

THE
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

OFFICIAL REPORT

[VOLUME 1]

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE
FIRST LEGISLATURE CONSTITUTED UNDER THE
BRITISH GUIANA (CONSTITUTION)
ORDER IN COUNCIL, 1961

18th Sitting

Tuesday, 3rd April, 1962.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

Present :

His Honour the Speaker, Mr. R. B. Gajraj.

Members of the Government

People's Progressive Party

Ministers

| | |
|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Dr. the Honourable C. B. Jagan | <i>—Premier and Minister of Development and Planning (Member for Corentyne —East)</i> |
| The Honourable B. H. Benn | <i>—Minister of Natural Resources (Member for Demerara Coast—West)</i> |
| The Honourable Ram Karran | <i>—Minister of Works and Hydraulics (Member for Mahaica)</i> |
| The Honourable B. S. Rai | <i>—Minister of Home Affairs (Member for Demerara Coast—East)</i> |
| The Honourable R. Chandisingh | <i>—Minister of Labour, Health and Housing (Member for Lower Demerara River)</i> |
| Dr. the Honourable Charles Jacob, Jr. | <i>—Minister of Finance (Member for Vreed- en-Hoop)</i> |

Dr. the Honourable F. H. W. Ramsahoye—*Attorney-General (Member for Canals Polder)*

The Honourable E. M. G. Wilson —*Minister of Communications (Member for Boerasirie).*

Parliamentary Secretaries

Mr. G. Bowman —*Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Natural Resources (Member for Corentyne Central)*

Mr. L. E. M. Mann —*Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Works and Hydraulics (Member for Mahaicony)*

Other Members

Mr. S. M. Saffee —*(Member for Berbice—West)*

Mr. G. L. Robertson —*(Member for Leonora)*

Mr. M. Bhagwan —*(Member for Essequibo Islands)*

Mr. J. B. Caldeira —*(Member for Pomeroun)*

Mr. V. Downer —*(Member for Berbice—East)*

Mr. M. Hamid —*(Member for Demerara—Central)*

Mr. D. C. Jagan —*(Member for Suddie)*

Mr. H. Lall —*(Member for Corentyne—West)*

Mr. M. Shakoor —*(Member for Corentyne River)*

Members Constituting the Minority

(i) People's National Congress

Mr. L. F. S. Burnham, Q.C. —*(Member for Ruimveldt)*

Mr. W. O. R. Kendall, Deputy Speaker—*(Member for New Amsterdam)*

Mr. J. Carter —*(Member for Werk-en-Rust)*

Mr. E. F. Correia —*(Member for Mazaruni-Potaro)*

Mr. N. J. Bissember —*(Member for Campbellville)*

Mr. W. A. Blair —*(Member for Berbice River)*

Mr. R. S. S. Hugh —*(Member for Georgetown—South)*

Mr. J. G. Joaquim —*(Member for Kitty)*

Mr. R. J. Jordan —*(Member for Upper Demerara River)*

Mr. C. A. Merriman —*(Member for La Penitence—Lodge)*

Mr. H. M. S. Wharton —*(Member for Abary)*

(ii) United Force

Mr. P. d'Aguiar —*(Member for Georgetown—Central)*

Mr. S. Campbell —*(Member for North West)*

Mr. R. E. Cheeks —*(Member for Georgetown—North)*

Mr. E. E. Melville —*(Member for Rupununi)*

Mr. I. Crum Ewing — Clerk of the Legislature

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

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS, ETC.

The following Papers were laid:

Minimum Wages (Saw Mill Workers) (Revocation) Order, 1962 (No. 21), made under section 8 of the Labour Ordinance, Chapter 103, on the 1st of March, 1962.

Audited Statement of Receipts and Expenditure of the Georgetown Replanning Scheme for the period 1st August, 1961 to 31st January, 1962. [The Minister of Labour, Health and Housing.]

Order No. 15 of 1962 made under section 8 of the Customs Ordinance, Chapter 309, on the 21st day of February, 1962 and published in the Gazette on the 22nd day February, 1962.

Report of the Directors of the New Widows and Orphans' Fund on the working of the Fund for the year 1960. [The Minister of Finance.]

QUESTIONS TO MINISTERS

POSTAL DELIVERY AT WISMAR HILL HOUSING SCHEME

Mr. Jordan (Upper Demerara River): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the question standing in my name: Is the Honourable Minister of Communications aware that there is great need for a house-to-house postal delivery in the Government Wismar Hill Housing Scheme? If the answer is in the affirmative, will the Minister take immediate steps to initiate a house-to-house postal delivery?

2.15 p.m.

The Minister of Communications (Mr. Wilson): I am aware that a substantial amount of mail is received for the 325 families who reside in the Wismar Hill Housing Scheme, which is a newly created area. It has not been possible to start a house-to-house mail delivery service in that area for the reason that the staff at the Wismar Post Office is not

at present sufficiently strong in numbers to undertake the service. The services of an additional Rural Postal Assistant will be necessary but because of the need for stringent economy it has not been found possible to provide in the 1962 Draft Estimates for an additional Rural Postal Assistant for this specific delivery service. However, provision for certain increases in the postal staff has been included in the 1962 Draft Estimates and after the Estimates have been passed the Director of Posts and Telecommunications will see what re-arrangement of staff is possible so that at least a thrice weekly delivery service for residents of the area can be provided.

Mr. Burnham (Ruimveldt) As a supplementary question, may I inquire from the hon. Minister what provision will be necessary, in terms of money, for an additional Rural Postal Assistant?

Mr. Wilson: It will mean the salary for an additional Rural Postal Assistant.

Mr. Burnham : As a further supplementary question, I want to know how much it would mean in terms of money.

Mr. Wilson: In the region of \$72 to \$100 per month.

Mr. Burnham : As a further supplementary question, does the hon. Minister, in these circumstances, say that an additional vote of a maximum of \$1,200 cannot be made because of stringency?

Mr. Wilson: That is so.

Mr. Burnham: As a further supplementary question, may I inquire from the Minister how you can give the Premier a \$200 a month entertainment allowance and you cannot provide a facility for letters to be delivered to people in a rural area at a cost of \$72 — \$100 per month?

[*The Minister offered no reply.*]

Mr. Speaker : There is another Question on the Supplementary Order Paper in the name of the hon. Member for Ruimveldt.

HOUSTON BY-ELECTION

Mr. Burnham : I beg to ask the Minister of Home Affairs Question No. 8 standing in my name on the Order Paper: Why has not the writ been issued for the by-election for the Houston Constituency? When will it be issued?

The Minister of Home Affairs (Mr. Rai) : On the 27th November, 1961, the Honourable Mr. Justice Fraser declared void the election held in the Houston Constituency — Electoral District No. 23 — at which Mr. George McLinton Henry had been declared the duly elected candidate. The sole ground for declaring the election void was that Mr. Ashton Chase, the successful candidate's election agent had committed the corrupt practice of aiding and abetting the personation of a voter.

At this date there were three other Representation Petitions pending and it was thought best to await the outcome of these Petitions before the election machinery was set up once again.

The last of these Petitions was disposed of on the 29th January, 1962, but before the election machinery could be fully set up there was an outbreak of civil disturbances in the City and a Proclamation declaring a state of emergency throughout the whole country had to be issued by His Excellency the Governor on the 16th February, 1962.

In the meantime, on the 8th March, 1962, Mr. Chase was acquitted by a Jury of the offence which the Honourable Mr. Justice Fraser had found to have been committed by him and which was the cause of the avoidance of the election.

It is not considered desirable in the present state of the emergency to hold a by-election. In addition, the legal implications of Mr. Chase's acquittal on the avoidance of the election are being studied by the Government. A further statement will be made in the near future.

Mr. Burnham : As a supplementary question, may I find out from the Government how long it would take it to study the implications of a short section— Section 37 — of Ordinance No. 34 of 1961?

[*The Minister offered no reply.*]

BILL — FIRST READING

CRIMINAL LAW (PROCEDURE) (AMENDMENT) BILL

The Attorney-General (Dr. Ram-sahoye) : On behalf of the Government, I present the Criminal Law (Procedure) (Amendment) Bill, 1962, a copy of which I hand to the Clerk. It is my intention to move, at the appropriate time, that the Standing Orders be suspended so that the Bill may be taken through all its stages at this sitting.

Bill read the First time.

The Attorney-General: In pursuance of the provisions of Standing Order 84, I ask leave of Your Honour to move the suspension of the Standing Orders so that the Criminal Law (Procedure) (Amendment) Bill, 1962, may be taken through all its stages.

Mr. Speaker : My leave is granted.

The Attorney-General: I move that the Standing Orders of this honourable House be suspended to enable me to take the Bill through all its stages.

Question put, and agreed to.

Standing Orders suspended.

The Attorney-General: This is a Bill which is intended to enable the presentation of indictments against accused persons after the session for which they are committed to stand trial. It was the practice in the past for indictments to be presented at any time subsequent to the time of committal so far as was practicable and convenient.

However, in a recent case which was heard in the Supreme Court, the trial Judge ruled that an indictment must be presented during the sitting to which an accused person was committed for trial. This ruling has led to much inconvenience, and it would mean that in those cases where an indictment was not properly presented in terms of the ruling, the preliminary inquiries for each indictable offence will have to be heard *de novo*. In the circumstances, it is sought to have provision to prevent this objection from being taken upon the hearing of an indictment which was not presented during the sitting to which an accused person is committed.

There exists in the Criminal Law (Procedure) Ordinance a conflict arising out of the provisions which relate to the presentation of indictments and the time during which a certified copy of the indictment is to be made available to a prisoner. Opportunity has been taken to amend Section 115 of the Criminal Law (Procedure) Ordinance to put an end to this conflict.

Those are the simple provisions which it is sought to make by this Bill. It would, first, enable an indictment to be presented at any sitting subsequent to the one to which a prisoner was committed. Secondly, it would provide that since an indictment has to be presented against the prisoner three days before he can be tried, he will have a copy of the indictment within two days of his trial. I now move that the Bill intituled:

“An Ordinance to amend the Criminal Law (Procedure) Ordinance”

be read a Second time.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, the Bill is now before the House for discussion.

Mr. Burnham: The copy of the Bill which I have speaks of an amendment to Section 113, and it seems to me that it should be Section 114, subject to what the Attorney-General has to say.

The Attorney-General : It would appear that it is Section 113 which needs to be amended on this occasion. There probably is some confusion — it was amended by Ordinance No. 22 of 1961.

Mr. Burnham: The marginal note should have carried the amendment which was made. [*Pause.*]

Mr. Speaker: If no one else wishes to speak, then I shall put the question that the Bill be read a Second time.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a Second time.

Assembly in Committee.

Clause 1 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Bill.

2.30 p.m.

Clause 2. — Amendment of section 113 of Chapter 11

Mr. Burnham: I would suggest that the marginal note should not only indicate an amendment of Section 113 of Chapter 11 but also of Ordinance 22 of 1961. This is usually done when the Principal Ordinance is amended and there is a further amendment. The marginal note should have an indication that one should not only look at the substantive legislation but also at any subsequent amending legislation.

The Attorney-General The stages of amendment make such a procedure unnecessary. Originally there was Section 113 which was amended by Ordinance No. 22 of 1961. Therefore today Section 113 is as it is amended. All that is necessary to have in the amending Bill before the Committee is an indication that Section 113 is being amended, and that is what is being done.

Mr. Burnham : What the hon. the Attorney-General has said is good enough for lawyers but not for laymen perusing the Ordinance. In view of the Attorney-General's argument there was no need, for instance, to put a marginal note at Section 119 (2) of Chapter 14, indicating that it was an amendment of Ordinance 15 of 1937. I am merely suggesting that this be done because it seems to have been done in the past, and it is certainly a facility for those who have to look at this Ordinance, and who may not be skilled, or may not have the annotations made.

The Attorney-General : The implications of the hon. Member's suggestion are that in dealing with future amendments the draftsman will be forced to say that Section X is amended from time to time, and Section Y is amended from time to time, and he will have to indicate in the body of the provision that there is to be an amendment. This is an old practice which has been discontinued because it is thought to be inelegant.

Mr. Burnham : Inelegance or elegance is not the criterion in these matters, but utility. Since the Attorney-General has the force of numbers to support him, I am not going to move an amendment. It will probably mean more money for people like me, but the public will not be properly served.

Clouses 2 and 3 ordered to stand part of the Bill.

Assembly resumed.

Bill reported without amendment, read the Third time and passed.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

CONTRIBUTION TO AERIAL GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY PROJECT

Motion:—

"Be it resolved that this Legislative Assembly authorises the expenditure of Thirty-two thousand, nine hundred and eighty dollars (\$32,980) for the initial contribution of the British Guiana Government to the United Nations Special Fund—Aerial Geophysical Survey Project." [The Minister of Finance.]

The Minister of Finance (Dr. Jacob): In accordance with Standing Order 21 I signify that the Governor has recommended this Motion for the consideration of the House. On the 15th January, 1962, the Governing Council of the United Nations Special Fund approved of an Aerial Geophysical Survey Project for British Guiana. Under this Project, aerial geophysical surveys of nine selected areas in the interior of this country will be carried out in order to delineate smaller areas, the mineral potentials of which will later be assessed through intensive ground investigations by the Geological Survey Department. The project is planned to be completed within three years at a total cost of \$2,113,627. Of this amount the Special Fund will contribute \$1,107,210, and British Guiana will contribute \$1,006,417 in kind.

The Special Fund contribution will provide for experts, including a geophysicist and a drilling engineer. The carrying out of the aerial photographic and geophysical surveys by specialist firms will be done under contract. The British Guiana contribution will provide for local counterpart staff; survey teams, including labourers; transportation and subsistence expenses while in the field. In addition, British Guiana is required to make a cash contribution of \$66,980 towards 15 per

cent. of the local operating costs. This amount is payable in three instalments, the first amount of which is \$32,980, and this is payable upon the signing of the plan of operation; \$17,000 is payable on the 1st January, 1963; and \$17,000 again is payable on the 1st January, 1964. I now formally move the Motion.

Mr. Speaker: As no one seems inclined to speak to the Motion I shall put the Question.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion affirmed.

APPROPRIATION BILL

SECOND READING

The Assembly resumed the debate on the Motion for the Second Reading of the following Bill:

A Bill intituled "An Ordinance to appropriate the supplies granted in the current Session of the Legislature."

The Minister of Finance (Dr. Jacob): With your permission, sir, and that of the House I desire, before we proceed with the debate on the Second Reading—

Mr. d'Aguiar (Georgetown Central): To a point of order! Your Honour, I would like to state for your consideration three points. The first point is that the hon. Minister of Finance introduced the Motion for the Second Reading of the Appropriation Bill and cannot speak twice on it. The second point is that the Motion is in effect to continue the debate on the Budget which, to all intents and purposes, we can call the Kaldor Budget. There have already been, or purported to have been, a number of modifications of that Budget, and further there have been public statements by Ministers signifying that there will be further revision. It is stated, for instance, in today's *Graphic*—

Mr. Speaker: You may just merely make your points. We cannot have a speech.

Mr. d'Aguiar: The point is that in effect we are being, or will be asked to consider a series of amendments to the original Budget which will in effect create a new Budget. The proper procedure would be to withdraw the original Budget, and for the Minister of Finance to introduce a new one. The third point is that if it were proper to continue the debate on the Budget in its present form, that debate cannot rightly take place, because certain necessary prerequisites have not been complied with. The Appropriation Bill, No. 4 of 1962, which we are being asked to consider, mentions a single sum, namely \$59,186,238. It contains a list of appropriate Heads of Expenditure, but it would seem that it does not comply with Article 109 of the British Guiana Constitution which says:

"109. (1) The Minister responsible for finance shall, in respect of each financial year, at the earliest convenient moment, introduce in the Legislative Assembly an Appropriation Bill containing, under appropriate heads, for the several services required, the estimated aggregate sums which are proposed to be expended (otherwise than by way of statutory expenditure) during that financial year."

2.45 p.m.

That seems to be confirmed by Standing Order 62(1), and it does not appear to have been complied with. I am of the opinion that, unless it is complied with, the debate will be out of order. Those are the three points which I wish to raise.

RULING BY THE SPEAKER

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member for Georgetown Central, in the exercise of his rights, has quite rightly questioned what appears, at first sight, to be a breach of our ordinary rules of procedure, in the sense that, the hon. Minister of Finance, having spoken on a previous occasion in introducing the Appropriation Bill and having attempted to say something to us today, he has conjectured that he will be speaking twice on the same subject.

[MR. SPEAKER]

I am sorry that the hon. Member moved so quick, because we were not able to hear what the hon. Minister of Finance had to say. However, may I point out to the hon. Member for Georgetown Central that it is laid down in our Standing Orders that a Member can be given an opportunity to speak more than once on a matter in order to explain something which he has said before—he can elucidate on the subject. I believe that is, perhaps, what the hon. Minister of Finance wishes to do. I cannot say that is his intention, because he has not yet said so.

The two other points which have been raised are these: The hon. Member for Georgetown Central says that the intention of the Minister is to continue a debate on the Budget; that an announcement had been made to the effect that modifications will be made or have been made by the Government, and that public statements have been made and published in the Press today. Hon. Members ought to know that statements made in public outside of the Chamber have no relevance whatsoever in the context of the work of the House, and, unless such statements are made at a meeting of the Legislative Assembly, no cognizance can be taken of them by us when we speak as Members of this House.

So far as the three points are concerned, they do not have any value in my opinion. Another point made by the hon. Member refers to Article 109 of the Constitution, and to Standing Order 62(1). Standing Orders may be dealt with in this fashion. — Article 109 (1) states:

“The Minister responsible for finance shall, in respect of each financial year, at the earliest convenient moment, introduce in the Legislative Assembly an Appropriation Bill containing, under appropriate heads, for the several services required, the estimated aggregate sums which are proposed to be expended (otherwise than by way of statutory expenditure) during the financial year.”

But our own Standing Orders must have precedence over anything which is not clearly defined in the Constitution. Standing Order 62(1) states:

“Any bill containing the estimated aggregate sums which are proposed to be expended (otherwise than by way of statutory expenditure) on all the services of the Government for the current or succeeding financial year shall be known as an Appropriation Bill. Estimates containing the details of the proposed expenditure shall be presented at the same time as any such Bill. When presented, the Appropriation Bill shall be put down for second reading upon a day to be named by the Minister presenting it.”

Hon. Members, who have had the good fortune to serve in the Legislature of this Colony before the present one, will recall that the procedure—indeed it has become a tradition—of the House is that the Appropriation Bill, when printed and presented to the House, carries only the aggregate sum required for expenditure on all the services of the Government. That, of course, is provided for in the printed Bill before us which gives the sum total of the required amounts for all of the services.

The Estimates, which were presented at the same time in accordance with the relevant Standing Order, give the proposed sums against the respective heads of expenditure. What we have been doing in the past was to go into Committee after the Second Reading of the Appropriation Bill had been concluded in order to consider the Estimates head by head. If it were necessary to make amendments to the proposals submitted by the Government, such amendments would be made in the normal way.

In the circumstances, I do not accept that the points of order raised by the hon. Member are valid in this case, and I would invite the hon. Minister of Finance to let us know what he wants us to consider. If he intends to make a second speech, he will not be

permitted to do so. However, if he wishes to indicate the policy which the Government wishes to pursue in relation to the Appropriation Bill, we will have to listen to him.

Dr. Jacob : Your Honour, before the interruption, I was about to explain that before we proceed with the debate on the Second Reading of the Appropriation Bill, I should like to have your permission to inform the House that, on the 31st January when I presented the Budget Statement, I stated that, since the proposals were challenging, the Government had decided to give the fullest opportunity not only to Members of this House, but also to the general public, to consider the proposals and, in particular, the taxation proposals.

As a result of the several representations received, I informed the House on February 9, 1962, which was three days before we were due to resume the debate, that in view of the representations and in order that the Government should give them careful consideration, the Government had decided to defer the Second Reading of the Appropriation Bill to a date to be announced. I am happy to inform the House that, after the most careful consideration, the Government has decided to modify some of the revenue proposals—

Mr. Burnham : On a point of order. Under Standing Order 32 (5), a Member who has spoken on a question may again be heard to offer an explanation of some material part of his speech which he claims has been misrepresented, but he shall not introduce new matter. I submit that, in attempting to tell us about modifications in the proposals in the Budget, the hon. Minister of Finance is introducing a new matter. Statements by Ministers are provided for on the Order Paper. I submit that, if the hon. Minister of Finance wants to make a statement, he cannot do it under Standing Order 32(5); he can only do so by

moving the suspension of the relevant Standing Order so as to bring up for consideration the item "Statements By Ministers" at this stage.

Dr. Jacob : Your Honour—

Mr. Burnham : I ask Your Honour to rule on my point of order.

Mr. Speaker : I have listened to the hon. Member for Ruimveldt. He has quoted Standing Order 32(5), and his contention is correct. A Member cannot speak a second time except he wishes to offer explanation of some material part of his speech and so on. When the hon. Minister was interrupted, I think he was saying that Government had decided to modify some of the revenue proposals. I did not hear everything he has said. However, even if the Minister has been treading on ground that he should not have tread, the hon. Member for Ruimveldt has made his task easier by suggesting the means he can adopt to enable him to make his explanation.

Mr. Burnham : I am always here to help the impotent.

Dr. Jacob : I think that this is the proper time to state these modifications, because the whole House—

Mr. Speaker : The hon. Member for Ruimveldt is right; the modifications can be considered as new matter. In order to speak about the modifications, it would seem to be necessary to have a Motion for the suspension of the relevant Standing Order. If the Motion is carried, the House will permit the hon. Minister of Finance to say what the modifications are.

The Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Benn): Sir, I beg to move the suspension of the relevant Standing Order in order to permit the hon. Minister of Finance to make a statement.

Mr. Burnham : It is submitted that, if it is desired to move the suspension of a Standing Order, the Order must be specified so that the House will be appraised of what is intended.

3 p.m.

[Interruption in the Public Gallery.]

Mr. Speaker: Please be quiet in the Public Gallery!

Hon. Members, we are living in historic times. You will probably find that in the course of this Session of the Legislature we will have to have written into the history of parliamentary societies, actions which will be quoted by others who will come after us. I know that hon. Members have viewed this matter which is before us with a great deal of care, and whilst one may be able to quote from Standing Orders here and there, this, in my opinion, should not be done unless something else is done.

We have to view this matter as a whole. What are we here for? We are here for the purpose of carrying on the legislative business of the country. The Government presents legislation for the representatives of the people to consider and make up their minds as to whether they will accept it or whether they will amend it before acceptance. In this particular case, what is, in fact, the Bill which has become known as the Appropriation Bill? It lists the heads of expenditure on which the Government will ask the House to give it authority to expend public funds during this financial year. But since it is also necessary to find the wherewithal before expenditure can be made, it has become part of the tradition, not merely of our own House, but of the Parliament of Westminster which is the oldest and the Mother of Parliaments, that the Government Minister—in this case, the Minis-

ter of Finance in our own Legislative Assembly — should indicate in his speech, known as the Budget Speech, the new methods or the new means of taxation which the Government would ask the House to agree to in order to fill its coffers to enable expenditure to be made therefrom.

I think the hon. Minister of Finance was quite correct when he reminded the House that on the day he presented the Appropriation Bill and made his speech it was told to Members that enough time would be given them, and the public in general, to make their comments and recommendations on these new proposals. Now, it was not merely the recurrent expenditure which was covered by the speech given by the hon. Minister of Finance, but development expenditure as well, and this is not covered in the Appropriation Bill before the House now. It was considered relevant and appropriate that the Minister should indicate the Government's policy on development expenditure at the same time.

However, Members must not lose sight of the fact that any new form of taxation that the Government wishes to levy is not automatically passed by the passage of the Appropriation Bill. Each one of these measures has got to come before the House for its careful scrutiny — each one separately — and Members of the House have got the right to criticize those measures in the same way as they may criticize the measures when discussing the Appropriation Bill. It would seem to me that Members have two opportunities of making the same criticisms because, in discussing the Appropriation Bill, the scope of discussion is as wide as any Member would wish to make it because it covers, as one knows from the Standing Orders, the entire economic condition of the country. The proposals are put up and so

Members will have a very wide and roving commission when they speak on the Bill.

What I understand the Minister of Finance, on behalf of the Government, wishes to do is not to keep Members of this House in the dark regarding the modifications which the Government will be prepared to accept. If Members wish, by a declaration of their own voice and vote, not to hear what those modifications are but wish to continue the debate on the original proposals, they are entitled to say so. Then, of course, they will also be responsible for a considerable shortening of the time at their disposal for really considering the final views of the Government, as the time at our disposal for discussing the Appropriation Bill is limited by the Standing Orders — so many days for Second Reading and so many days in Committee of Supply. Therefore, it would seem to me that it is against the public interest that, when it is possible for us to have information that would place things on the proper keel so that we would know what is being finally proposed, we now close our eyes. But, as I said, it is entirely a matter for the House.

The point in dispute at the moment is whether the Minister of Finance, who is indeed the proper Minister of the Government to speak on financial matters, should be permitted to indicate to us what modifications his Government is prepared to accept. If the House says "no", then certainly he would not be heard. If the House says "yes", I will be prepared to let him be heard. I will now put it to you; it is entirely a matter for you to decide whether the House will permit the hon. Minister of Finance to indicate to us what modifications to the taxation proposals his Government has, according to his words, decided to accept. As many as are in favour, please say "Aye". As many as are against, please say "No". I declare the "Ayes" have it. Please proceed, Mr. Minister.

Dr. Jacob: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

3.15 p.m.

STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER OF FINANCE ON MODIFICATIONS TO THE REVENUE PROPOSALS IN BUDGET SPEECH DELIVERED ON 31ST JANUARY, 1962

As Honourable Members are aware, when the 1962 Budget was introduced on 31st January, the debate on the proposals was deferred until 12th February to allow adequate time for their consideration. These proposals of their nature could not be discussed with the interests likely to be affected by them in advance of their formal announcement. Announcement had perforce to precede any such discussion. Since it was clear from subsequent developments that a still longer period was required for the expression of views on the revenue proposals, and for adequate discussion of them, it was stated in the Legislative Assembly on 9th February that the debate scheduled for 12th February would be further postponed to a date to be announced.

2. During the two-month period which has elapsed since the Budget Speech, the Government has carefully considered the representations of the interests affected, and held many discussions with them. In the light of these representations and discussions the Government has decided to modify some of the revenue proposals. However, the need for the proposals and their objectives have not been changed by time and circumstances: the need for additional revenue is the same; and the need for a just and equitable system of taxation, the parts of which are consistent and reinforce one another, is the same. The modifications are therefore necessarily limited by these considerations.

3. In order to facilitate the debate of the Government's financial and economic policy on the motion for the

[DR. JACOB]

Second Reading of the Appropriation Bill, I shall now state briefly the modifications to the revenue proposals. In relation to the relevant paragraphs of the Budget Speech they are as follows:—

Para. 28: This provision will be modified to allow the tax authority to accept the actual profits of the company as the tax base in cases where satisfactory evidence can be adduced to show that, although a significant part of a company's business was transacted with or influenced by an associated overseas company, the profits have not thereby been understated.

Para. 30: New businesses engaged in manufacturing will be exempt from the minimum income tax for the first five years of assessment.

Para. 31: Where the right to set off a loss from one source against income from other sources (different businesses run by the same company or individual being regarded as separate sources of income) is withdrawn, unlimited carry-forward of the loss will be permitted for tax purposes.

Paras. 32 & 33: The tax holiday legislation will be repealed but incentives to industrial development will be provided through tariff concessions to manufacture for the home market, through accelerated write-off of capital expenditure for tax purposes (as proposed in this section of the Budget Speech) and through negotiated concessions, if necessary, to industries producing for the export market. Private investors will be invited to participate in Government industrial enterprises.

Para. 34: Expenditure on advertising (other than the "Prestige" variety) will be allowed as an expense for income tax purposes only to the extent of 75%, except where it is designed to promote the sale of specific products abroad or of local manufactures for home con-

sumption, when the full expenditure will be allowed. A provision to this effect will be substituted for the proposed limit of ¼ or 1% of turnover. The restrictions on tax-allowable advertising expenditure will be brought into effect from the year of assessment 1963, i.e. will apply to any such expenditure made from 1st January, 1962.

Para. 64: The proposed additional import duties will be withdrawn except in respect of coffee, concentrates for non-alcoholic beverages, alcoholic beverages, tobacco, motor cars and motor cycles excluding "auto-cycles". The duty on manually-operated coffee mills will be removed. The import duties retained should yield (allowing for some curtailment of imports) only \$2.0mn. in additional revenue — \$3.5mn. less than the original proposals.

Para. 67: The licence duties on pawnbrokerages in New Amsterdam and in the rural areas will be increased to \$400 and \$120 respectively, instead of to \$500 and \$200 respectively.

Para. 69: It is proposed to move an amendment to the Bill introducing higher rates of stamp duty to allow documents executed between the commencing date of the higher rates of duty and the enactment of the legislation not bearing stamps to the value required by the legislation to be validated without penalty by affixing additional stamps.

Paras. 71 to 74: The proposals relating to the personal income tax will be revised to reduce the personal allowance to \$800, instead of to \$750 as originally proposed; and to increase the top rate of income tax to 70% — the 60% rate to apply to chargeable income between \$10,800 and \$13,200 per annum and the 70% rate to apply to all chargeable income above this level. These adjustments will result in a net increase in the additional yield of the proposals of nearly \$0.1mn., bringing the total additional yield to \$1.1mn.

Para. 75: Along with the P.A.Y.E. system of income tax collection, quarterly payment of the company income tax — equal instalments payable at the end of each quarter of the calendar year — will be introduced from 1st January, 1963.

Para. 76: The rate of income tax (now 15%) on life insurance companies will be increased to 25% for mutual companies and 45% for proprietary companies, instead of to 30% as originally proposed for all life insurance companies. This should raise the additional yield of the proposal from \$0.15 to \$0.2mn. per annum.

Paras. 80 & 81: The capital gains tax will be introduced with effect from the year of assessment 1963, *i.e.* in respect of transactions after 31st December 1961.

Paras. 82 to 84: The net property tax (to be collected this year on net assets as at 31st December, 1961) will be levied both on individuals and on companies. However, the tax will be so levied that the same real capital is not effectively taxed more than once.

Paras. 85 to 87: The gift tax will be levied on gifts made after 31st December, 1961, *i.e.* will be first collected in the year of assessment 1963 in respect of gifts made in 1962. Gifts will be so defined as clearly to exclude expenditure, reasonably necessary, on the maintenance and education of children and dependent relatives.

Para. 89: The adjustments to the tax proposals discussed above will reduce the yield of additional revenue from \$10.5mn. to \$7.2mn. The deficit on the Recurrent Budget as presented is \$7.1mn. This will leave no surplus available for development expenditure and no margin against failure of the revenue expectations. The exigencies

of the financial situation therefore require the curtailment of the recurrent expenditure (\$65.59mn.) proposed. However, with inescapable commitments for increased salaries and debt charges adding nearly \$5mn. of the \$8.2mn. increase on last year's recurrent expenditure (\$57.4mn.) and with the bulk of the remainder of the increase in the form of expenditure which can be avoided only temporarily and at greater cost to the community, this curtailment of expenditure cannot be achieved simply by cutting a few selected votes; it can, and must, be achieved mainly by economizing to the utmost on expenditure from every vote. Some reduction will be effected by downward adjustments to some of the estimates, but the main curtailment will be by way of strict administrative control of expenditure to ensure that there are savings on the provision.

Paras. 90 to 98: The scope and the form of the savings scheme will be revised. As a national development savings scheme it will be levied on the income before tax of companies at the rate of 10%; and on the income of individuals in excess of \$3,600 per annum — salary or wage income at 5% and other income at 10%, the income of the self-employed in excess of \$5,000 per annum to be regarded as falling in the higher rate category. The savings bonds (to be issued as at the end of each calendar year in respect of the total contributions made in the year) will bear interest at 4% per annum payable annually free of tax, will be registered and non-transferable and will be redeemable at the end of six years from the date of issue, *i.e.* the bond issued at the end of the first year in respect of the contributions made during that year will be redeemable at the end of the seventh year — six years from the date of issue — and so on for each subsequent annual issue. The principal and interest of the bonds will be charged

[DR. JACOB]

on the revenues and assets of the Government. The bonds cannot be encashed before maturity except on emigration, retirement from employment for more than six months, (in which case half the value of a bond may be encashed at six-monthly intervals as long as the unemployment subsists), or at death. The alternative lottery-type bond will bear interest at 2% per annum. The additional funds that will accrue to the Development Fund from this levy will enable the programme of public industrial enterprise to be accelerated, so that any capital so diverted from private industrial development by the levy will be devoted to equivalent high-yield public industrial development.

Paras. 109 & 110: Life insurance companies will be required to invest 75% of their net premium income, i.e. gross premium income less management expenses, relating to policies held by residents, in British Guiana; and over a period of ten years to bring their total investment in British Guiana to 75% of their assets held against local liabilities.

Para. 98: The National Development Savings Scheme on the revised basis should yield \$4mn. per annum — \$2mn. less than the original scheme. With its introduction from 1st July, 1962, it should therefore provide \$2mn. this year for the Development Fund. The requirement for 75% local investment of life assurance funds could yield something like a further \$1mn. a year in loan funds to the Government. The \$20mn. funds in sight for financing this year's Development Budget as presented already include \$2mn. for local borrowing by a market issue. It seems unlikely that all forms of local borrowing will yield more than \$3mn. this year. With no revenue contribution (and it is no longer prudent to count on any), the funds in sight for financing development

expenditure this year amount to no more than \$21mn. Development expenditure this year will therefore have to be restricted to this amount.

4. The additional cost of collecting the new taxes should be recovered many times over by the improvement in the efficiency of the income tax levy which integrated information on capital and revenue transactions will allow. Staffing will present difficulties, and it will be necessary to depend to some extent on expert staff recruited temporarily from overseas.

3.30 p.m.

Mr. Speaker: Copies of the Minister's Statement are now being distributed, after which the debate may proceed.

Mr. Burnham: Not now.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, you have just been handed a 5-page document which has just been read by the hon. Minister of Finance. I am sure that at the moment, very few of you will be able to integrate the modifications with the Budget Statement which has been represented to us some time ago. In the circumstances, if the House has no objection, I propose to allow two clear days to enable Members to peruse the documents and return to the House to proceed with the debate.

Mr. Burnham : No, sir. The hon. Leader of the House (Mr. Benn) has spoken to me, and I have suggested that we resume the debate on Monday next. Actually, from the point of view of legislative business, it will only be one day later; and, from the point of view of one's ability to study the matter, there will be a period of three extra days. The Leader of the House had promised to

inform me of what he thought of my suggestion, but I have not been privileged with such information.

Mr. Benn: I had intimated to the hon. Member for Ruimveldt that the Government was suggesting that the House should have two days in which to study the revisions or modifications to the proposals in the Budget, and I had promised to talk to him about the matter later. He had suggested Monday, but I told him that it would further delay the Government's ability to carry on spending money under the Development Programme. I had hoped that he would have co-operated with the Government in this matter.

I also intimated Government's intention to the hon. Member for Georgetown Central who has agreed with it. I want to ask the hon. Member for Ruimveldt to agree with us that this is a very urgent matter, and that full time would be given to everyone to debate the important Budget Statement made by the hon. Minister of Finance. Every Member need not speak on Friday. In view of the urgency of the matter, I think we should proceed with the debate on Friday.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members you have heard two points of view: (1) Because of the urgency we should proceed on Friday; (2) The hon. Member for Ruimveldt thinks we should proceed with the debate on Monday. It is for—

Mr. d'Aguiar: Your Honour, in as much as the matter is of great importance and procedures are somewhat unusual and possibly improper, I feel that the Government should give us the necessary time to go into the matter. I do not know whether the person who drafted the Customs Ordinance had in mind a minimum of four days, when four days were written in Section 8.

I feel that proper time should be allowed before the debate resumes for the consideration of what is in effect a new

Budget. It is newer than the difference in Budgets between the years 1960 to 1961; there are more differences between this and Kaldor's Budget than between the 1960 and the 1961 Budgets. It is, in effect, a new Budget, and it requires careful investigation. I think that a minimum of four days should be given to Members to enable them to study the Budget. I would suggest that we be given until Tuesday.

Mr. Benn: I am surprised to hear the hon. Member for Ruimveldt —

Mr. Burnham : On a point of order.

Mr. Benn : I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, I meant the hon. Member for Georgetown Central. He readily agreed with me when I spoke to him regarding the urgency of getting the matter through, and he told me that two days were enough for him to consider it. I know that the hon. Member appreciates the urgency of this matter before the House, and, in view of this, he will study the proposals in as short a time as we recommend so that we can get on with the business.

Mr. Speaker: Does any Member wish to speak?

Mr. Burnham : The urgency is appreciated by those on this side of the House, but the fact remains that under the Financial Administration and Audit Ordinance, No. 39 of 1961, Government can make certain payments up to a certain limit. The Minister of Finance can sign the warrant as long as the expenditure is an old one. If it is a new one, he has to come here with a Resolution which we will gladly pass. Then we have the Interim Collection of Taxes Ordinance— [Mr. Rai. "Provisional."]— I thank you. There is the Provisional Collection of Taxes Ordinance, and there are a number of paraphernalia or bits of legislative machinery whereby Government can carry on.

Mr. Speaker: According to the hon. Member for Ruimveldt, legislatively speaking, we will be only one day late.

Mr. Benn: I agree with that.

Mr. Speaker: We will resume the debate on the Second Reading of the Appropriation Bill on Monday next week. We must realize that hinged to the Appropriation Bill are Bills Nos. 5 and 6.

3.40 p.m.

Mr. Speaker: We will now deal with Bill No. 8.

CUSTOMS ORDER NO. 3/1962

"Be it resolved that the Legislature in terms of section 9 of the Customs Ordinance, Chapter 309, confirms Order No. 3 of 1962 which was made on the 20th day of January, 1962 and published in the Gazette on the 27th of January, 1962." [The Minister of Finance.]

Dr. Jacob: In accordance with Standing Order 21 of the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly, I signify that the Governor has recommended this Motion for consideration by the House.

Order No. 3 of 1962, made under Section 8 of the Customs Ordinance, exempts all goods not for sale or personal use of employees—

Mr. Burnham : Mr. Speaker, may I make an inquiry? I thought it was Bill No. 8.

Mr. Speaker: Item No. 8.

Mr. Burnham You see, Your Honour, you said Bill No. 8.

Mr. Speaker: My apologies.

Mr. Burnham: Accepted.

Mr. Speaker: Please proceed, Mr. Minister.

Dr. Jacob: As I was saying, Order No. 3 of 1962, made under the Customs Ordinance, exempts all goods not

for sale or personal use of employees of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations from the payment of customs duties. The principle of granting this concession to cultural organizations of this nature has been established by the grant of a similar concession to the organization known as the British Council. I therefore formally beg to move the Motion.

Mr. Burnham : I am in favour of the principle, but the legality, I submit, is absent. This is an Order made, I understand, under Section 8 of the Customs Ordinance, Chapter 309. Section 9 provides for certain procedure which has not been adopted and, consequently, we will be debating a nullity, I submit.

This Order which, under Section 9, had to be laid within 21 days of its first publication, which happens to be the 27th January, was properly laid on the 9th February. That I agree with. But the last sentence of Section 9 reads:

"If the order be not submitted within the said period of twenty-one days to the Legislative Council for confirmation it shall *ipso facto* expire."

In other words, what Section 9 envisages is the laying — [Interruption.] I wish some of the ignorant will only listen. The more intelligent always listen. I was saying, that Section 9 envisages three things: that you lay at the earliest period after four days; that you lay within twenty-one days, and thirdly, that you submit it for confirmation within twenty-one days.

This Order has not been submitted for confirmation within twenty-one days and, consequently, I submit, it would amount to a nullity. I repeat that I am in favour of the exemption, but I am submitting that this Order that is being discussed today cannot give the exemption which is hoped for.

The Attorney-General: There are certain provisions in our laws which require statutory instruments to be

laid before the Chambers of the Legislature. Certain of them say specifically that the instruments are to be laid. In this particular case, and unlike other cases, it is required that the statutory instrument should be submitted to the Legislative Council—this would now read “Chambers of the Legislature” — after four days and within twenty-one days from the date of its first publication.

It is difficult to say whether “lay” and “submit” mean the same thing. My learned friend, the hon. Member for Ruimveldt, obviously thinks so. Assuming it is so, then the question is whether a document is “submitted” within the meaning of this provision if it is sent to the Clerk of the Legislature within the time and if it is further circulated to Members within the time.

This problem was encountered in the United Kingdom by the Commons House of Parliament, which has established usage and practice. Standing Order 110 provides that if the instrument is sent to the Votes and Proceedings Office, then it would have been considered to have been well and truly laid. Standing Order 85 of our Standing Orders provides that where our Orders are silent, the usage and practice of the House of Commons should be adopted. I think that by virtue of Standing Order 110 what is necessary in the case of these customs orders is that they should be submitted to the Clerk of the Legislature after four days and within twenty-one days of their being made and published, and that the formal approval of the Assembly can come at any time thereafter.

I do not know how far we can get by debating this question in this forum, but I would have wished that my learned friend had left this question to the adjudication of the courts rather than have the Assembly deal with the matter which is predominantly a question for the judges. My own view is that in the circumstances, having re-

gard to previous practice, the hon. Minister is in order to move this Motion for the reasons I have given. If I am wrong, I would prefer the judges to say.

Mr. Burnham : On a matter of personal explanation, Mr. Speaker, adding nothing new. I think my hon. and learned Friend, the Attorney-General, did not quite get the particular point I was making at this stage. I was not making the point on “submission”. I was merely stating the point that it would appear from the last sentence of Section 9 that the submission for ratification or confirmation should be within the twenty-one days.

I appreciate very keenly the observations made by the Attorney-General. They have been made by one whose learning permits him to recognize the possibility that he is not right—so different from some other people who prefer to giggle when these points are made. I also appreciate his suggestion to leave this matter to the arbitrament of the court, but I am not for encouraging litigation and the expense of litigation. Perhaps, this is the sort of matter that may be referred to a Select Committee of this House for consideration as to what new legislation may be put up. This is not a matter for Party differences, and I appreciate the attitude that has been adopted by the Attorney-General. I want to take this opportunity to congratulate him.

3.50 p.m.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members will fully appreciate that I am not in the position of either the hon. Member for Ruimveldt (Mr. Burnham) or the hon. the Attorney-General, in that I have no legal qualifications. My observations, therefore, are based merely upon my ability to understand English as it is written, even in legal language. Section 9 of the Customs Ordinance, which seems to be creating a little bit of dispute between the two sides of the House reads thus:

[MR. SPEAKER]

"9. Every order made under section 8 shall after four days and within twenty-one days from the date of its first publication be submitted to the Legislative Council . . ."

This condition, as far as I am aware, has been fulfilled.

Submission to the Legislative Council is for the purpose as disclosed when we read further —

" and the Legislative Council may by resolution confirm, amend or revoke such order and upon publication of the resolution of the Legislative Council in the Gazette the resolution shall have effect and the order shall then expire."

The Legislative Council having made its decision, publication is made in the Gazette, and when it is so published the Resolution shall have effect. The point which the hon. Member is making is in relation to the following words:

". If the order be not submitted within the said period of twenty-one days to the Legislative Council for confirmation it shall *ipso facto* expire."

Now the operative word, in my opinion, is the word "said."

In this case the submission took place within 21 days, therefore the argument of the Attorney-General seems to be justified, in that ratification may follow at any time thereafter, provided the submission has been made within a reasonable time. In the circumstances I consider that the Motion is correct in its timing, and may be considered by the House.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion affirmed.

SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION (1960) BILL

A Bill intituled: "An Ordinance to allow and confirm certain additional expenditure incurred in the year ended the thirty-first day of December, 1960."

The Minister of Finance (Dr. Jacob): In moving the Second reading of the Supplementary Appropriation (1960) Bill, 1962, I merely wish to state that the object of this Bill is to confirm expenditure which was in excess of that provided for by the Appropriation Ordinance, 1960. I now formally move that the Supplementary Appropriation (1960) Bill, 1962, be read a Second time.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a Second time.

Assembly in Committee.

Clause 1 — Short Title.

Ordered to stand part of the Bill.

Clause 2 — Schedule.

Item 24—Law Officers. \$4,799.44

Mr. Burnham : I would like to inquire for what purpose was this expenditure. The Minister may not be able to give me an answer now, because it was incurred in 1960. I would be satisfied with the information being informally supplied on another occasion.

Assembly resumed.

Bill reported without amendment, read a Third time and passed.

Mr. Speaker: It is now four o'clock. The sitting is now adjourned for half an hour.

4.30 p.m.

On resumption—

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, we were about to deal with item No. 10 on the Order Paper when we adjourned for the tea interval. It is a Bill to be moved by the hon. Minister of Finance.

DEVELOPMENT FUND (1960) APPROPRIATION) BILL

Dr. Jacob: Your Honour, in moving the Second Reading of the Bill intituled:

"An Ordinance to make provision for the appropriation to the Development Fund of a certain sum of money transferred thereto from the revenues and funds of the Colony,"

I wish to state that it is the policy of the Government to use the annual surpluses of revenue over recurrent expenditure to finance expenditure on the Development Programme. This Bill, therefore, seeks to appropriate the sum of \$5,506,193.74 to the Development Fund to which all expenditure on development works is chargeable, and to validate payments made out of the sum just mentioned. This amount represents the surplus of revenue over recurrent expenditure in respect of the year 1960.

I now move that the Development Fund (1960 Appropriation) Bill, 1962, be read a Second time.

Mr. Speaker: The Motion for the Second Reading of the Bill is before the House for consideration.

4.45 p.m.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a Second time.

Assembly in Committee.

Bill considered and approved.

Assembly resumed.

Bill reported without amendment, read the Third time and passed.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, we may now turn to the Supplementary Order Paper and deal with the Government business under items 1, 2, 3 and 4. Then we shall return to the main Order Paper for Motion No. 11.

MOTIONS

REPLACEMENT OF BUXTON SEA SLUICE

"Be it resolved that this Legislative Assembly authorises the expenditure of fifteen thousand dollars for carrying out

urgent works on the replacement of the Buxton Sea Sluice." [The Minister of Finance.]

Dr. Jacob: In accordance with Standing Order 21 of the Standing Orders of this House, I signify that the Governor has recommended this Motion for the consideration of the House.

The Government has recently approved of the construction of a new sea sluice at Buxton on the East Coast of Demerara to replace the existing one which is no longer serviceable. This special Motion seeks to obtain authority for the expenditure of \$15,000 for strengthening the embankment of the high-level basin in connection with this work. Provision of \$55,000 has been made in the draft Estimates for this work, but there is none for the strengthening of the embankment of the high-level basin. These Estimates are to come before the Legislative Assembly. This money is very urgently required for work on the embankment, and, in the circumstances, I formally beg to move the Motion.

Mr. Speaker: Does any Member wish to speak to the question?

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion carried.

SENIOR LEGAL ADVISER AND LEGAL ADVISER FOR POLICE DEPARTMENT

"Be it resolved that this Legislative Assembly authorizes expenditure of \$9,000 to provide for the appointment of one Senior Legal Adviser and one Legal Adviser to the Police Department." [The Minister of Finance.]

Dr. Jacob: In accordance with Standing Order 21 of the Standing Orders of the House, I signify that the Governor has recommended the consideration of this Motion by the House.

[DR JACOB]

The posts of Senior Legal Adviser and Legal Adviser have been included in the 1962 draft Estimates. There is now urgent need for filling these posts and the Legislative Assembly is therefore being asked to approve of the expenditure of \$9,000 so as to allow the appointments to be made quickly. I therefore beg to move the Motion.

Mr. Burnham : So far as I am concerned, I agree that there is necessity to have a Senior Legal Adviser and a Legal Adviser to the Police. In fact, for some years now, I have been making the suggestion that several Government departments should have lawyers attached. I think it would make for more expedition and a higher quality of service from the respective departments. When I saw the provision in the Estimates for these two posts, I welcomed such provision and the critical remarks I make this afternoon are not directed against the creation of these two posts; not directed against the individual who, I understand, will be appointed Senior Legal Adviser; but against the undue haste in this particular case as against other cases.

A careful perusal of the Estimates which were submitted to us on the 31st January shows that, for instance, under "Supreme Court and Deeds Registry", Head 4, there is a new post of Court Accountant. Are we to understand that there is no urgency about that? Under the same Head, you find a Senior Clerk — a new post — on the establishment. There is no haste to have us pass a Resolution to pay this person or the person to be appointed.

Let us turn to an important Head like "Office of the Premier and Ministry of Development and Planning" on page 9 of the Estimates. A provision is made there for a new Principal Assistant Secretary. No urgency about that, Mr.

Speaker? Continuing with the Office of the Premier and Ministry of Development and Planning, there is provision for an Inspecting Officer.

Then, we turn to the Ministry of Natural Resources — a most important Ministry; a Ministry under whose supervision falls, I think, the largest share or part of the development funds. We find it is proposed to have two Principal Assistant Secretaries in addition to the old establishment, and as we go through the Estimates I have been able to count something like over 20 new posts for the establishment, none of them I think unimportant. Public Works — 2 Senior Engineers; Drainage and Irrigation — 1 Executive Engineer; and one wonders what sort of discrimination is being exercised in this case that there should be a special Resolution for the posts of Senior Legal Adviser and Legal Adviser. I do not know. I cannot understand, but I should hate to believe that what is being said in uninformed places has even a scintilla of truth. [Interruption.] The hon. Minister of Natural Resources would like to hear, but I do not think I should repeat in this House the reasons that are being suggested outside for the undue haste this Government is showing in having a Resolution passed in respect of these two posts.

We appreciate that for one reason or another, one unfortunate incident or another, one calamity or another, it has taken us some time to pass the Appropriation Bill and, therefore, to give legal authority to the appointment of persons to new posts on the establishment. But does this Government for one moment imagine that we are that unreasonable that if it had come with a Motion to cover all these new posts, all of which are important for the smooth and efficient running of the Government, we would have voted against it? And even if we had voted against it, it

has the numbers and it would have carried such a Resolution or Resolutions.

The Government, like Caesar's wife, must be above suspicion. It is not sufficient for the hon. Minister of Finance to tell us here that it is considered necessary to have these posts; it is considered that the appointment is an urgent one. That I would say, with the greatest respect to the Minister of Finance, is an insult to our intelligence. It either means that the Minister of Home Affairs is more diligent with respect to his duties and the departments that come within his portfolio than other Ministers, or it means that there is more in it than meets the eye. There is more in the mortar than the pestle.

As I was looking through the Estimates and I looked at the Attorney-General's Office, I noticed how many new posts have been created — none considered unnecessary — and I wondered how these officers were being paid; under what legal authority. When I look at the Head of "Director of Public Prosecutions", I see a number of new officers and new posts which I know are being filled at the moment. Under what authority are these people being paid? Under the head of "Printery"—

Mr. Speaker: That is a different question.

Mr. Burnham : I find that there are a number of new posts that have been created. First of all, why no Resolution, and, secondly, under what legal authority are they being paid?

Mr. Speaker: I do not think that is pertinent to the question before us.

Mr. Burnham : Your Honour is always so kind to me to direct me to the proprieties of the situation.

Why does not the Government introduce one comprehensive Resolution to cover the holders of all these posts and also to facilitate the appointments of persons to the substantive posts? This sort of piecemeal attack on problems and difficulties is something that I have been criticizing for the last four or five years, but it has always fallen on deaf ears. We hear from time to time the Government say, "Your criticisms must be constructive." When you make them, your suggestions are ignored with the greatest *hauteur*, and when you criticize without suggestions you are told your criticisms are not constructive. Will this Government never learn? There are two things that continue with this Government — the Minister of Works and Hydraulics' sense of humour which is original, distinctive and peculiar, and its inability to tackle problems as a whole rather than piecemeal.

5 p.m.

I will vote for the Motion, and I hope that the Public Service Commission will appoint a proper person. Some time ago the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Works and Hydraulics (Mr. Mann) appealed to us on this side to show tolerance and to lend assistance. I am acceding to his request on this occasion, and I hope it will bear fruit.

Mr. Bissember (Campbellville): This Motion is a very important one. Those of us who practise in the Supreme Court and the Magistrate's Court, and have to deal with matters concerning the Police, know only too well that the Police Department needs assistance by way of trained legal officers. I wish to make certain remarks so that the Government may take notice of them and do not repeat what has been going on in the past. There have been many cases — I can mention at least three straight away — in which the Police Legal Adviser was sent a file for

[MR. BISSEMBER]

his advice on certain matters. He gave his advice but Ministerial interference operated against that advice. I should not like to abuse my privilege here by calling names concerned in those matters, but one of the matters is now pending in the Court.

In that particular case five months after the Police Legal Officer had advised that a certain charge should be instituted, the Minister of Home Affairs (Mr. Rai), through his Permanent Secretary, wrote a letter calling in the person concerned, with whom he had a long discussion. After five months had elapsed—and the statutory period is six months within which a charge could be instituted—the person whose matter had been handed over to the Police, was told to take private action. This is a case in which the Police Legal Officer, paid to do a job, had given his advice as a trained lawyer on the papers and evidence before him, but as a result of Ministerial interference his advice was not taken and no charge was instituted by the Police.

There is another instance in which the Police Legal Officer, having had a certain file in his possession, was suddenly relieved of that file by the Minister concerned, and the next thing one hears is that the Minister is endeavouring to act against the advice of the Police Legal Officer. That is not the kind of thing the Minister should do. If there is a Legal Adviser paid to advise the Police Force so that it may carry out its duties to ensure that justice is done, there must be no governmental political interference whatsoever.

I mention those two instances so that those who are concerned may take note that we on this side of the Table are alive to this political interference by them, and that they abuse their positions. We support the Motion because we feel

that the Police need a lot of legal advice and assistance, but whenever there is interference we shall not sit down and allow any Minister to interfere in the proper administration of the Police Force, especially when the Police Legal Officer has taken over a matter. I make no reference to the person who was the Legal Officer in those two instances I have mentioned. I merely say that in one instance a file was taken away from him, and in the second case the advice he gave as a trained lawyer was not followed by the Police.

The Minister of Home Affairs (Mr. Rai): I wish to refute very emphatically the very baseless charges which have been hurled against me and my Ministry by my Friend, the hon. Member for Campbellville. He has not given any names but merely made general charges against me and my Ministry. I wish to assure the House that there is no Ministerial interference in prosecutions by the Police. [Mr. Burnham: "The Police against Lowe".] A Minister is entitled to know what is going on in every Department which falls within his portfolio, but there has been, and there is, no interference whatsoever with Police prosecutions. If my Friend knows of any instances where the Police Legal Officer's advice has not been followed, I shall be glad to learn from him. But the Police Legal Officer is merely to advise the Police who bring prosecutions. The Minister never brings a prosecution and does not interfere with Police prosecutions.

What strikes me as very interesting is how Members of the Opposition know about the Police files and what is written on them. How is it that Members of the Opposition know what the Police Legal Officer had advised, and what transpires on Police files, as evidenced by what the hon. Member has said here this afternoon? Neither does the Minister nor his Ministry interfere in Police matters. Day after day people

make complaints which have to be investigated. They are usually referred to the Police and after investigation the people concerned are informed of the facts of the case. That is one of the reasons why I am seeking so urgently the appointment of two Legal Advisers to the Police Force, so that the Police may have the best advice available to enable them to bring prosecutions, and to enable them also to refrain from bringing prosecutions when they are not warranted by the facts.

Mr. Burnham: The prosecution of Police Constable Lowe.

Mr. Speaker: Please. You have had your say already.

Dr. Jacob: I merely wish to refer to the imputation of discrimination made by the hon. Member for Ruimveldt (Mr. Burnham). It is his practice always to impute to the Government many things. The fact of the matter is that in this case the appointments of a Senior Legal Adviser and a Legal Adviser to the Police are urgently required. The hon. Member cited a number of other cases to prove that we are discriminating against the prospective holders of these posts by not bringing a special Motion before the House to authorize expenditure for the appointment of those officers. There is no great urgency in regard to the appointment of those people. Indeed, if there were, a Motion would have been brought here to seek approval of the necessary expenditure. It seems very extraordinary that the hon. Member should have knowledge of people who are likely to be appointed to posts. This is a serious matter.

Mr. Burnham: We all know.

Dr. Jacob: How can the hon. Member say here or indicate that he has knowledge of people to be appointed to posts?

Mr. Speaker: There is such a thing as intelligent speculation.

Dr. Jacob: There may be intelligent guessing or speculation, but there are other means adopted to secure information from official and secret files of the Government. We take a serious view of leakage of secret and confidential information.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion affirmed.

ENVIRONMENTAL SANITATION PROGRAMME

Motion —

"Be it resolved that this Legislative Assembly authorizes the expenditure of ten thousand dollars for carrying out urgent works in connection with the Environmental Sanitation Programme in the Essequibo District." [Minister of Finance].

The Minister of Finance (Dr. Jacob): In accordance with Standing Order 21 I signify that the Governor has recommended this Motion for consideration by the Assembly. An Environmental Sanitation Programme is included in the plan of operation agreed upon by the World Health Organisation and UNICEF for the carrying out of an integrated health service programme in participation with the Government of British Guiana. The programme includes the erection of 4,000 concrete pit latrines on the Essequibo Coast and Islands, and cement for their construction was obtained from UNICEF towards the end of last year in anticipation of early provision of funds in 1962. This cement may deteriorate if it is not used in the very near future. In addition, delay in execution of this work may affect the timing of the overall programme. The sum of \$10,000 is required for the construction of a pre-casting shop for the manufacture of units, and is included in the proposed Development Estimates for 1962. I formally move the Motion.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion affirmed.

5.15 p.m.

PURE WATER SUPPLY PROGRAMME

"Be it resolved that this Legislative Assembly authorizes the expenditure of four hundred thousand dollars for the purchase of materials required for the 1962 Pure Water Supply Programme." [Minister of Finance].

Dr. Jacob: Your Honour, in accordance with Standing Order 21 of the Standing Orders of this House, I signify that the Governor has recommended this Motion for consideration by the House. An amount of approximately \$700,000 is included in the 1962 Draft Estimates for Pure Water Supply in Rural Areas, including the Black Bush Polder. It is estimated that 75% of this amount will be spent on materials imported from abroad. Delivery of the materials will take about six months after the receipt of the orders by the suppliers abroad. In order to reduce to a minimum the period of delay in carrying out this Programme, it has been necessary to order the materials some time in advance. The Motion seeks authority for expenditure of four hundred thousand dollars for the purchase of materials required for the 1962 Pure Water Supply Programme.

Mr. Burnham: Mr. Speaker, once again I support the Motion ——— [Mr. Bowman: "But".] ——— I notice that the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Natural Resources is becoming psychic; he anticipated my conjunction, "but". I would like the hon. Minister to explain why the Government is, at this late stage, now making arrangements for a pure water supply for the Black Bush Area. I have heard complaints about the absence of a pure water supply in the Scheme. I am not talking about rattlesnakes; I am talking about the absence of a pure water supply. It seems to me that if one is going to embark on a scheme like the Black Bush Polder Scheme, where one is not only going in

for land development but settlement of communities, one should have all of the conveniences that go with a community. Mr. Speaker, I would have thought that if the Government were interested in the release of land to the settlers, it would also have completed the network for a Pure Water Supply Scheme. It seems to me that the Members of the Government feel that their support is so strong in Corentyne that they can get away with murder. But even fanatical supporters are human beings, and certain consideration should be given to their human needs and conveniences.

The Minister of Labour, Health and Housing (Mr. Chandisingh): I wish to inform the hon. Member for Ruimveldt that there has been no question of delay in providing pure water supplies for the Black Bush Area. The fact that the hon. Minister of Finance has just introduced a Motion seeking approval for expenditure in the sum of \$400,000 does not necessarily mean that the provision of a Pure Water Supply Scheme for the Black Bush Area is just about to begin. As a matter of fact, the programme for the Black Bush Area was started some time ago.

As some Members are aware, settlement in the Black Bush Area is taking place in about four districts. At the moment the Lesbeholden district is the most developed one in the area, and the provision for shallow wells has gone ahead rapidly. I am assured by the Geophysicist/Hydrologist that within a very short time — a matter of days — Lesbeholden will be completely provided with shallow wells. It is proposed to provide one well for every four families. The digging of wells in Mibikuri and other areas will begin as soon as possible. As soon as the work in the Lesbeholden district is completed, the drilling will be transferred to work in other areas where settlement is taking place.

Once again, sir, I would like to say it is not correct for the hon. Member for Ruimveldt to assume that it is only now that the Government is thinking of providing pure water supplies for people in the Black Bush Area.

Mr. Speaker: Does the hon. Minister of Finance wish to reply?

Dr. Jacob: No, sir.

Question put, and agreed to.

Motion affirmed.

Mr. Speaker: We will now refer to the main Order Paper. At page 4, there is a Motion standing in the name of the hon. Member for Upper Demerara River.

CONSTRUCTION OF ATKINSON-MACKENZIE ROAD.

"Be it resolved that this Assembly recommends to Government the early construction of a road between Atkinson and Mackenzie". [Mr. Jordan.]

Mr. Jordan (Upper Demerara River): Mr. Speaker, I believe all of us in this honourable House can remember the East Bank Road, say, 20 years ago, when it hardly went further than about ten miles from Georgetown, and to go further one either had to walk or travel by boat. When the war came and the United States wanted a base at what in those days was called "Hyde Park" and what is now called Atkinson Field, there was set in motion the machinery that, today, provides us with a really first-class road from Georgetown to Atkinson Field. I am told that even then a move to continue that road as far as Seba was rejected, but that does not concern us at the moment.

When the road stopped in the vicinity of Craig, about ten miles on the East Bank, we all know that it was literally virgin forest after one left Craig. No body lived there, and the few settlers who lived on the banks of the river had a very hard time because those were not the days

of motor boats, launches, etc. Those poor people had to paddle up and down the river; they had to watch the tide to determine whether or not to move, and very often their hard-earned labour was lost as a result of travelling in inadequate paddle-boats. Because life was so hard and discouraging in those days in the area between Craig and Hyde Park as it was then known, only a handful of people people lived in that vicinity.

A road was constructed, and what do we find today? The land along the road from Georgetown to Atkinson has been either inhabited or profitably occupied, and even Government has taken a hand in things by establishing the Garden of Eden Project. I am told it is not a Garden of Eden — perhaps, after the fruit had been eaten, it remained that type of garden. But, Your Honour, it is a vast improvement to what it used to be. Where was once virgin forest, we can now find prosperous chicken farms, and people are not hesitant to leave Georgetown and live in that area. That is real development, and one would have thought that the Members of the Government, having seen such development falling into the laps of the people in this country like manna, would have taken the hint and said: Since all of this has happened through no effort on our part, the people have settled so well along the East Bank, and a thriving chicken farm industry has been established, it would undoubtedly be a good thing to continue the road in the hope that it would encourage minor industries. But the Members of the Government do not seem to think so, and they prefer to go far and wide experimenting in other areas.

Sir, what the results of these experiments will be, we do not know. But why worry to experiment when one sees clearly what is taking place? Is it not fair to say that what has happened once will happen again? Government has gone into the North West District—I have no

[MR. JORDAN]

grudge for the people there—to start a project. Guiana is, indeed a land of many waters, but Guianese are not at home on water, and any project that will force large numbers of our people to contend with our wild, fierce, rivers must find itself in great difficulties. The great bulk of our population has been accustomed to living on flat coastland where there are only trenches and small canals, and it will be asking too much to transplant people from such areas and put them in areas where they have to contend with vast, raging rivers and waterfalls.

We have all heard of our famous Itanamie, and only those who have seen and watched it can understand how city folk feel when they are transferred from their accustomed mode of living to such areas.

5.30 p.m.

It therefore follows that it would be a very sensible and practical thing for Government to consider development and expansion in an area in which the people of the coastland are more or less accustomed to living. Because in the past our roads have followed a pattern of ribbon development—they have always tended to run alongside rivers or alongside the coastland and the development that resulted was usually ribbon-like with a handful of people living along a strip of road — we have not had development in any depth along our roads.

I believe that we all in this honourable House know of the extensive surveys that have been carried out on a would-be road between Atkinson and Mackenzie. I believe that some of us in this House might even have had the opportunity of travelling along this road so we know that it is practicable. This road avoids all creeks and runs on the watershed between the Demerara and the Essequibo Rivers, and it would provide, one can feel certain, land that would be

fertile and suitable for development. Perhaps, just as chicken farming has arisen on the land between Atkinson and Georgetown, it may well be that pig farming can be started on the lands between Atkinson and Mackenzie.

Travelling along this path as it has so far been surveyed, one finds, here and there, the sources of a large number of creeks, and one would think that it would be a sensible thing for a Government to push a road through an area like this where settlers need not be transplanted lock, stock and barrel. Rather, they could be transplanted gradually. A man could start off “in the rough” by himself and when he has found his footing, he could come back to Georgetown and gradually remove his family, taking them with him to live in some measure of comfort.

Along this particular route, the problems that arise in many areas do not arise. This is so for two reasons. One does not have to think of drainage in this area: in the worst weather, these lands are not under water, and in the driest weather, there is water available. So at once two of the biggest problems that plague this country — drainage and irrigation — are eliminated. But I know there are some people who will say that there is sand along this route. If there is sand, there is no desert. Any of us who have travelled along that road will know that things are growing there. There is plenty of vegetation, and, if one thing will grow, there is no reason to believe that something else will not grow. Those of us who have lived for any time in the bush know that what are commonly called “catch” crops grow anywhere.

So, if the Government is really thinking of development, this is one direction on which it can hardly afford to turn its back. To go further, any road in this country moving in a southerly direction must have as its terminus, we

believe, Brazil. I see in Government's little booklet here that the road going towards Bartica hopes to end on the Brazil border. Fair enough. But why does the Government select an area which is mountainous, which has the largest rivers in this country? The road has not gone 40 miles yet, but the Government will find itself faced with building a number of bridges or ferries.

As soon as you leave Georgetown, there is the first ferry—Georgetown to Vreed-en-Hoop. You travel 18 or 20 miles and then you have to take the second ferry to get to Bartica. When you get there, those of us who know that route would not find it difficult to imagine the problems that would face any Government in building a road in that mountainous area with rivers running all over the place. We know what a tidy sum of money we spent to build the bridge at Garraway Stream, and what has been the experience? A handful of people lived there for a while but they had no means of getting to market what they were able to plant there. So that after gold mining on a large scale ceased, the area fell into natural decline.

But what is the difference with a road going from Atkinson to Mackenzie? Builders of such a road will not be faced with a single river after leaving Georgetown. The largest creek, Madewini, is already bridged. The next largest, on the very boundary of Mackenzie, at Karakara is also bridged. You would travel 70 or 80 miles into this country and not cross a single river. I believe any schoolboy would know that building a road on level country or over gradually rising land would be much simpler than building a road in country where there are high mountains, ravines, waterfalls and the like. I hope Government would be more than schoolboys and would recognize that a road in this direction would get one to the Brazil border at less cost and with more efficiency.

What will you find when you have covered this 70-odd miles and have arrived at Mackenzie? Twenty thousand people living around that area. Development along such a road will be two-pronged. People need not only come from Georgetown and along the East Bank. There will also be people to live along that road from Mackenzie, Wismar, Christianburg and the higher reaches of the Demerara River. It would appear to me that this is ordinary commonsense that if the people from this end took over 20 miles and the people from the other end took over another 20 miles, development could easily be sparked along that road.

To go a step further: Mackenzie arrived at, what do you find there? Thirty-eight miles of road already built. I do not believe that the people who own that road would be averse to allowing the public to use it, because right now the public uses that road and that 38 miles of road takes you further on to within 12 miles of the Berbice River. Perhaps I can call this road first-class because it is better than any road, say, beyond Buxton on the East Coast, Demerara, and better than any road on the Corentyne. You are 12 miles from the Berbice River, and enterprising people in that area have taken such a view of it that they have already started to run a truck service between the Demerara and Berbice Rivers.

Further, after reaching that 38 miles of road, you are just 10 miles from the Demerara River and 110 miles inside the country, and you have not yet crossed a single river and you have not had to contend with any high mountains. Those of us with adventurous spirits have followed the trail along this route right up the Berbice River as far as Tacama, and some of us have been as far as Great Falls, 175 miles from Georgetown.

If this Government is talking with any seriousness about tourist development, internal tourism and the like, what

[MR. JORDAN]

would be finer than for a tourist to be able to touch down at Atkinson, and within two hours be able to drive 75 or 80 miles inside the country and see some of the most beautiful landscapes; to get to a waterfall without crossing any rivers and without facing any hardships? A tourist can arrive at Mallali, see a waterfall and get back to Georgetown, and at the same time and on the way see very much scenic beauty. I am glad to note that the Government is appreciative of this in some measure and the photographers have seen to it that there is plenty to attract the tourist's eye. The Government has taken the trouble to put it on the booklet *British Guiana* which it has recently published. I hope that those who are responsible for it are willing to make it more than a picture and pamphlet, but are willing to make it a reality for people in this country and people outside to enjoy.

This road would not only help tourism. It would not only help new development of this country, but development and industries that already exist will prosper because timber producers along the river will get relief. Very many of us know that it is a matter of life and death for them sometimes to get a simple parcel from Georgetown, and if a man can receive it in five or six days his whole life is changed. Very often, because he will take five or six days to get there, his whole life comes pretty close to being destroyed.

5.45 p.m.

This road would in fact be the keystone to development in this country, because it would give rise to a network of roads in the area. Some of us know that along this very road it is possible to reach Mahaica, and I am told, even though I have not experienced it, that from this very road one can push on to Mahaicony. If this can be done it is not unreasonable to believe that people living in the upper reaches of the Mahaica and Mahaicony

Rivers will also push out and reach this road. They would be developing a pattern, a real pattern of progress, because people who now live alongside the creeks in the Demerara River would push on to the road, and where many an enterprising young man would fear to go up the river to seek a living, he would not fear to go along a road to acquire some place to scratch a living until such time as he can really make a go of it.

Besides leading towards the Berbice River and the upper reaches of the Demerara River, such a road will also lead to the Rupununi savannahs, and it is not difficult to understand that if cattle can come on the hoof alongside the road, or transported by trucks on the road, beef would certainly cost less and come to Georgetown in greater quantities than if it comes by air as at present. I find it difficult to understand why Government cannot see that a road to Mackenzie from Atkinson Field would mean real progress for this country. I know that Government is committed to the tune of \$8 million to build a road from Parika to Makouria, but to go further and try to reach the Brazilian border I warn Government that it is courting disaster, serious disaster, because vast sums of money will be expended not only to build the road but to maintain it.

Those of us who have lived in the interior and have seen what heavy showers of rain can do to a road which runs along a mountain side, will understand that not because we do not read of landslides in this country we do not have them, but where they occur here people do not live. Government will do well to avoid, for as long as possible, travelling in a direction which leads to places where there is a road today, and after a shower of rain tonight you would not know tomorrow where the road you had yesterday was.

Government, I know, is going to say that development funds are limited. If there is only a certain amount of money

to be spent, then there arises the question of priorities. If one does not have all the money to do what one wants to do one has to do the best that needs to be done, and stretch the dollar as far as possible and spend it where it will count for the most. A sum of \$8 million has been allotted for the construction of a road from Parika to a point opposite Bartica. I am sure that \$8 million would not need to be spent to build a road from Atkinson Field to Mackenzie, but I am told, and hope I am told wrongly, that Government will never build this road for the people in the Upper Demerara River. I hope Government will prove me wrong. I hope that for once it will put the welfare of the people of this country above party politics. I know that Government has received advice that it would cost less and do more for this country to construct a road to the Brazilian border from Atkinson Field through Mackenzie and beyond. There is also a plan for another road which, as I have said before, will necessarily pass through very difficult territory, uninhabited territory where settlers will have to be transplanted from populous areas, and will not naturally overflow on to that road.

I feel that it is ordinary common-sense to understand that if people are clustered and packed together in Georgetown, and people are fast becoming clustered in and around Mackenzie, it would make for development and progress to provide means whereby they can overflow into another area and overflow gradually. We do not want them to overflow necessarily as "Eldorados" because perhaps when those "Eldorados" move into areas in which they are not accustomed to live, and discover the hardships, they may well become desperados. What we want is that people who could go and spend a week or two for a start, and then return to the areas to which they are accustomed, refresh themselves and go back again. That would be the start of development, a practical type of development for us all.

But if Government intends to govern sectionally and not in the interest of the country as a whole — I hope I will be proved wrong — it will realize that quick progress, real progress, in this country by the removal of people from the coastlands and encouraging them to go into the hinterland, is going to lie alongside a road built between Atkinson Field and Mackenzie. That is why I recommend to Government the very early construction of a road from Atkinson Field to Mackenzie.

Mr. Burnham : I beg to second the Motion.

Mr. Campbell (North West): It is very refreshing to have a debate on the topic of interior development, for it is a long time since the subject has been discussed in this Chamber. I have often wondered why a roadway to Brazil has not been constructed along the very route the hon. Member for Upper Demerara River has outlined. He has made some very telling points — crossing the Demerara River and the Essequibo River in the lower parts entails the use of ferry boats, and I am told now the Government is building a road with the object of reaching the Brazilian frontier. I have been studying the Demerara River for quite a long time and I have asked: why not a road from Georgetown along the Demerara River to Mackenzie and then finally to Brazil? What has prevented people in the past from concentrating on that road from Georgetown along the Demerara River to what is known as the cattle trail? That cattle trail leads to the Rupununi savannahs, but for some reason the last Government ceased maintenance of that trail. The question came up in this Chamber and some of us pleaded with the Government to continue maintenance of the trail.

6 p.m.

The Government then in power — it was the very people who are now in power, I think — saw fit to abandon the road. Today the hon. Member for Upper

[MR. CAMPBELL]

Demerara River brings up the same question of constructing a road from Atkinson Field to Mackenzie. I am told that surveys have been made. I am also told that people have been able to travel from Atkinson Field to Mackenzie in jeeps and other vehicles over a path or kind of roadway. It has been done over and over again by people who go there by way of seeking adventure, I suppose. Since some form of roadway is already there, I am unable to understand why the Government cannot convert it into a good highway for all types of vehicular traffic. Not far from the roadway will be found the banks of the Demerara River. I feel that the banks of the Upper Demerara River can become a granary for British Guiana; that livestock, citrus and other crops can be produced there economically.

There are two schemes in the North West District, I am very glad to say, but these schemes need encouragement. I am supporting this Motion because it is the only way in which British Guiana can be developed. A network of roadways in the interior will develop British Guiana. Unless the Government develops the interior, instead of concentrating on the coastland, it will be pursuing a lopsided developmental plan. There are valuable trees in the interior such as greenheart and other timbers which can be exploited.

Sir, I know a song which goes like this: "There is no money." I wish that there was money to develop this wonderful land of British Guiana. Why is there no money to develop this country? There is too much politics in British Guiana: Instead of making a practical approach to the business of developing the country so that the people in Georgetown and others will be proud to go and spend a week-end there, the Members of the Government are indulging in too much politics.

I understand that when Government employees go on long leave, it is stipulated in General Orders that they must go

abroad. I would say that Government should provide facilities in the interior, so that Government employees would be encouraged to look at the beautiful country the Almighty has given us by way of waterfalls, strange animals, strange flowers and so on. Let us encourage them to see the beautiful things in the interior that nature has created for us. I wholeheartedly support the Motion brought by the hon. Member for Upper Demerara River.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Natural Resources (Mr. Bowman): I feel that the hon. Member for Upper Demerara River has brought a very good Motion to the Assembly, although I must say that it is not an original one. On this side of the House, in former times, there was a Member who, every now and then, harped on the question of the construction of a road from Atkinson Field to Mackenzie. Today he is not with us.

This Motion is one with which every Member agrees, and the Government accepts it in principle. It is something to which the Members of the Government look forward; something which we feel is necessary, and which we hope we will be able to do in the very near future. But very often we find that a Member comes to this Assembly with a good Motion, and, although he stands a chance of having it accepted by both sides of the House, somewhere along the line there is a tendency to introduce a very sour note. I do not know whether it is the result of our always wanting to get at each other's throat across the Table.

We agree with the Motion brought by the hon. Member but, here and there, he kept referring to things like "school-boy"; "I hope the Government will do this, that and so on". He could not for one moment bring a Motion which, in his opinion as well as in ours, would advocate a measure of benefit to the country and leave it at that, but he had to introduce a sour note. He spoke of the benefits that would accrue from the

construction of the road, and we agree with that. But it is one thing to stand up and say that a road is needed, and it is another thing to be in a position to push the measure forward after giving consideration to all the factors relating to it.

We are in charge of the expenditure of the public funds and we have to be careful because, when we accept a Motion and something goes wrong, the people who will start the shouting will be those who advocated the measure.

6.10 p.m.

We want this road built, but there are a number of points which must be taken into consideration. If you are going to construct a road, you have to consider what development is likely to take place along that road. You have to consider the territory through which this road will run. I submit that, in the past, much of the lack of development in this country was due to the fact that many people who sat in chairs in the City and advocated development in certain parts of the country had no knowledge of the region in question. The Member said that he has travelled along this road. I want him to know that Members on this side of the House are also very conversant with the territory in question and that Members on this side of the House have a good working knowledge of the interior of this country. They have walked through it and they know it.

I do not for one moment want to assume the position of a road building expert, but when the hon. Member says that he would prefer this road to the one which is being constructed now from Bartica to Parika and when he speaks on the question of priority, I would say that he has no knowledge of the territory through which this road runs. When one takes into consideration the agricultural possibilities of the two regions and compares them, if one has any knowledge at all of the two areas, one must come to the conclusion that the Bartica/Parika road runs

through far more favourable territory as far as agricultural development is concerned.

I thought that Members on the other side of the House would always try to take into consideration the Constituency represented by others; but here we find one Member getting up and saying, "Look here, you are going to build a road from behind godforsaken Bartica in preference to a road in my Constituency", without consideration for the Constituency represented by his colleagues. We know that both these areas were peopled as a result of mining operations, although in the one case, Bartica is more or less not what it used to be. But we all know — those of us who have a working knowledge of the territory in that district — that lands at the back have been reached and the proposed road alignment runs through territory which has enormous possibilities as far as agriculture and mining are concerned.

As I have said before, the road of the length advocated by the Member would necessitate the spending of money, millions of dollars, and whenever such a plan is going to be made all the various factors will have to be taken into consideration. The Government is quite reasonably disposed to this proposition of a road in that area and we would like to be able to be in a position to do this in the near future.

He went on to say that we are now carrying out development in the North West District. He said — this is what he meant in essence — why carry out development in a district like the North West District and submit the people to the raging of the rivers, and so on. When the Member for North West rose to speak, I felt that he would have said something of the development which is taking place in that district at the moment, but this, very often, is the type of representation that we get. In the North West District, a little behind the

[MR. BOWMAN]

Hosororo Experimental Station, we are now building a 2½-mile road, the first of its kind in this country, from the Wanaina Creek to the Wauna foot-hills across a roaring swamp. Right now, we have machines, draglines, and so on, working and there are blasting operations taking place.

Yet, the Member is completely oblivious of all this. He comes here and speaks of development in another area, particularly forgetting that the Member who spoke before him did not speak in very glowing terms of the efforts we are making to develop the area which he represents. We are building this road with the hope of bringing the many farmers out of the swamplands of the Wauna Yarakita area to the hill tops. If one goes to the North West District, one will notice the type of shifting cultivation which is practised there. A man goes into the heavy pegasse swamplands and, by dint of hard work, he empolders a certain section — if his family is big, he is fortunate. But then, the acidity takes over, with the result that after a few years he has to shift his cultivation. This is the kind of development taking place.

In the North West District, there are hills, and where the land is flat most of it is nothing but swamp. For the first time in the history of that much-neglected district, we are pushing a plan to bring people out of the swamp, to put them on the hill tops and to provide certain amenities for them; but the Member forgets to mention this. In fact, as I have said before, he is completely oblivious—

[*Interruption from the Public Gallery.*]

Mr. Campbell : Mr. Speaker, the subject we are discussing is a Motion brought by the Member for Upper Demerara River, not a Motion about the North West District.

Mr. Speaker: Before I reply to that, let me make this clear to persons in the Public Gallery. On every occasion that I have sat here I have had to tell them that theirs is a position whereby they

must keep quiet and listen; and I will not have comments being made and the work of the Assembly interrupted. It is within my power to order the clearance of the Public Gallery if we are going to be interrupted in the Assembly. This is a meeting of the Assembly, not a meeting of the public. I hope that those who are there will understand and not cause me to speak to them again in this sharp way.

6.20 p.m.

The hon. Member raised a point which has also been passing through my mind, and I have been asking myself whether in fact the hon. Parliamentary Secretary has not gone too far in his speech in relation to the development of the North West District. The reason why I permitted him to carry on for a while was because the hon. Mover of the Motion, instead of sticking to his own particular line, did introduce the question of the suitability of the two routes, and since that was so I have not been able to prevent any other Member from making reference to the roadway in the North West District. But I would say to the hon. Parliamentary Secretary that he himself deplored the fact that "sour notes" were introduced into the speech which was otherwise a good speech.

I join with him in saying that where the interests of the country as a whole are concerned it would be far better if we could eliminate those sour notes, but let me, in all fairness to the House, say that sour notes do not originate only from the Opposition side of this Legislature. ("*Hear hear*"). It has become apparently part and parcel of the life of the whole House. May I say now, in appealing to all hon. Members, to let us take heed of the appeal made by the hon. Parliamentary Secretary, and in future, because we have a lot of very important business to transact in the interest of the people of this country, let us eliminate as far as possible these sour notes, and let us deal with the matters before us in the interest of the people of the country.

Mr. Bowman : I only digressed because of my close connection with the scheme which has been going on in the North West District.

Mr. Speaker: May I say that it has not been fair to the hon. Member for the North West District (Mr. Campbell) to say that he is entirely oblivious of that scheme because, if I remember rightly, he did make reference to two schemes being carried out in the North West District, and that in his opinion they needed a little "pepping up". But he did not particularly highlight those schemes because no doubt he was thinking of the particular Motion before the House.

One other point. The hon. Parliamentary Secretary has referred to the fact that the hon. Member for the North West District represents that district and, in the opinion of the Parliamentary Secretary, has not been paying in this House sufficient attention to the interests of his constituents. Let me remind him that while a particular constituency may return a Member, when he becomes a Member of the Legislature he has to look after the interests of British Guiana as a whole and not particularly the constituency which has sent him into the House. That is strictly parliamentary practice.

Mr. Bowman : The hon. Member for Upper Demerara River did mention in his speech that people should be settled in the areas in which they have been accustomed to live. I am sorry that it is not possible for me to procure a map of the country, but at the moment we occupy a very thin coastal strip, about 270 miles long. At the moment our population is increasing at a very fast rate, and it is only commonsense that any farsighted Government will see now that the time will soon come when those areas are going to be so overcrowded that speedy provision, if proper measures are not taken now, will have to be taken then to spread out the population.

On the question of subjecting persons to raging rivers, I do not think for a moment that the pioneer spirit which prevailed in this country in the 1920's is dead to all intents and purposes today. I feel that we still have a great number of people, both young and old, who will avail themselves of the opportunity to settle in some of these districts after certain amenities are provided. So I feel that when he says that our policy to move now towards interior development should be discontinued and certain priorities should be introduced, I disagree with him. We have to see to the future needs of the country, and if we are going to do this we have to start moving people into the other soils of the country. We know what the coastal plain can produce, but sooner or later, and the sooner the better, we have to start to find out what the other soil types in the other regions of the country can produce, and the surest way to do it is by proper investigation.

We know also, and I agree with the hon. Member that the problem of drainage and irrigation is largely eliminated in those areas, but we say that development must take place in as broad an area as possible, and should not be restricted to any one area. We say that certain parts of this country have been labelled "Cinderella country" for a long time, and it is high time Government starts to look towards the development of those areas. So that I disagree with him on those two points, that right now we should not be doing what we are doing in the Parika-Makouria area, and what we are doing in the North West District. We agree that the Demerara River is an important area, and we want to be in a very short while in a position to build that road, because we agree with it in principle. The hon. Member is attempting to be original by saying to his constituents "Here am I appealing for you against a reluctant Government". But the impression he is trying to create is quite wrong. We accept his Motion in principle and agree with it, but we have to begin with certain things such as industries, and most important of

[MR. BOWMAN]

all we have to provide the necessary funds to do so. So I want to tell the hon. Member that we agree and accept his Motion in principle, and we want to be in a position to construct this road in the very near future.

The Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Benn): After discussions with the hon. Member for Ruimveldt (Mr. Burnham) and the hon. Member for George-

town Central (Mr. d'Aguiar) it has been agreed and we ask leave for the House to be adjourned until Monday, 9th April, at 2 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Resolved, "That this Assembly do now adjourn until Monday, 9th April, 1962, at 2 p.m."

Adjourned accordingly at 6.30 p.m.