

THE
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
OFFICIAL REPORT

[VOLUME 3]

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

17th Sitting

Friday, 10th January, 1964

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair.]

Present:

His Honour the Deputy Speaker, Mr. W. O. R. Kendall,

Members of the Government

People's Progressive Party

Ministers

- | | |
|---|---|
| Dr. the Honourable C. B. Jagan | —Premier and Minister of Development and Planning (Member for Corentyne — East) |
| The Honourable B. H. Benn | —Minister of Agriculture, Forests and Lands (Member for Demerara Coast — West) |
| The Honourable Ram Karran | —Minister of Works and Hydraulics (Member for Mahaica) |
| The Honourable R. Chandisingh | —Minister of Labour, Health and Housing (Member for Lower Demerara River) |
| Dr. the Honourable Charles Jacob, Jr. | —Minister of Finance (Member for Vreed- en-Hoop) |
| * 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 Home Affairs (Member for Corentyne Central)

Mr. L. E. Mann

—Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Education and Social Development (Member for Mahaicony)

Mr. S. M. Saffee

—Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forests and Lands (Member for Berbice West)

Other Members

Mr. G. L. Robertson

—(Member for Leonora)

Mr. J. B. Caldeira

—(Member for Pomeroon)

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, Q.C.,

—(Member for Werk-en-Rust)

Mr. E. F. Correia

—(Member for Mazaruni-Potaro)

Mr. N. J. Bissemer

—(Member for Campbellville)

Mr. W. A. Blair

—(Member for Berbice River)

Mr. R. S. S. Hugh

—(Member for Georgetown — South)

Mr. J. G. Joaquin

—(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. Checks

—(Member for Georgetown — North)

Mr. E. E. Melville

—(Member for Rupununi)

(iii) Independent

Mr. B. S. Rai

—(Member for Demerara — East)

Mr. I. Crum Ewing — Clerk of the Legislature (Ag.).

Mr. F. A. Narain — Assistant Clerk of the Legislature (Ag.).

Absent:

His Honour the Speaker, Mr. R. B. Gajraj - on leave.

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

Mr. S. Campbell (Member for North West) - on leave.

Mr. E. E. Melville (Member for Rupununi) on leave.

Mr. B. S. Rai (Member for Demerara Coast - East).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Leave to Members

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Hon. Members, the hon. Premier has asked for leave from the 11th January for a period of about three weeks.

2.10 p.m.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

APPROPRIATION BILL
BUDGET DEBATE

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Assembly will now resume the debate on the Motion for the Second Reading of the Bill intitled: "An Ordinance to appropriate the supplies granted in the current session of the Legislature." When we adjourned, the Member for Georgetown North (Mr. Cheeks) was on the Floor.

Mr. Cheeks (Georgetown North) rose - -

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I think it might be appropriate if we ask for a Motion to extend your time to a further 15 minutes.

Mr. d'Aguiar (Georgetown Central): I beg to move that the hon. Member be given a further 15 minutes to continue his speech.

Mr. Wharton (Abery) seconded.

Question put, and agreed to.

Mr. Cheeks: I have now reached a point where I must say a few words on Government's education policy. I observe, sir, that the Government has increased the appropriations for this cur-

rent year by around \$1.6 million leaving out the sum allocated for the Social Assistance Department. When I examine the various areas where it has added and subtracted, I have come to the conclusion that the education policy is, undoubtedly, in the hands of a group of wild men. In fact, in the midst of the darkness, the only glimmer of light that I have seen is in the decision which it has made to make secondary education free. I do not think much of the manner in which it is doing it, but of the fact of its having made the decision. I will come to that in due course.

Now, there are about 135,000 children at present in the schools which are now called "all age" - they used to be called ordinary primary schools - and, in spite of that, I noticed, a few days ago, that a Government spokesman admitted that there were still about 50,000 places needed in these schools. I am certain that that spokesman did not include the other 50,000 children for whom Government has never made any provision, nor has it ever made any provision for the children who are in the age group between 3 and 5. **Mr. Mann:** "Careful! Careful!" Now, from previous statements made by Government Ministers, they do appreciate the importance of that age in the educational life of the child. In fact, modern educators have come to the conclusion that, all over the world where education courses are studied, at that age, the treatment which a child gets, determines the child's general attitude towards learning, maybe unconsciously, later

[MR. CHEEKS]

on in life. [Mr. Mann: Where did you get that from?"] The Member who is asking where I got this from should look at last year's White Paper and ask his Minister where he got it from.

I am suggesting, sir, that the fact that this group of children is neglected, is the reason why, out of a potential number of about 30,000 children who reach the Standard IV in the public schools, only about 7,000 of them are of the grade to write the common entrance examination, and out of that 7,000, only a few hundreds qualify. That means that out of a potential body of 30,000 children who reach the grade where they should be stepping over to begin secondary work, there are only a few hundreds who qualify. [Mr. Benn: "It used to be 12."]

I am suggesting that the main reason for this is the continued neglect of the Government to pay any attention at all to the age group between 3 and 5 and, what is most alarming, with all its plans and with all the money it is spending, and with all it is talking and boasting, the statements it made in its White Paper suggesting that its kindergarten work be left to private enterprise, nothing has been changed. In spite of that, the policy is one of failure. It is costing the Government quite a lot, it is costing the country quite a lot. If the members of the Government were to examine the statistics, which show a few paltry hundreds out of about 30,000 children who reach the grade of the Standard IV qualifying for secondary work, they will get an idea of the waste which is taking place.

2. 20 p. m.

Now, I repeat that merely transferring these children to a secondary school cannot really achieve anything of importance. The Government was warned before that, on account of the economic condition of the country, the children's parents would not be able to buy books for them. We have had the spectacle of many of the meagre few hundred children who have qualified for secondary education at the common entrance examination having to return to the All-Age Schools because their parents did not have the money to buy books for them. There are cases where many of them have not been able to buy a single book. If the Government wants to make secondary education free so that it will mean something, it must reduce its expenditure on P.P.P. propaganda and divert some of the funds which are being wasted into useful channels that will bring dividends in the future.

As regards secondary education, I should like to refer to the question of school fees. I cannot understand the policy of this Government, which is dedicated to the abolition of class discrimination in the payment of school fees. Some Government schools are charging \$27.50 per term. In the Government secondary schools on the new sites the fees are \$10 per term. In the Government-aided schools, which are now to be Government schools if the Government's plan is to be put into effect, the fees are \$20 per term. What is the reason for this discrimination? Can't the Government realize that this sort of thing will institutionalise a distinction in the schools and

therefore in society? If it wants to remove this, how can it do so by introducing other grades? I wonder whether the Government realizes that such a state of affairs must cause confusion and dissatisfaction?

All schools have not yet accepted Government's proposals, and I understand that the reason is that the Government wants total control over appointments of the staff, general policy, choice of subjects, and so on. In fact it seeks to make schools Government schools overnight - schools which had been receiving Government grants and serving the public for many years, and the Government now wants to take them over. The Government has made this offer, at a time when it believes that the Election is around the corner, in an effort to bring parents on its side.

A sop is given to the teachers in this manner: the Government says that it wants to make the teacher's job secure. I am of the opinion that the teachers will, eventually, accept the Government's offer, but it can be assured that many of them will not sacrifice the principles for which they came into existence. They have seen the trap which the Government has laid for them; they have seen the real purpose behind the Government's policy, which is linked to the removal of the grants which were given to Voluntary Youth Organisations: the Girl Guides, the Boy Scouts, the Y.M.C.A., the Y.W.C.A., Club-Land, Boys' Brigade, and so on. Up to last year certain grants were given to these organisations. Now the Government's aim is to make them apply to the National Youth Council, which is

just an off-shoot of the P.P.P. - It is saying: If you want these grants which you used to get you must come to the P.P.P. and do what it wants done. Now we come to the question of religion. [Hon. Members (Government): "Shame!"] Unless the Government had some ulterior motive, it would not have removed the grants for these voluntary organisations and made it necessary for them to go to a P.P.P. organisation to apply.

I shall now refer to the question of higher education in British Guiana. [An hon. Member (Government): "What do you know about it?"] Before I refer to the University of Guyana, I would like to ask the Government if it does not think it advisable to provide some place in the country districts where children may receive higher education? Is it the Government's aim that higher education should be confined to Georgetown? Can't the Government select some of its new secondary schools and arrange for children from surrounding areas, possibly from other secondary schools in the country who have qualified for higher education, to proceed to advanced level work in their own area? That would save parents in the rural areas the expense of sending their children to Georgetown in order to enter advanced classes to do advanced work.

I shall now deal with the University of Guyana. In an undeveloped territory a university cannot develop if it is cut off from world standards and isolated from the main streams of human knowledge. If that were possible, then Queen's College, St. Stanislaus' College, and Bishops High School could issue degrees.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Time!

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Education and Social Development (Mr. Mann): I beg to move that the hon. Member be given 15 minutes to complete his speech.

Mr. d'Aguiar seconded.

Question put, and agreed to.

2.30 p.m.

Mr. Cheeks: If it were so then Queen's College, St. Stanislaus, the Bishops' High School and other schools may have been able to issue their own degrees. Books alone and teachers alone cannot make a university, and what is more, there are universities in America from which one can get (I am quoting) a "B.A. Ice Cream" or a "B.A. Basket-Making". But such universities are not recognized even in their own country. If you establish a school of higher learning, the so-called University of Guyana, and it is completely isolated from the modern streams of thought, apart from a few books and a few lecturers, you are making of those students who pass through its doors nothing more than mental prisoners. In fact they would also be social prisoners, because the qualifications and degrees which may be conferred upon them will have no currency outside the borders of this country while this Government is in power.

That is not what an undeveloped territory which is seeking help from outside wants, a country with a small population of 500,000. A few weeks ago in a

conversation with the Premier he told me how insignificant and uneconomical our population is. He pointed out to me that the smallest economic unit should consist of about 10 million people. He recognizes that, but in the realm of education he has established a university cut off from all sources which is fed from a population of 500,000. What a contradiction! I am not certain if Government has put a certain plan into effect yet, but it is proposed to convert the Government Training College for teachers into an Institute of Education of the Guyana University. Hitherto all those persons who graduated from the Government Training College and who received certificates were recognized abroad - anywhere. The certificate had currency. but if the Training College is to be an offshoot of the University of Guyana, and that so-called University of Guyana is to be isolated from all other institutions of learning, it is quite clear that nothing that issues from it will be recognized in the outside world. Perhaps the Government intends that all it needs is for such certificates to be recognized here, and when we bear in mind that the foreign Governments which this Government admires do not permit people to emigrate, it would be the means of forcing the best qualified persons to remain in this country. The Premier himself recognizes the need for regional co-operation, yet in the realm of education, which is one of the most important fields of human activity, he discards that principle.

As I wind up I would ask the Government to avoid incidents

like that which took place at the Government Training College where the Principal was given certain instructions as to the quality and qualifications of persons to be enrolled for a certain course. Somebody applied to be admitted to the course but the Principal refused the application because the applicant did not have the qualifications. The person, I am informed, was sent by the Minister of Education, and the Ministry decided to take the control of the course out of the hands of the Principal of the College. It is a most immoral act. [Mr. Ram Karan: "Give the facts. Don't stand there and lie".] The person into whose hands the Ministry put the control of the course admitted the applicant who did not qualify for admission. Subsequently the Ministry decided to transfer the control of the course back into the hands of the Principal of the College. [Mr. Mann: "What course?"] What respect can the public have for a Government that would stoop to such crude dodges?

My next observation is of a more general nature, and that is the question of the appointment of Education Officers to the Education Department. It is known that this is the function of the Public Service Commission, but the snag is that the Ministry of Education has the power to appoint teachers, maybe head-teachers or assistant teachers, who may have qualified, to act in the Education Department as Education Officers. The Ministry does not have to refer such appointments to the Public Service Commission, but when the time comes for permanent appointments to be made and the Public Service Commission

interviews the applicants, even if there are other applicants who are better qualified, the person who had been acting in the post for perhaps 18 months is naturally given the job. There is now a Committee to deal with acting appointments, no doubt because of the noisy protest made by members of the Opposition.

When the Parliamentary Secretary replies to the criticisms which have been made here I hope he will tell the House if the grants-in-aid to the All-Age-Schools which were passed for payment, and which have been entered as paid for the year 1963, have in fact been paid. During my brief comments on the Budget I have raised certain points which I hope will have relevance for a long time. So long as this country is faced with a crude dedicated totalitarian rule by a sizeable group it will be necessary for us to bear in mind all these points. In this Budget Speech the Minister of Finance has not used the word "socialism" even once; quite a contrast to last year's Budget Speech and that of the year before, but more particularly last year's in which it was made quite clear that the wonderful change to the ideal of socialism would convert British Guiana into a land of milk and honey.

2.40 p.m.

They have not done so this time. It makes me wonder whether they are trying to influence the British Labour Party which is not now using the word "Socialist", but calls itself "British Labour". It may be because the idol of the Party in Cuba has re-

[MR. CHEEKS]

versed his policy of nationalisation of land in order to boost production of sugar, or it may be because the policy of economic planning in Russia according to socialist theories has caused the rate of economic growth to drop to 2.5 per cent per annum, making it clear that by 1972 the production in the United States will be double that of the Soviet Union even if the Union continues increasing at the present rate.

I do not know what their reasons are, but it may be that they have begun to see the light and are changing. Inasmuch as those who support the Government constitute a sizeable section of the population, we cannot count without them. If they have begun to see the light and are turning from their evil ways, it means that this country has a peaceful and possibly a prosperous future in store for it.

Mr. Lall (Corentyne-West): Criticisms of the Government by Members of the Opposition are baseless and without foundation. Opposition Members are criticizing the Government for instability and chaos which they themselves have created. They have organized violence and disorder in this country and while their misguided supporters were taking part in violent and disorderly behaviour some of these same unscrupulous leaders were drinking brandy, produced in the United States, at an hotel in Camp Street.

The hon. Member for Georgetown-North (Mr. Cheeks) criticized the Government for not implementing many schemes which

are included in the Budget for 1963. But, from which source is the Government to obtain the money when these agents of the United States of America help to create disorder in this country and shatter its economy? Their plan was exposed at various times in several newspapers. I have with me a copy of the *Mirror* of 22nd December, 1963, which carries this heading, "Yankee intervention - MORE CHAOS IN THE MAKING". I quote:

"Fresh and startling evidence of U.S. intervention in the British Guiana Trade Union Movement of this country has recently come to hand from our Washington Correspondent,

"He reports that on the 29th of August, a meeting was held in Washington of Trade Union and C.I.A. elements at which top level strategy for toppling the Government of British Guiana was knocked into shape.

"The strategy was later codified in a set of guide lines which has been issued from Washington and delivered personally to two persons. One is a top local Trade Unionist, the other is an American Trade Unionist increasingly well-known to local Trade Unionists.

"This paper has their names and will disclose them in due course, so that suitable action can be taken against them.

"We have been able to get a part of the document issued from Washington and we

are printing it below. All Guianese and especially Trade Unionists should ponder this document well.

"They should cut it out and keep it. This document is a blue-print for disaster and disorder. It is a blue-print for racial strife.

"It could be the cause unless you think well and act wisely of many deaths and much poverty in the months ahead.

"Says the document from Washington.

"Keep them on the defensive. They are on the retreat, keep them on the retreat."

"They must be more concerned in pleasing the opposition than the people who voted them into power.

"Do not allow them to formulate and follow any clear-cut policy. Attack, attack all the time. Keep them on the defensive until the time of election when they will find themselves surrounded by unfulfilled promises to the electorate and their opportunity to use their present position of State Power to gain unbridled popularity gone down the river of no return.

"Start labour trouble at the B.G. Rice Marketing Board and let it culminate into a colony wide programme of obstructive and destructive assault on the government.

1. Demand wages which they cannot pay. Exploit the dis-united administration of the Rice Marketing Board.

2. Undermine the management.

3. Talk of the idle workers penalizing the conscientious ones.

4. Play on the grievances of the sincere workers who have struck (sic) to them all through the crises. Tell them of the ingratitude of the Board. Favouritism in employing Muslims. God Fatherism.

And the re-employment of the trouble-makers and hooligans through fear and spinelessness of their politicians.

5. Tell them that those who make the most trouble get the best concessions.

6. When the Board is idle from its very nature of being seasonal draw the attention of those who are working hard to those who are idle and vice versa (sic). Tell the idlers how who are at work are specially (sic) favoured.

Play on the Government's fear of criticism. Make them throw their best plans overboard.

When you hit at the Board you hit at the Government once it is red dominated.

Carry out plans on identical lines as before."

[MR. LALL]

2.50 p.m.

Your Honour, in the second to last paragraph here, it is stated: "Make them throw their best plan overboard." It is obvious that when this Government formulates a plan, it is formulated for the welfare and the benefit of the people of this country. [Interruption.]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order in the Gallery, please.

Mr. Lall: If there are irresponsible elements in our society, trying to overthrow these good plans that the Government has formulated, then who will remain to suffer? It is obvious - the people of the country - and, most of all, it would be the working-class people, because these agents of the United States of America, who are planning and formulating these disorders, are wealthy, and they are exploiting the poverty of the working-class people of this country, whose blood they were sucking all along.

Your Honour, they have - especially the United Force - their agents who they planted in the Trade Union Movement of this country. You can spot them; one of their executive members is Mr. Richard Alexander Ishmael. [Mr. Joaquin: "That is your boss."] It is obvious that they have to protect that beloved member of theirs. Although he is being called a trade union leader, he can only lead the people over Radio Demerara. I defy

them to advise this trade union friend of theirs to go to the people he is supposed to represent. [Mr. Cheeks: "Cuban guns from the P.Y.O. in the shadows."] If he wants to speak to them, Your Honour, he does so over B.G.B.S. and Radio Demerara, but the time is coming now when he will be exposed.

I would like to quote from the Budget Speech of the Minister of Finance about what is going on in the sugar industry. Page 18, second paragraph:

"In the sugar industry, for example, production increased from 174,227 tons in 1949 to 334,441 tons in 1960. But while production nearly doubled, employment trends moved in the opposite direction and dropped by some 27 per cent - from 28,184 persons employed to 20,480 during the same period - because of technological changes, including mechanization. With a marked reduction in the input of labour, therefore, output was greatly increased, its value jumping from \$44.5 mn. in 1952 to \$60.75 mn. in 1960."

Your Honour, although the production of sugar nearly doubled, we had a 27% decline of the labour force in the industry. What has the Trade Union Movement done to remedy this situation? It is obvious that the Trade Union Movement in the industry should not only look for better wages for its members but it should also look forward to guaranteed employment for its members.

3 p.m.

The so-called recognized union has done nothing to remedy this unemployment situation in the sugar industry. Every year the labour force in the sugar industry is being reduced by hundreds of workers, and yet the profits are mounting up. I have with me the Annual Report of *British Guiana for 1961*. In 1960, 19,831 workers were employed in the sugar industry. In 1961, the production of sugar was increased, but the labour force was reduced by 933. In 1961, 18,898 workers were employed in the industry. Compare this with 19,831 workers employed in 1960, and you will get a reduction of 933 workers who were retrenched.

The hon. Member for Georgetown-North (Mr. Cheeks) said that Bookers are now preparing to spend \$8 million at Albion to modernize their factory. But when the \$8 million is spent there will be another reduction of 2,000 in the labour force! What has the so-called trade union done to remedy this situation? Nothing whatsoever. That is why progressive trade unions are terming this counterfeit trade unionist as the agent of the sugar planters and employers.

The President of the M.P.C.A. happens to be a university graduate. In 1961 a once-for-all bonus was paid to the sugar workers - \$3 million was supposed to be paid to the workers. I asked for proof as to how this \$3 million was paid out. I said that, if \$3 million were divided among 20,000 workers, each worker should get an average of \$150. I queried the amount paid out, and found that over 50% of the work-

ers received below \$50; the next 25% below \$100, and the rest below \$200! The M.P.C.A. made a big hue and cry about this matter and said that it was merely propaganda. I am happy to say that today 61 people at L.B.I. estate are now being paid the 1961 once-for-all bonus. Let the M.P.C.A. challenge this statement. Where did this money come from? I say that nearly 1,500 workers were not paid this once-for-all bonus. They have boards on all of the estates, and the names of the people who are entitled to 1961 once-for-all bonus are posted up there.

A man from Ann's Grove received \$44; he came to my office and complimented me and my union for exposing what had been done to the sugar workers. I repeat that the 1961 once-for-all bonus is now being paid to workers in 1964. What has the university graduate been doing in this matter? He was only planning to make more strife in this country. These are facts that can never be refuted. While the sugar industry made \$16 million profit, the people responsible for producing the profit are now unemployed. [Mr. Burnham: "Tax sugar!"] If we tax sugar you will start looting and burning again.

At the G.A.W.U.'s office you can find about sixty people every day complaining about not getting work. What is the Trade Union Leader of the Sugar industry doing about this? I saw that the B.G.L.U. the other day signed an agreement with the Waterfront Employees to pay the Waterfront workers \$15 per week while they were unemployed. Why can't a similar scheme be implemented for the sugar workers in the indus-

[Mr. LALL]

try? Instead of the so-called President making an agreement to protect these workers, he signs an agreement to protect the employers.

3.10 p.m.

A worker may be employed for 45 years in the sugar industry, but if his service is short of two days he is kicked out and nothing given to him. That is the kind of agreement this university graduate signed on behalf of the workers in the sugar industry, yet certain elements of the Opposition protected him in the 1963 strike. But I want to see if they will protect him when the results of the survey being conducted by the Labour Department are known.

I am advocating that displaced sugar workers should be given priority of employment in the proposed extension of peasant cane-farming. They have built the sugar industry and have been kicked out, therefore they should be given priority of employment. They should be given special priority in Government land settlement schemes because they were the pioneers of the sugar industry and contributed greatly to the economy of this country. Due to the American boycott of Cuban sugar the world price of sugar increased by leaps and bounds, but what do we see in this country? The wages and working conditions of workers in the sugar industry are getting worse every day. What has been done to remedy this grave situation in the industry?

I compliment the Government for reducing the means test with

respect to old-age pensions and social assistance. In the sugar industry workers with 55 years service who were given the kick receives \$1.50 or \$2 per week as pension. The highest pension they received was \$3 per week, out of which \$1 was deducted for the repayment of housing loans. This Government has to protect those workers who have given their life-blood to build the sugar industry, by giving them old-age pensions or social assistance. What has the recognized union done to protect these workers? Not a thing, but property was destroyed and lives sacrificed to protect this university graduate who is supposed to be a trade union leader. He is a symbol of iniquitous agreements [Laughter.]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Time!

Mr. Hamid (Demerara Central): I move that the hon. Member be allowed a further 15 minutes to continue his speech.

Mr. Burnham (Ruimveldt)
seconded.

Question put, and agreed to.

Mr. Lall: I was saying that I must thank the Government for reducing the means test and increasing old-age pensions and social assistance, as the result of which hundreds of old sugar workers will benefit. It has been said in this House that these increases should have been made since last year. [Mr. Burnham: "Since 1957".] I want to say that looting, burning and violence in a country always reflect not on the *bourgeois* but on the *proletariat*, the working-

class people. That is what is happening in British Guiana today. I heard the hon. Member for Georgetown North (Mr. Cheeks) say that because the P.P.P. has sent youths to Cuba and Russia we have racial strife in this country. That is not so. I would say that since the capitalist United Force Party came into being we have begun to have disorders and strife in this country. When the P.N.C. was known at one time as the Burnhamite faction of the P.P.P. it worked alongside the Jaganite faction of the P.P.P. for four years in the Legislative Council, and there were no disorders in this country. But in order to preserve and maintain its privileged position the Capitalist Party started to formulate plans to destroy the country and its people.

3.20 p.m.

At the time when we had these disorders in the country not one member of the United Force was hurt, but P.P.P. and P.N.C. members were killed. Who is the wedge? Who came as a wedge between the working-class people? The producer of Banks beer. The truth hurts. I am appealing to my friends, the members of the U.F. and the P.N.C. to join with the P.P.P. to weld the people of this country together for the general good of all. When we have all done this, then we can say we have done something for our people and our country.

Mr. Wharton (Abari): In the absence in the Budget Speech of any mention of what is Government's plan for education, I feel at liberty to express the opinion that Government is perfectly satisfied that its work in the edu-

cational centre is running true to form and needs no pruning or amplification in any part of its administration. But education is a growing concern and plans for its improvement are never complete, what with the chaotic state of primary, secondary and higher education in this country today. If at least we assume that the Government's educational plan is still in its infancy, then it should be right for us to conclude that schemes for improvement should be expressed in this House to the satisfaction, or otherwise, of the Members of the House. Total silence savours of disrespect and cannot be tolerated or allowed to go unchallenged.

The educational reforms now being attempted by the Ministry of Education and Social Development are impressive only in so far as they hasten to attempt so many objectives without carefully worked out plans for their effective implementation. In the matter of the provision of additional school places, the school-building programme is far behindhand for the requirements of the steadily growing population. Apart from this, the several new schools built with Colonial Development and Welfare funds reflect great discredit on the integrity of the Government, which should represent all sections of the population at national level. No fewer than eight out of the nine new secondary schools or low-cost schools have been established in the rural areas, while the need for primary schools in the large urban areas has been studiously overlooked. There are thousands of children in the South George town, Ruimveldt and La Penitence, area of school age for whom there

[MR. WHARTON]

is no school provision and for whom there is no known plan for their basic primary schooling, while at Black Bush Polder there are aging white elephants in the form of monstrous buildings which are still in need of adequate school population.

Lack of planning has been discerned in the inadequacy of school furniture and school equipment for most of the new secondary schools recently opened. It is a public scandal to see these schools opened with governmental pomp and pride and having large classes squatting on the floors. As a result, the organization of some of these schools leaves much to be desired as compared with some of the all-age schools or better type of aided secondary schools.

These new schools ought to have been organized as modern schools in keeping with modern trends in secondary education, rather than as second-rate secondary schools of which neither the Government in power nor the Opposition can be truly elated. Although graduate headmasters have been appointed in the new secondary schools, in most cases there is a wanton lack of trained personnel to support the headmaster in his onerous task. Most of the appointees are merely holders of the G.C.E. ordinary level or advanced level certificates with little or no experience in teaching and, in most cases, with no training whatsoever. Modern secondary schools, in their organization and teaching, demand specially qualified personnel and trained staff, but all the evidence points to

the development of these schools along the old traditional lines of private secondary schools with limited facilities and unqualified staff.

3.30 p.m.

If the rural population is to be properly educated, Mr. Speaker, we demand equal facilities for the education of children in rural areas as for those in the urban areas.

Mr. Speaker, the attempt to extend the curriculum of the all-age schools to include secondary subjects in the absence of adequate secondary schools, may be considered as feasible and expedient. But the limitations, sir, of secondary education given in the over-crowded all-age schools are apparent even to the most untutored in the practice of education. What is most distressing is the fact that, because of unemployment and poor economic circumstances, the majority of parents of children who attend these schools, are unable to buy the long list of expensive books demanded by the wider curriculum, so that much of what Government, with all its good intentions, sets out to achieve, is naturally defeated.

There is obvious lack of experience of Education and foresight among those who are chosen to advise the Ministry of Education in the launching of such a vast and varied programme of secondary education almost simultaneously without studying the practical implementations or working out the details. In consequence, Mr. Speaker, there is much confusion as to goals

and methods. This confusion exists in the minds of the inexperienced teachers who are now being appointed as supervising education officers.

Mr. Speaker, it is with respect to the teacher training policy that the evidence of lack of careful planning and experienced direction is most alarming. Government has set out, in its White Paper of 1963, its long-term policy for teachers and teacher training programme, and yet, within a matter of months there-after, the Ministry of Education has made a complete somersault in the implementation of the teacher training programme, merely, as it appears, because of the personality bias in the administration of the Ministry of Education.

Already the defects of the planning, in the Ministry, for teacher training are being revealed, for instead of 180 teachers who should have begun in-service training in October last year, only 60 odd teachers have been enrolled. The reason for this is obvious, for Government is trying to throw the burden of the cost of training, which is its own responsibility, on the shoulders of the parents who can ill afford the cost of two years of further education for their children after completing five or six years of secondary education.

What is more indictable on the Government is that very few persons from the rural areas of Essequibo and Berbice can afford to send their children to the Government Training College in Georgetown owing to the high cost of their upkeep, now that the

Government has unwisely, or perhaps callously, abandoned the residential facilities at the make-shift Training College building as well as ceased giving subsistence allowances to students in training.

It is difficult to understand, sir, how a socialist Government, with so much rural support, can fail to see the need for providing aid—financial and, or residential — for these student teachers who hail from the rural areas. The hard facts are that it would be only by a modern miracle that plans for the pre-service teacher training can be really carried out without adequate financial provision. Besides, the problem is now aggravated by the precipitated and thoughtless decision to hand over, to an unwilling Guyana University, the difficult problem of teacher training, at its stage of infancy, when it has not yet overcome its teething problems.

The P.N.C. emphatically states that the University of Guyana cannot, at this stage of its existence, perform the duties of the Government Training College which has a proud and long tradition of being able to produce more than one of its Principals, a Chief Education Officer, several members of the present staff, as well as Education Officers of outstanding calibre. We therefore feel that it would be unfair to accept the Guyana Faculty of Education, when it is established, to serve as an all-purpose Training College for teachers even within the next decade. Sir, it is with much regret that this observation must be aired in

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this House, that self-Government has brought in its trend, and that various and varied forms of discrimination exist in the public administration and in particular, in the Ministry of Education and Social Development.

Firstly, from all reports, most decisions in the Ministry are made on the advice of the favoured few, and, as a result, senior officers of high integrity are hastening to leave the Ministry, rather than comply with the carrying out of decisions which savour of partisan administration. Secondly, although Government places on the annual Budget, grades and scales of salaries for certain categories of civil servants, those salaries are never paid, but the additional duties which go with the scales are being performed, have to be performed, by the officers concerned.

3.40 p.m.

It is regrettable to say that the withdrawal of the British Chief Secretary has not brought a higher standard of impartiality in the administration of the Ministries, and the Ministry of Education, which ought to set the example for the teachers under their jurisdiction, is no exception. We have recently seen some of the most glaring irregularities in the appointment of head teachers, deputy head teachers, and senior assistants in Government schools. The crying need is for a truly independent Teachers' Service Commission, free from ministerial control, on which there is equal representation of

governing bodies on the one hand, and equal representation of the Government and the British Guiana Teachers' Association on the other hand with an unquestionably independent chairman acceptable to both sides. It would, indeed, reflect great credit on the Ministry of Education if -- [Mr. Mann: "You are reading your speech."] -- every compromise with the governing bodies is made to establish the proposed honesty of purpose of the Ministry in carrying out its educational programmes without partisan aspirations.

In the matter of Technical and Agricultural Education, -- [Mr. Mann: "Stop reading your speech! Do you have the Speaker's permission to read it?"] -- is it not time that the Government Technical Institute issue its own certificates? Have we trained enough people to be able to carry on when independence comes? I shall make one sentence with regard to the Agricultural Station at Mon Repos, and say that things do not seem to be going right there.

With regard to the University of Guyana, this Government feels that the content of the teaching at the University of the West Indies is unrelated to the needs of Guyana. It has, therefore, established a University of Guyana, and is making efforts to produce a Guyana Certificate-- [Interruption.] -- on the same level as the College of Preceptors, or the G.C.E., but exotic appearances are still slavishly adhered to. What has become of the energies and abilities of those who have laboured to produce the Curriculum Guide?

[**Mr. Mann:** Stop reading your speech."] Could not the energies of those people be harnessed in order to produce a Guyana Certificate Examination? Is it not true that there is a backward class at the University of Guyana? I should like the hon. Minister to answer my question when he replies. You will find students there who have gained entrance under the category known as "matured students". This University of Guyana is of doubtful utility to the present population of Guyana. Of course there are universities and universities.

The P.N.C. wants to see vocational schools going up for those who want to make use of the grammar-type secondary schools. The P.N.C. wants to see adult education set in motion, and it wants to be sure that it will be easy to find a Guianese who is so educated that he can become the Private Secretary to the hon. Premier, or the editor of the *Mirror*.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Education and Social Development (Mr. Mann):

I think it was William Pitt who observed that it is better that age be imputed to one as a regret than to be ignorant in spite of experience. I have listened to two teachers in this House: one read his speech, and he would have done well to imitate the other one. [**Hon. Members** (Opposition): "We cannot hear him."] So far as my contribution to the debate is concerned, I want to limit my observations merely to the remarks made in respect of or against the Ministry of Education. Some of these accusations

levelled are, to my mind, serious indeed, and I intend to refute them with as much vehemence as I have. [**Hon. Members** (Opposition): "Speak louder."]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Hon. Members are finding it difficult to hear you.

Mr. Mann: I am not motivated to shouting, and I am sorry.

[**Mr. Jordan:** "He can speak louder than that."] The hon. Member for Georgetown-North (Mr. Cheeks) told us that our aims in the field of primary and secondary education are incomposite, and they propose to include 50,000 children. I want to congratulate him on this observation. The provision for something more than kindergarten education in this country was set out in the Government's White Paper which was presented to this Assembly early last year. That document was prepared by the Ministry of Education, and the proposals contained therein involved a tremendous amount of expenditure, the magnitude of which we are yet unable to provide.

3.50 p.m.

In many countries specialized training in kindergarten education is provided for teachers who are skilled in the techniques of visual education and child welfare, because they are not only teachers but also responsible for the welfare of the child, therefore they require intensive specialized training in order to make themselves extremely difficult to obtain. Nevertheless, I congratulate the hon. Member on his acumen.

The hon. Member for Georgetown North however observed that

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in spite of the number of free places provided in the secondary schools there is still a tremendous gap to be covered. If my memory serves me correctly, in my day at school there were 12 scholarships provided. In 1953 this number was increased to 24 and subsequently increased to 36. To date the number of free places provided is in the vicinity of 300. What the hon. Member ought to have observed is the cumulative effect of the liberal policy encompassing a greater number of children rather than to observe the abuses. There is still a great deal to be done.

Then the hon. Member for Georgetown North went on to attack Government for attempting to throw sops at the Association of Masters and Mistresses in order to absorb the schools now in private hands. I am giving this as my studied opinion, that the Association of Masters and Mistresses is one of the most backward and reactionary organizations in this country. It renders unto teachers, children and parents alike a tremendous disservice. We have circulated our proposals to the Association. They sent us a list of questions, and I am going to show the measure of scholarship which inspired those questions. Included amongst the questions with respect to Government's proposals to take over those schools is Question No. 59 - Watchman. "Can his services be retained?"

When the Association fails to come to terms with itself it can hardly expect to come to terms with anybody else. As I told officers of my Ministry, if I had

to deal with this questionnaire I would scrap it and send it back for the Association to send something intelligent. The Association of Masters and Mistresses has failed first of all to convene a comprehensive meeting to discuss the proposals in respect of the new arrangement for secondary schools. The result was obviously to circularize individual schools asking them to react to Government's proposals. In other words, what it has done is to reveal the internal contradictions and squabbles in public. The Catholics and the Lutherans are concerned about certain things while the privately run schools, including Central High School and the Tutorial High School, want something else. One of the questions reads something like this: "Will non-graduate headmasters and deputy headmasters be paid on the same scale as graduates?" I admire the concept of social equality.

We have offered the concession of a substantial reduction of the fees now paid by parents to these Government-aided secondary schools. In many cases they exceed \$30 per term, and we have proposed that they be reduced to \$20 per term in keeping with our objective of providing free secondary education. I may vote in passing that the fees at the new Government secondary schools are a mere \$10 per term. We also propose to enhance the conditions of service of teachers at the Government-aided schools. What do we find? Parents, on the one hand, are willing to accept these proposals. So far as they are concerned their considerations are limited to the choice of bread and butter. Teachers, on

the other hand, in the main are willing to accept enhanced conditions of service, but the reactionary Association of Masters and Mistresses, a body of laggards and reactionary old women noted for insular or individual conflicts, centred its proposals in questions of conflicts to the Government measures - conflicts of schools like Central High and Tutorial High School, etc. Not a single constructive suggestion or one single reaction or schedule of amendments was submitted to the proposals which we have set out. The result is that the work of the Ministry is impeded and thrown into confusion because nobody could make sense of the clarade from the Association.

Sitting suspended at 4 p.m.

4.32 p.m.

On resumption --

Mr. Mann: Before the adjournment was taken I was commenting on the reaction to the proposals in respect to the Government-aided schools, and I was observing that the reply put up in the form of a questionnaire by the Association of Masters and Mistresses displayed the mental untidiness which one would hardly associate with a trade union of teachers. So far as I am concerned the question is quite simple. If the present Government-aided schools wish to remain as institutions preserving their own laws, their own traditions, their own characters, their own standards, let them keep their schools. If they wish to be considered as national institutions properly administered along lines of policy defined by Government in co-operation with professional

men in this field, then let them be absorbed into a system of national education.

As I said, so far as I am concerned, so long as they wish to keep themselves as separate and distinct entities, let them keep their integrity, let them keep their standards and we keep the grants. The money would be profitably used to provide new secondary schools, granted at a slow rate, but a rate which we hope to accelerate as additional funds become available. The competition which we will shower upon them in terms of rates of fees, in terms of academic standards which we will maintain, will be so fierce that they will find that far from being the business enterprises which many of them are today, they will become unprofitable concerns which their owners and/or principals will be forced to relinquish. Keep them! We keep the money.

If you want to have a national system of education, you come in; if you don't want to, get out and stay out - so far as I am concerned. Continue with your half-baked - [*Interruptions*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order in the Gallery!

Mr. Mann: Continue with your youngsters with G.C.E. in two subjects and with the C.P. teaching people for advanced level and senior examinations. Continue! We keep the cash. Build your facilities with fees; raise these until you get \$100 a term. We keep the cash.

This is my attitude and this is the attitude I will prevail on the Minister to adopt. Thousands

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of the parents have been brow-beaten into paying tribute to a decadent system, in which a school is conceived not as a social utility, but as a sort of business enterprise with greater glory and, of course, profits to the owners. Bad standards because of bad tuition; bad tutors; inadequate provision because of great selfishness and conceit. If the validity of schools rests on anything, it rests on its social purpose. A school is not a business enterprise and if anyone wants to open, as I observed once in this House, a little two by four place and take on one hoy with the C.P. in six subjects and two boys with the G.C.E. in three subjects and a principal with the G.C.E. in eight subjects or with an Advanced G.C.E. in one subject, and call that a school, keep it; you don't get any grant from us. [**Mr. Cheeks**: "Your own supporters do that."]

As I observed when I quoted from the questionnaire, a lot of nonsense has been expressed; big teachers parading a lot of rubbish and having their squabbles in public. This comes from the Association of Masters and Mistresses, the previous head of which resigned because, as she expressed in her letter of resignation, she was not forceful enough to deal with the Government. In other words, she saw her role as head of the Association of Masters and Mistresses as being a sort of essential antagonist of the Government. She has no concept of educational development, no concept of the role of education in a developing society. She was there to attack; she was not forceful enough so

she resigned giving way to Mr. Sancho, who, presumably, possesses these qualities of forceful representation. I do not wish to say any more about this question.

The hon. Member for Georgetown North (Mr. Cheeks) said that Government's programme of school building, both at primary and secondary levels, was confined almost exclusively to Georgetown. [**Mr. Wharton**: "Of course not."]
I beg your pardon. I have mixed that point up with the point made by the hon. Member for Abary (Mr. Wharton).

4.40 p.m.

He observed that the Government had provided little facilities for higher education to the level of the G.C.E. (Advanced) in the rural areas. This, sir, is quite inaccurate. There are private schools in rural areas which are subsidized by Government grants. For example, Government subventions pay for the upkeep and salaries of teachers for Berbice High School, Corentyne High School, and, in the Esse-quiibo, the Government has just constructed a high school which caters for the G.C.E. Ordinary level and it soon hopes to be able to provide facilities to enable students to obtain the level of the G.C.E. (Advanced).

Unfortunately, however, the question of secondary schools constructed by Government is not limited to mere considerations of finance, and, even though the financial proportions are necessary, machine programmes are essentially vital. There are questions of skilled manpower to

service these institutions. The present rate of augmenting the manpower pool is very slow and you cannot find teachers. Quite often, even when the school provides them — and this is especially true for teachers in rural areas — some of the graduates prefer to settle in Georgetown, in the Public Service, rather than venture into the country areas to teach. So that, in addition to considerations of finance, there is also the vital consideration of skilled manpower for servicing these institutions.

But what amazes me, sir, is the venture of the hon. Member within the realm of the University of Guyana, its concepts and its activities. He observed that the University of Guyana is cut off from outside. I do not know exactly what he means by cut off from outside — [Mr. Cheeks: "No affiliation."] The hon. Member says, from his seat, that it has no affiliation, but there are thousands of universities existent in countries of the world — Latin America, for example — which have no affiliation with other universities. Countries have universities to meet their own peculiar situations. Even the United States is an example, because universities were developed to meet the needs of particular areas, particular states.

I have none of the bigotry which inspires my hon. Friend for Georgetown North (Mr. Cheeks) to say that American degrees are better than British degrees, or any other degree. But the American universities, as I said, were developed to meet original needs, and, therefore, you find highly specialized faculties, sometimes to the concept of other

faculties. The hon. Member, I am willing to bet, has never set foot in an American university or any university in his life — [Mr. Cheeks: "You are quite wrong, young man."] — and he is willing to participate in a debate about a university. What does he know about it? The same sort of bigotry is what prompts him to say that the University of Guyana is inferior to the other universities. These colonialists who get their concepts of a university from text books or some other observation, prattle about and believe that for a university to be a university, it must have the same number of faculties, the same traditions, the same mascots as the older universities in Europe and Britain.

The University of Guyana, sir, is itself concerned with the question of standardization or equality of standards for free intercourse between universities to be possible — and this is vital to the development of the University. It is necessary to have exchange personnel of both student and staff levels. The question of establishing the standards and faculties which are not identical to, but which equate or are similar to the standards which prevail outside, is obviously a question of tremendous importance.

Indeed, at the moment, the proposal which is being taken by the hon. the Premier, in his capacity as leader of the delegation at the Head of Governments Conference in Jamaica, concerns the standardization, in as much as this proposal envisages the co-operation of the University of

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Guyana with the University of the West Indies in respect of an examination to Council which is to be responsible for the marking of examination papers *inter alia*, and therefore, the setting of examination papers and the marking of them before revamping extant syllabuses to meet the needs of these new examinations, obviously with a stronger local flavour.

I merely make that observation to establish that the University of Guyana is concerned, deeply concerned, in standardization of training between itself and external institutions of a similar nature - as indeed are all universities - and even though someone from the university at Oxford said that a post-graduate student of a University of India had to, once again, revert to under-graduate status before he could write for a particular field - it is nevertheless, concerned with the question of standardization.

The hon. Member then went on to criticize the absorption of the Government Teacher's Training College - -

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Time!

Mr. Checks: I beg to move that the hon. Member be allowed a further 15 minutes to continue his speech.

Mr. Joaquin (Kitty) seconded.

Question put, and agreed to.

4.50 p.m.

Mr. Mann: The question of the absorption of the Training

College with the University of Guyana is something which gives the hon. Member for Georgetown-North (Mr. Checks) cause for alarm. I would have thought that the development of an Institute of Education in a National University was so essential for the University itself that credit would have been given where it was obviously due. On the contrary, we have heard baseless and totally irrelevant criticisms that since the University itself is isolated, then it follows *ipso facto* that the Institute of Education is itself isolated.

Another hon. Member went further and said that this absorption could not profitably take place for another decade. The University College of the West Indies, as it was then called, developed within five years of its establishment a pattern of education, and issued certificates or diplomas of education to graduates therefrom. It was formerly the practice that students and teachers from the Colonies, who wished to obtain professional degrees in education, had to go to some University in a Metropolitan country or in Britain in order to do so. In terms of time; in terms of experience; and in terms of rate-turnover, I would have thought that this innovation would have found the favour of hon. Members opposite, particularly those who have some sort of association, however obscure, with the teaching profession. It is not true to say that the establishment of an Institute of Education, is a retrograde step. On the contrary, it would be amply true to assert that it is one of the most progressive steps which could be

taken by a University, especially one which is of such a recent origin.

I do not want to quarrel with the hon. Members; I prefer to ascribe what they have said to mere ignorance and perversity. I would urge hon. Members opposite that, in dealing with the development of fledgling institutions, they ought to exhibit some sense of historical time. One cannot take an undeveloped institution at a particular time, and then make a comparison with developed institutions either in the same country or abroad. One has to summon a sense of history; one must not take a static view of institutes, but take them in the context of historical time in relationship to what went on before, what is likely to succeed them, and what is likely to happen in the future.

Where I take particular umbrage is when the hon. Member for Georgetown-North (Mr. Cheeks) quite dishonestly - a traditional obscurantist - mentioned an instance involving dishonesty without attempting to identify it. He said that some Minister sent somebody for some course, the Principal of which was reluctant or refused to accept this somebody. Thereupon this same Minister threatened and/or removed the controller of the course and replaced him by some other teacher. He went on to say that the new man accepted this somebody, and then the course was restored to the hands of the former Principal. In my opinion it is not honest for an hon. Member to mention an instance involving the dishonesty, or underhandedness, of an hon. Minister of the Government without ident -

fying it so that the particular Minister can have the option or the right of reply. This kind of intellectual dishonesty gets us nowhere it is not impressive, and it harms none of us on this side. Why didn't he identify the Minister?

Since he was dealing with education, I should hope that he does not refer to any one in the Department of Education, because I would not sit here and listen to anything said against the Minister of Education without making the fiercest of refutations. Nor, indeed, do I think it is fair for the hon. Member to come here and attack defenceless officials of the Ministry of Education who have no right of reply in public. It is a piece of cheek, impropriety, and ignorance!

I now want to turn to the remarks of the hon. Member for Abary (Mr. Wharton) who is not in his seat at the moment. Sometimes I think that this hon. Member has a bee in his bonnet; he seems to suffer from some sort of persecution complex. The hon. Member is always alleging that Government programmes at one time or another are unfavourable to the rural population. As a result of that, he made the observation that, if the 9 secondary schools recently built by the Government were built in the rural areas, things would have been different. The position is that in Georgetown, both in the primary and secondary schools, there are a number of vacancies. However, the hon. Member says that the school-going population in Georgetown is catered for amply by the number of primary and secondary schools in the City,

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whereas the rural areas have not had an opportunity in the past to enjoy adequate primary or secondary education.

5 p. m.

I do not think the hon. Member should take the opportunity in this House to make yet another allegation against us of discrimination in the building of secondary schools in the rural areas. Indeed, in his speech the hon. Member for Georgetown North said that the rural population was being unfairly treated in respect of provision for secondary schools, and I agree with him. That is why secondary schools have been constructed for the benefit of people who live in the country districts. [Mr. Checks: "I spoke of quality; he spoke of quantity".] The hon. Member further felt that standards in the new Government secondary schools are inferior to those in the schools which obtain now but, on the contrary, teachers in the new Government schools are better qualified than teachers in the Government-aided schools, and therefore one would expect, other things being equal, the academic standards at least of the new Government secondary schools would be superior to those previously attained by other secondary schools.

The hon. Member for Georgetown North asked me to defend the discrimination in fees. So far as I am aware the fees charged in the new Government secondary schools are \$10 per term, *vis-a-vis* \$30, \$35, and in many instances \$40 per term in respect of the Government-aided secondary

schools. Government's policy in respect of fees is gradually to reduce the amounts which are paid per term until its educational objective of the provision of free secondary education has been accomplished. Therefore, in the fixing of fees the essential considerations are what is the Government's current financial position; and what is the extent of the concession which could be made, and there is absolutely no attempt to discriminate in the fixing of fees for Government secondary schools.

But what was really a shock was when the hon. Member for Abary (Mr. Wharton) felt that Government's educational reform was too vast and was proceeding too far and at too fast a pace. We have been behind-hand for a long time. Education was never considered a vital objective of the old colonial society, and we feel - and no politician dare feel otherwise - that the intellectual improvement and therefore the social upliftment of the citizen is an essential factor of social development in modern nationhood.

Teachers' complaints. Those teachers engaged in in-service training who have to go in the afternoon after school to receive instructions complain that they are tired after work, and some say they are too old. Well, if the Government has to pay tribute to the perverse idiosyncracies of many teachers while recognizing the obvious validity of the in-service training course, with its objective of at least one year's training for teachers by 1970 --

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Time!

Mr. Checks: I move that the hon. Parliamentary Secretary be

allowed a further 15 minutes to continue his speech.

Mr. Jordan (Upper Demerara River) seconded.

Question put, and agreed to.

Mr. Mann: I was saying that if Government were to take heed of the objections of teachers engaged in in-service training courses, that having to go for training after school is too onerous, we might as well pack up and go home. The pre-service training course, that is the two-year course, has been extended to cater for 180 pupils, and it is hardly our fault if, on account of the recent strike, the recruitment of students for this course was delayed and hampered. It is true that our reforms are far-reaching and extensive in scope, but in my opinion it is better to be blamed for attempting to do too much than to be blamed for attempting to do too little or nothing. We have got used to the idea of change rapidly. If any official of any Ministry feels that the pace of change is too much for him he is quite free to tender his resignation to the Public Service Commission, so that his place might be filled by someone with greater energy.

It is not true to say that the Minister or the Ministry of Education controls temporary appointments of Education Officers any more than in the sense that it is the function of any Ministry in the matter of temporary appointments. The Head of a Department has the right to make temporary appointments until the Public Service Commission confirms them and makes them permanent.

There is very little left in either of the speeches, especially those of the hon. Member for Georgetown North (Mr. Cheeks) and the hon. Member for Abary (Mr. Wharton) but I would like to say on behalf of the Ministry of Education that our task of expanding the scope of education in a backward country and community, in which education has been for so long neglected, has not been easy. It has been a tremendous strain on officials of the Ministry, and I would like to take this opportunity to say that they deserve to be publicly congratulated. The Ministry of Education has had to bear the brunt of criticism from teachers and members of the public alike on occasions when policy decisions were disagreed with. We do not grudge people their right to criticize us, but hon. Members opposite should learn to accept and accommodate change when change is necessary and inevitable, rather than have change forced upon us all when concessions to change would then be robbed of most of their usefulness and of their grace.

5.10 p.m.

We recognize the need for change, and we are trying to vanguard it so far as education is concerned. I wish to give public assurance that the hon. Minister of Education and Social Development does not discriminate and does not curry favour. Appointments and promotions are made entirely on the basis of merit where the Ministry of Education and Social Development exercises the prerogative. In some cases the prerogative is exercised by other bodies. We are not to be blamed for their deviation or

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their departure from principles to which we adhere. We are very hard pressed and we would like to feel that our efforts in the field of education will not go unrewarded. It is therefore with great conviction that I record my confidence in the Budget Speech of 1964.

Mr. Merriman (La Penitence-Lodge): This is Budget time when all the people of Guiana are entitled to be told by the Government what is being provided for them. This is not a question of courtesy; it is a question of duty. The Government is to tell the people what it intends to provide for welfare and well-being with money extracted from them, and to tell them to what extent they will benefit from the self-denial they will be called upon to make. In other words, in the final analysis, it is a time when the people can balance in their minds the benefits against their self-denial.

We are told, with great conceit, by the hon. Minister of Finance that he presented a balanced Budget for 1964, which, he states, will be a tax-free year. He has laid so much emphasis on the word "balanced" that one can readily see the word in inverted commas. He has likened this Budget to that of 1963. One recalls what flowed from the 1963 Budget. The memory of those events is so buried in our minds that one hardly longs to relive that period. It has been a period of economic stagnation and developmental curtailment; it has been a period of convulsion and a period of resentment. In fact, it has been such a period that no

Government, conscious of its responsibilities and its duty to its people, would like to have been associated with or to identify itself with, and what strikes me is that this Government actually attempted to compare - in fact, compared the Budget for 1964 with that of 1963. To my mind, a balanced Budget in this context should be one which sets out to provide - and I underscore these words - *an efficient administration* and furnishes the services required by the workers of the entire country, so that these services flow with such uniformity as to benefit everyone whether he lives in the town or in a rural district, because these people are all citizens and will have collectively to meet the expenses which are involved

The modern practice in presenting a Budget is to take into account the ability to secure loans, the ability to obtain help and assistance to foster development in one's country, and particularly is this necessary in British Guiana which has at all times been a colonial territory.

5.20 p.m.

These are absolute requirements if Guiana must find its place, which it is entitled to, in the world, but not only to satisfy the world, but to satisfy its own people. There is an increasing demand in an increasing population. There are many requirements, many things which are needed, not as luxuries, but which are essential to command the literacy needs. To meet the literacy and to meet transport needs. And when one seeks to obtain such loans, or

assistance, or help, it is certainly without any strings attached - as one is accustomed to hearing these days - without attempting to endanger our freedom or our sense of pride and integrity, and, above all, our political independence.

In other words, in Guiana today, whenever a Budget is to be presented, one must see a programme or provisions made in which all the people will benefit, and I want to underscore *all of the people*, not a section, a part, an area, or a political segment of the population. What is done in a Budget must be done to benefit all the people of Guiana. It must give to all of them that sense of security.

We know, in the context of Guiana, about the unequal distribution of land. A Budget proposal should have a programme, to my mind, that will give the assurance that the unequal distribution of land will come to an end - whether the land or the produce of the land - that it will cease, and, in the overall pattern, one would see real equality of opportunity for all Guianese. Mr. Speaker, while it is said that politics is the art of impossible achievements, such achievements are not impossible. Any one that sets out intelligently and convincingly to give service to this community can do so, I would say, readily and easily, but there must be the sincere desire and consciousness, and above all, as I said before, there must be the intelligent application to the problems, which, unfortunately, I must say, has shown itself completely removed from this Budget and from what has been discussed both at

the presentation of the Budget and by the support which has been given to the Budget on the side of the Government.

What is rather pathetic about this whole matter is that, rather than attempting to justify its presence, rather than attempting to at least earn the money which it is being paid, the Government, which should provide for the welfare and well-being of the people of Guiana, - if I may read a sentence somewhere - demonstrates irresponsible leadership in all spheres and at all levels of its activities. The members of the Government seek to place their failure at the foot of the members of the Opposition. And they do not end it there, Mr. Speaker. They put them in concubinage with the Fascists, the foreign conspirators, and the Imperialists.

Mr. Speaker, what is assuring to the people of Guiana is this: they have been able to demonstrate such indomitable strength in their resentment of this Government, that they have been able to prove that the overwhelming majority of the people of Guiana are totally against what the P.P.P. is attempting to do to B.G. - and I want to underscore the word *overwhelming majority*.

Mr. Speaker, one has to look at this because it is their inherent right. In the final analysis, it is the people that matter, and it is the majority of people that matter more, and, in spite of the bemoanings of the Government, I am certain today - not like yester-year - that the voice of the majority - and the

[MR. MANN]
overwhelming majority - of people
of Guiana, is being heard and
is known.

adjourn. The House will now ad-
journ until Wednesday, 15th Jan-
uary, 1964, at 1.30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I think
this is an appropriate time to

*Adjourned accordingly at
5.30 p.m.*