their contribution to society, that we do not have high regard for them. We do have high regard for them, hence this supplementary provision,

The Chairman: This completes consideration of all the items.

Question –

That the Committee of Supply approve of the proposals set out in Financial Paper No. 3/1982, Schedule of Supplementary Provision on the Current and Capital Estimates totalling \$22,652,322 for the period ended 1982-10-26

Motion put and agreed to.

Assembly resumed.

The Speaker: Cde. Sallahuddin.

Cde. Sallahuddin: Cde. Speaker, I beg to report that the Committee of Supply has approved of the proposals set out in Financial Paper No. 3/1982 and I now move that the Assembly doth agree with the Committee in the said resolution.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

Resolved, “That this Assembly do now adjourn to a date to be fixed. /The Vice President, Agriculture/.

Adjourned accordingly at 15:48 hrs.