

ADDRESS BY HON. C.V. NUNES, MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT AT 11TH BIENNIAL CONFERENCE OF CARIBBEAN UNION OF
TEACHERS, AT QUEEN'S COLLEGE ON TUESDAY, 21ST AUGUST, 1962.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I appear before you today in a dual capacity - as Minister of Education and Social Development and as a former member of the Teaching Profession. Indeed if you believe, as I do, in the axiom "once a teacher always a teacher" then there is no such expression as "former teacher". If there has been any material change in my status since taking office as Minister, it is that I am more of a student than I was before.

Paradoxical as this may seem, it is nonetheless true. If I am to discharge my ministerial responsibilities effectively, I must, of necessity, be receptive to the points of view, the ideas, the proposals of all concerned for meeting the stern challenge of independence which confronts us all today. In that sense I am a student; and I sincerely hope, indeed, expect to gain at least as much from, as I shall endeavour to contribute to, the deliberations of a group perhaps better qualified and experienced than any other to find solutions to the problems common to our emergent nations.

One speaker at yesterday's Opening Session of your Conference remarked that, the appointment of two Ministers from the Teaching Profession reflected my Government's appreciation of the importance of education in the present context of Guyana's political development. That, on the face of it, is self-evident, but it is also - and I say this with due modesty and humility - a tribute to the entire profession in which I have served most of my adult life, and to which I am proud to have belonged.

In his key-note address to you yesterday, the Premier was at pains to point-out that the emergence of our territories from a state of dependence to one of independence, was but the first stage in the process of transforming our society from one of privilege - economic and social - to one in which there is equal opportunity and a better way of life for all.

In recent years, so much of our efforts has been devoted to the achievement of freedom and independence that in the minds of many, these worthwhile objectives have unwittingly become ends in themselves. If we are not alive to this danger, we could well find that the energy to resolve to become free and independent could weaken our power of action to engage the greater dragons of unequal opportunities, false values, outmoded social attitudes, beliefs and outlook on life which have become engrained in our people.

The fabric of our society is riddled with examples of our slavish pursuit of standards which are unnatural to our way of life and environment. I should like to make a critical analysis of some of the social attitudes which we have acquired from the past, and which have to be changed, if we are going to make maximum effort towards economic and social advancement.

At this point one may well ask the important question as to the role of education in social change. Should education be a mirror to reflect the social changes which are going on almost independently in society, or should education play an active role in bringing about certain desired and desirable social changes?

In most Western countries, it has been pointed out that the content of education, changed mainly as a result of pressure brought about by social and economic changes which were taking place in the society at large. However in under-developed societies where the emphasis is on the rapidity of economic - and as a consequence social - change, it is felt that education has a more positive role to play as an agent of change. If we accept the latter view - that education should play its part in bringing about social change - as I certainly do - then we come to the next question as to the role of education as a change-agent in Guyanese, Jamaican, Trinidadian and West Indian societies.

Here we need to look a little more carefully at some of the social attitudes in our societies - and quite often there is a lot of similarity between Guyana and the Islands, because of our common historical background and to see which of these would need to be changed, if we are to make rapid strides in our social and economic programmes.

For nearly a century and a half, the people in Guyana, and for centuries the inhabitants of the Islands, had the status of colonial subjects. This meant that, in relationship to the peoples of the United Kingdom, we were regarded as second-rate citizens. Because of this fact, we were deemed inferior to the citizens of the Mother Country, and further, because the British were on relatively equal footing with other nations such as the Americans, the French, the Germans, we were regarded in the eyes of the world as inferior to the European nations. We had only to look around and see the barriers against the mobility of West Indians, in terms of their ability to enter, and settle in other countries, to realise that, where other nations were concerned, we were also thought to be inferior. After a time, this fact was like a self fulfilling prophecy, and we too began to accept the inferiority of our status.

The Jamaican visitors here are the first among us who have been able to experience what it feels like to be regarded as an independent people equal in status to all other nations. I am sure you will agree with me that Mrs. James convincingly epitomised that feeling yesterday morning.

Yet, despite our attainment of independence, as Jamaicans, Trinidadians, Guyanese or West Indians, we may hardly free ourselves - at least in such a short time - or the social attitudes we have developed under colonial days. But change we must.

Our colonial relationship has caused most of us to develop a hierarchial scale of values, in which the European occupied the topmost rung of the ladder. This is one of the main reasons why, although we are thinking of nationhood and independence we cannot help holding the European and his behaviour patterns as the model which we should imitate. We not only fail to define consciously what standards mean, but also forget that standards can have meaning only in the context of our needs and resources. We regard our own standard as inferior, and do our best to imitate the European - a tacit acceptance of our inferiority.

Let us take a rather obvious example - the question of dress. I now quote from this morning's issue of the Graphic. "Mr. Forbes Burnham, leader of the People's National Congress, has denounced the attitude of Guyanese aping their "masters" by dressing with coat and stripped pants in this tropical climate of Guiana.

"At this stage when Guiana is on the verge of emerging as an independent country the people should take a new attitude in the changing times. It is time Guianese think in terms of Guiana and stop aping others, he told a meeting on Sunday night. It was time, he said, we start making our people understand that independence means something more than the going down of one flag and the raising of another". *Unquote*

"In these territories we have grown up to believe that man is not properly clad unless he wears a coat and tie. There are many so-called "respectable" public places in these parts where it is difficult to secure entry unless one is in "full regalia" so to speak". *Unquote.*

In our warm tropical climate a full suit with tie should be regarded as incongruous as a short-sleeved open-neck shirt would be in a temperate climate, on a cold winter's day. Yet this incongruity never strikes many of us. We continue to regard this form of attire as the very essence of respectability, and suffer in silence.

This sort of outlook is no doubt part of our psychological make-up which was functional in the old colonial days. We had to prove to ourselves that we could be as good as the European by imitating certain aspects of his behaviour which, to our minds, would increase our status in society.

One of the results of such thinking is that we become more concerned

with the externals - with the facade of respectability, rather than with the person behind it.

In fact many of our patterns of expenditure are dominated by a desire for show - what T. Veblen calls conspicuous consumption - rather than functional utility.

We find for example that gate keepers of an institution would be reluctant to let a man, who is ordinarily dressed, pass, while he would throw both gates open to another who is dressed in a suit, especially if he happens to be in a car also.

Why is it that the man who is driving a car and doesn't happen to be wearing a suit is immediately categorised as the chauffeur, rather than the owner of the car, especially if the pigmentation of his skin happens to be dark?

Our subordinate relationship with the European has left us with a peculiar complex about colour.

The anthropologist H. Henriques describes very clearly its manifestations in Jamaican Society in a study entitled "Family and labour in Jamaica". But this is a phenomenon common throughout the West Indies. Status in the society tends to be distributed according to the shade of one's colour, obviously with the European again set up as our ideal in skin colour. This is the reason why sales girls in a shop quite often tend to give quicker and more courteous service to the person who happens to be white, in preference to the darker skin West Indian. Similarly, many commercial establishments, especially those owned by overseas companies, such as the Banks, prefer to give employment to people with lighter skin pigmentation. This is undoubtedly part of the past in which it was felt that only Europeans were honest, and that no natives could be trusted.

All these manifestations of our social life and values are around us, and would undoubtedly affect the values which our pupils are developing in this society.

The question which I want to post here is: "What can we as teachers do to create in our pupils an awareness of the fact that mode of dress, social and economic standing are artificial criteria, and are not necessarily symbols of good citizenship.

Have we tried, and shouldn't we in the immediate future, try harder to inculcate in our children's minds that one who does a task and does it well and who has consideration and love for his fellow-being is a more worthy citizen, though he may be a farmer or an unskilled worker, than say, a white-collar worker who lacks these qualities?

Another important result of our past colonial relationship is that it has developed in a Guyanese or a West Indian a general feeling of inferiority and a relatively poor self-image. The result is that generally he has little faith in himself and his ability - in fact he lacks that degree of self confidence, which is necessary if he is to develop a belief in the future possibilities of his country.

He sees anything Guyanese or West Indian as inferior, and anything imported as automatically better, than what he himself can make locally. This poor image of ourselves has undoubtedly affected adversely, the rate of our social and economic development, our achievement in the field of cultural activities, and our economic trading position as a nation.

We import many more articles than we might normally have done, if we had more faith and respect for ourselves, faith and respect in the products we make, and in what we can achieve through our own efforts. We are constantly comparing ourselves with more developed nations, and when we fail to achieve their standards and their levels of performance - which of necessity, often happens, because of our lower level of economic development - then we regard our

achievement as inferior, and our people who fail to achieve the standards of other nations, as second rate.

We need to take more positive steps to build up greater self confidence and a more favourable image of ourselves.

Instead of having pictures of the great men of other countries adorning the walls of our schools let us start with the pictures of great Guyanese, great Jamaicans, great Trinidadians and great West Indians. Similarly, we should learn to appreciate the beauties of our own buildings and our own countryside first, before we begin to appreciate the beauties of other countries.

We need to look more closely at our own historical past, and not be ashamed of our origin in slavery or under the indentured system. In fact this should give us greater confidence in our own abilities, when we see that our forbears, either through their slave rebellions or estate riots, were constantly fighting to break away the chains of bondage, and trying to secure for themselves a better place in the sun.

To do this, we need more Guyanese and West Indian text books, and more use of our songs, poems, music and literature in our schools. These could all help in creating this favourable image to which I have already referred, and for which, psychologically, we are badly in need.

It is sometimes argued by purists that our standards of performance in the fields of music, art, literature are not high enough, and since there are so many classical works available, it is professionally infra dig to introduce these local productions in our schools.

I disagree with this view, since I see it as another manifestation of our inferiority complex. Unless we begin now to use what we have, and gradually improve as we go along, then we would never get anywhere in the improvement of our own standards.

Another result of this, would be the building up of a Guyanese and West Indian culture. We often complain that there is very little good West Indian music or art. However, if we continue to prefer juke boxes and foreign recorded music and not try to create, encourage and appreciate our own, then our musicians and artists would not only be frustrated, but would also never be able to earn a decent living in our society, and these forms of artistic production would never flourish.

In fact this is a vicious circle and unless we begin to break it down now, in another decade we would be in the same position and would be making the same criticisms of our society.

In Guiana we have in addition failed to develop an image - good or bad - of a Guianese. Some people identify their belongingness to one or another ethnic group and being a Guianese is only of secondary consideration.

In the past it was to the advantage of the ruling power to divide, so that they could rule more effectively and few organised attempts were made to bring the different ethnic groups together, to think of themselves first and foremost as Guianese.

Much might have been done in the schools to inculcate in our citizens a feeling of belongingness to the same country, an understanding and appreciation of each other's way of life, so that gradually there would have evolved a common core of Guianese culture which all groups could have shared. But this was not in the spirit of the times, and the task yet remains to be accomplished.

Creating this new social image, this confidence in ourselves, would certainly help us to tackle our problems in our own way, rather than slavishly follow those of other nations. Obviously we do not want to get into the other position of thinking that everything Guianese or Jamaican or Trinidadian or West Indian is superior. We want to learn from other countries, but in so doing, we must not forget our own identity. Our solution must certainly be linked with our own problems and our own resources, and since our resources are rather limited as compared with the more economically developed countries such as England, U.S.A. U.S.S.R. Germany etc. we must not be ashamed of our own standards, if we are fully convinced that this is the best we can do at the moment, and that we still have our eyes on higher goals.

I think it is true to say that all our territories represented at this important and historic conference are confronted to some degree by this problem of how best to cut our social and economic suit to fit our political cloth of freedom and independence.

Styles may vary from territory to territory, but the problems are basically the same, and you will, I am sure, be interested in the programmes which we in Guyana have been thinking about and, in some respects are actually implementing at this moment.

In planning an educational programme for an independent Guyana my Government is fully cognisant of the fact that education can play a vital role in the economic and social advancement of the country. An educated citizenry is our best investment in progress and development, and education is recognised as one of the greatest liberating forces in our struggle against ignorance, reaction, bigotry, superstition and political and economic exploitation.

Our children and youths are among the most precious of our potential assets, and we hope that through our educational system, we will be able to enhance tremendously, the value of these assets to our economy.

In addition to the purely economic aspects of education the increased efficiency which must result from an educated and trained man-power, my Government wants to ensure that educational opportunities are available on an equal basis to all sections of the population, irrespective of colour, religion, ability to pay or social class. No educational institution should in itself be a source of privilege and confer a status of superiority on its students.

These two factors - equality of educational opportunity and removal of pockets or prestige in any educational institution are of major consideration to us as socialists. This sort of
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feeling of superiority is at the root of the system of social stratification in society and tends to perpetuate a social structure operating with class barriers, which are incompatible with a truly democratic society.

One writer has drawn our attention to the fact that one of the main roots of class discrimination in any society is the disparity of life opportunities or "life chances" between different sections of the society. When education is more easily available to one economic group, then this becomes a major factor in the perpetuation of class differences.

In short, my Government aims at developing a national system of education which will provide all Guyanese with the opportunity of achieving their educational ambition and sharing in all the educational facilities which are available without regard to considerations of race, religion or economic circumstances. This educational system also aims at removing long-standing discriminations, at integrating young Guyanese at the very start of life, and preventing the threatened disintegration of our society when we are the portals of freedom and independence.

In economically under-developed territories such as Guyana, manpower is one of our greatest material resources and capital assets; to make full use of these assets and resources, we need an imaginative programme of education and training especially for our youths and children.

Another very important aim of our educational programme is to produce among the citizens of Guyana a greater sense of belongingness to their country - producing a sense of nationhood among the different groups that make up our population. This fostering of a spirit of nationalism and rootedness in our country is necessary if we are to achieve and preserve a sense of unity in Guyana.

Our educational system must therefore be geared to function effectively as a means of bringing about this national integration whereby the people of Guyana would overcome the divisive elements in their midst, and unite together as one people, striving towards the common goal of making life in this country better for all.

The structure of our national system of education will embrace from nursery to adult community education. Guyana has been divided into eleven educational districts, and each of these will come under the supervision of a district education officer who will be responsible for the implementation of the total educational programme in his district.

Nursery Schools

At the bottom of this educational structure would come our nursery schools which would admit children from 3 - 6 years of age. Although Government cannot at this moment accept financial responsibility for, and has no immediate plans for the establishment of more nursery schools, it fully realises the importance of education at this stage of the child's life, since his later attitudes to learning can be considerably affected by his experience in the nursery school. These schools should provide for the child an atmosphere of natural affection, a feeling of space and security and an ordered and regular way of life. The child in such a school would be on friendly terms with his teachers and others who minister to his needs, and should have at hand the material through which he may develop his powers and enlarge his experiences. In a good nursery school the child should show the gaiety, curiosity, friendliness of spirit and adventure, and develop the power of self-expression.

To ensure that the right conditions exist in nursery schools, we propose that anyone who wants to open up nursery schools in the future should provide reasonable accommodation and equipment for the children and a competent teaching staff.

/ The teachers

The teachers should have some training in the principles and practice of nursery school education, and to effect this, we have already started, and will continue, to arrange courses for nursery school teachers.

In addition, many Local Authorities have expressed the desire to open nursery schools in the rural areas. We shall always give encouragement to such activities. With the economic development of British Guiana more and more job opportunities will become available to women and properly run nursery schools will be needed.

Primary Education

At the next level in the educational system is the primary school and for most children in Guyana, this is their first experience of formal education.

In all advanced countries of the world - in the U.S.A., in Russia and in Germany primary education extends over a period of six years. In Guyana the term "primary schools" referring to schools which cater for children from 6 - 16 years is a misnomer. Such schools should really be referred to as all-age schools. From September 1, 1962, these schools will be re-organised into primary and secondary divisions. Primary education will embrace the first six years of the child's formal education and will, generally speaking, begin when the child is six years old and end at the age of 12 years - hence:-

Preparatory A for the 6 year old
Preparatory B for the 7 year old
Standard I for the 8 year old
Standard II for the 9 year old
Standard III for the 10 year old
Standard IV for the 11 year old

So by the age of 12 years the child will complete his 6 years of primary education and will then be ready to pass to the second or secondary stage of education as obtains in all developed countries. Age 12 represents not only the attainment of puberty more or less, but also an administratively convenient age of transition from childhood to adolescence - from the primary to the secondary stage of education.

During the primary stage of education, the child will study such subjects as health and physical education, creative activities comprising music, art and craft, drama, language, arts, elementary mathematics, and social and environmental studies.

The course in the primary school should not only aim at teaching the child certain skills in reading, expression, understanding and number work, but should begin to make him more aware of himself in relation to his world around him.

Secondary Education

The next rung of the educational ladder is that of Secondary Education. How should this be organised?

At present all primary schools in Guyana have curricula containing nearly the same formal elements pursued with similar educational aims, but our present organisation of our secondary education is on bipartite lines.

If after a comprehensive primary school education, secondary education is provided in two types of schools, might this not tend to create artificial divisions between those who have pursued different studies in different types of schools? Would this division not tend to fragment our culture?

My Government is not against a division of the types of instruction given to different children of different abilities (such as the bipartite or a tripartite system provides), but it seems to be of doubtful value to provide different types of instruction in different schools.

/ My Government

My Government is **more in favour** of the comprehensive school as the answer to the organisation of secondary education in Guyana. As you are aware, a comprehensive secondary school is one which caters for all 12 children of all abilities in any area.

Guyana's goal is democracy, and as far as secondary education is concerned, this means increasing equality of opportunity and an expanding area of common educational and social experience for its youths. Segregation of schools into two types does not seem a valid arrangement for the achievement of these aims.

It is invalid, because it segregates the youths, and thus militates against the common social and educational experience posited by our conception of democracy.

It should make for better human and social relations in community and in working day life, if the managerial class and the operatives, the clerical and the technical workers, and the skilled and the unskilled workers have a common school background at the secondary stage, as at the primary stage, of their education.

All adolescents should then come nearer to speaking a common language and share a common background of basis culture, however far beyond that common area some of them might advance. Were all youths to continue to share this common educational experience, as is provided in our primary schools, as sound basis for good human relations in all forms of activities and working life might be established at the start, and the risks of fundamental segregation by future occupation, may not be so great, if there is a common cultural foundation. The grammar school youth may not be drawn away from the majority of his fellows, upon whose shoulders will fall the labour upon which the national wealth fundamentally depends, and upon which national life with its social and cultural amenities, is reared. The youth, whatever his academic attainments, who leaves school, lacking the awareness of the intrinsic value of his fellow-countrymen in other (and perhaps lower) walks of life, is a social illiterate in modern society. The comprehensive school should provide this common educational environment and experience, and should play an effective part in preventing the perpetuation of a rigid class system in our society, since this is the very antithesis of a Socialist Society.

Free secondary education in comprehensive schools is an ultimate aim of policy.

However, proposals for reform must square with financial and economic realities. Our financial position does not now permit the immediate implementation of the comprehensive secondary school.

In the circumstances, it has been decided that secondary education will be of two types:

Secondary Grammar/Technical education for those adolescents who can profit from this type of education; and

Secondary Modern Education for adolescents who are less likely to profit from the Grammar/Technical School Courses. This type of education would be partly academic and partly practical and would make full use of concrete as opposed to abstract learning. It will include vocational training.

Though the Grammar/Technical type of education would not be free for all students Government is already implementing plans with this objective in mind. During this year the Government has offered 161 free places to the Government Secondary Grammar Schools in addition to the existing 64 scholarships. Moreover, by deciding to grant a free place to all children who have made a certain performance at the Common Entrance Examination we are making sure that many of our best children are not allowed to go without a Grammar/Technical education, because of the parents' inability to pay for it.

The Secondary Modern type of education would be available free of charge. Such education would be offered in the post-primary or secondary divisions of all-age schools and eventually in separate Secondary Modern Schools. In these Secondary Modern departments -

the 12 plus youth will be in form 1
 the 13 plus youth will be in form 2
 the 14 plus youth will be in form 3
 the 15 plus youth will be in form 4

Here children would be prepared free of charge for the College of Preceptors Examination, and later, on for the G.C.E. 'O' level.

/ Selection

Selection for Grammar/Technical Secondary Education will be based on the results of the Common Entrance examination taken by children between the ages of 10 and 12 while attending the primary school.

Agricultural Education

Our attitude to manual work is one which has significance in our past history. After our experience of slavery and indentureship we built up a general dislike for manual work and thought only in terms of white-collar jobs. The result was that we still regard manual workers, skilled or unskilled, as on a lower social level to clerical or other white collar jobs.

Guyana and the West Indies in general are primarily agricultural countries and we cannot progress satisfactorily unless the present attitude to manual work is changed. It is essential that in our education programme both in the Secondary Grammar/Technical and in the secondary modern schools we take immediate steps to enlighten the attitude of the population towards the need for greater agricultural production. This means that rural education must be fully re-orientated towards inculcating in our youths the elements of a scientific attitude to agriculture.

Technical Education.

Let us see what happens next to the boy or girl who finishes his secondary education at about 16 years of age.

He might decide to go straight into a job or seek an apprenticeship. In many cases he would find that he needs further training in certain skills and to meet this need, we are considering plans to establish craft centres in each of the three counties. These centres would aim at supplementing the work being done at the existing trade Schools by providing additional courses over and above those which the trade schools already provide. The courses conducted at such centres would be run in close conjunction with the needs of the area and of the country as a whole.

The Technical Institute in Georgetown at the moment provides both craft and technical training. It is proposed that the craft work now being done at the Technical Institute will eventually be transferred from this institution and be conducted at the craft centres which it is proposed to set up throughout the country.

At the same time efforts will be made to upgrade further the level of Technical training at the Government Technical Institute so that it would produce more technicians. Some time in the future this institution would also become part of our University of Guiana.

University Education - College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

For those students whose interests and abilities would allow them to follow a more academic course we are hoping to establish as from October, 1965 a College of Liberal Arts and Sciences in Guiana which would make it possible for university education to be secured locally.

At present University Education because of its high cost is only available to a relatively small section of the community. The establishment of a College of Liberal Arts and Sciences would make university education available to a wider section of the population.

The College would provide its formal lectures after 4.30 p.m. and this would make it possible for students who were willing to scorn delights and live laborious nights to study in the evenings after work. This would make the acquisition of a University degree easier on financial grounds, to a wider section of the population and would reduce the social snobbery which develops when University education is only available to a small group who tend to establish themselves as a superior social group or class in society. In addition this

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is the only way in which we would be able to broaden in a very short time the strata from which our future administrative, managerial and technical staffs will be drawn. The case for the withdrawal from the University of the West Indies and the establishment of our own University has been set out more fully in a Talk I recently gave and copies of the Text will be available to any interested party.

Curriculum Planning

We recognise the need for periodic reviews of the curricula of educational institutions. Modifications of the suggested curriculum contained as an appendix, to the Education Code, 1940 have been made from time to time, but there is not in existence any one document embodying all those modifications.

The production of a Curriculum Guide, a draft of which has quite recently been sent to schools, is an attempt to bring to the attention of teachers the latest information on educational thinking about teaching in our all-age schools, which are now being reorganised into primary and secondary departments.

Our Head Teachers and staffs of schools will be expected to use the guide in such a way as to ensure that the educational needs of the children in any particular area are adequately met. It is hoped that the basic or general and special skills will be mastered and that opportunities for the wide variety of experiences contained in the guide will be provided in each school. Intelligent use of the curriculum guide should result in the production of a patriotic individual mentally and physically equipped to lead a full life as a useful member of the Guyanese Society.

It has often been said and not without justification that we have been slavishly following exotic patterns. Our present concern is that any curriculum devised should reflect clearly a course which pursued should help the children to be knowledgeable, critical, industrious and practical, to have a sense of direction and to be fully aware of their responsibility to their community. Towards this end apart from the more traditional academic subjects more and more emphasis must be given to Civics, Social and Environmental Studies, to Arts and Crafts, to Home Economics and School Gardening and to Elementary Science.

Local Text Books

In keeping with the policy of developing a national outlook we propose to give every encouragement to local writers to produce text books with a local flavour. A number of publishers are willing to co-operate in this connection and we have under consideration the setting up of a text book Unit. Meanwhile schools will be encouraged to give an important place to indigenous poems and songs.

Examinations

At present there is too large a number of local examinations for persons who enter the teaching profession. A pupil from the primary school who desires to take up a teaching career is required to pass five pupil teacher examinations then three teachers certificate examinations and more of his time and energy might be taken up in preparing for examinations than in gaining professional competence.

We are giving consideration to a reduction in the number of these examinations. The introduction of the College of Preceptors Examination in the all-age schools will in time bring about the abolition of the Primary School Certificate and the Pupil Teachers Examination since the College of Preceptors is now regarded as an entrance qualification to teaching. This examination which was formerly conducted by the Union of Private Secondary Schools will with the consent of this Union and the approval of the College of Preceptors be conducted by the Ministry of Education. Proposed pre-service training will also reduce the number of entrants to the Teachers Certificate Examinations which it is also anticipated will be reduced from three classes to two. A good deal has already been said of the Common Entrance Examination.

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The Examinations Section of the Ministry of Education and Social Development conducts a large number of overseas examinations including - Bar Examinations, University Degree examinations, London and Cambridge G.C.E. examinations, Institute of Book-keepers examinations, London Chamber of Commerce Examinations, Royal Society of Arts examinations - hitherto some of these examinations did not clear the expenses involved. My Ministry has, however, examined the whole matter of examination costs and has effected some reduction in costs and increased some of the local fees with a view to bringing about as near as possible a balance between expenditure and receipts.

As from 1964 the Cambridge University Examinations' Syndicate proposes to abolish the School Certificate Examination in favour of the G.C.E. The Ministry of Education therefore proposes to encourage all secondary schools to take the same G.C.E. either that of London or of Cambridge. Such a change would be economical as well as administratively convenient.

Recruitment and Training of Teachers

Government is anxious to recruit the best possible material for the teaching service. It is anticipated that with the extension of facilities for secondary education more students will wish to adopt teaching as a profession. It is proposed that holders of the College of Preceptors Certificate or the G.C.E. Certificate should be accepted as probationers until such time as they may be admitted to the Government Training College. The pupil teacher system will continue for some time but we aim at its ultimate abolition.

Less than 25% of over 3,000 teachers employed have been trained. Government aims at training as large a body of teachers in as short a time as is consistent with efficiency. Up to 1958 only 30 first year and 30 second year students were in training at the Government Training College. In 1959 an emergency one-year course was instituted by which 150 students were in training about half of whom were in residence.

It is Government's policy to increase the number of students substantially as from 1962 and to this end the College will be entirely non-residential so that existing residential accommodation can be used for lecture rooms. Emphasis will be progressively shifted to pre-service training.

Entrance to the Government Training College will normally be by way of examination but holders of a Class I Teacher's Certificate or the G.C.E. Advanced Level in two or more subjects or holders of a Higher School Certificate may be admitted to the College without having to take the Entrance Examination.

Candidates will be selected on the basis of order of merit without regard to sex.

A certain number of places will be reserved for teachers from remote areas where it is difficult to recruit or retain qualified staff. Teachers for reserved places must, however, take the entrance examination and satisfy the requirements of the College, and must sign a contract to return to work in the area from which they are selected for a minimum period of three years.

School Buildings:

Government has been doing what it can to provide increasing accommodation for school children. At present there are 19 new schools under construction and these will provide accommodation for several thousand children. There will still, however, according to projections be need for approximately 50,000 additional school places in the next four years. To meet this need Government is prepared to erect Government Schools wherever possible subject to the availability of funds. Because of the enormous costs involved we must rethink the whole approach to the design of construction of schools within very limited resources.

/ We hope

We hope to build as many secondary schools as possible with a view to implementing its policy of primary education from 6 - 12 and secondary education from 12 to 16 years. Where there are not enough children to have separate primary and secondary schools, all-age schools will be built suitable to the needs and curricula of the separate departments. All new schools built whether, primary or secondary will be co-educational, in keeping with modern trends as well as for economy and convenience. Indeed the equality of the sexes should be reflected throughout our institutions. There is no reason why there should be so few female Headteachers when in fact women teachers so greatly outnumber their male counterparts.

Practical work departments will as far as possible be attached to all secondary schools; these will include laboratories, handicraft and Home Economics departments.

Mrs. Dalton James who so ably and humourously moved the Vote of Thanks yesterday, expressed the hope that the interest of the Governments of these territories in the development of education would be reflected in the Budget. I think, it is common knowledge that Guyana already spends a higher percentage of the annual budget on education than most territories in this area. We are, however, far from satisfied and will continue to face up to our educational needs within the limits of our financial means.

I would like to repeat that for our economic development to take place as rapidly as we would like we need both physical factors such as capital, a trained labour force etc and also the correct social attitudes.

The social attitudes we acquired in the past were functional for those days but are out of step with the times. We need a new social image of the Guyanese and the West Indian - not one in which he slavishly tries to imitate the behaviour of his former masters but one which is based on an awareness of his own importance and equality. The feeling of inferiority which he built up as a colonial has to go overboard if he is to take his place rightfully among other nations of the world. This is the only way he would ever be able to assert his freedom and begin to think seriously about a solution to his own problems within his own context.

These new social attitudes we should begin to inculcate in our children through the stories, the pictures, the textbooks, the music and literature to which we should expose them. There is the danger that unless teachers are fully aware of this they may continue to inculcate the old social attitudes in which we were all brought up and not realize that these are out of date in the new social order.

Having been a primary school teacher in British Guiana for many years I think I can say from first hand experience that on the whole the British Guiana Teachers Association - and the teachers who belong to it and those who do not belong to it are all a devoted, hard working and progressive group. Judging from the West Indian teachers I have met and have heard, I think that this can also be said of teachers in the Caribbean generally.

I am sure that they possess the necessary vision and foresight to see that the old values and attitudes are changing and have to change, and that instead of trying to obstruct them, they would do everything in their power to usher in this new social era and these new social attitudes which are necessary if the West Indies are to go full ahead with their different programmes for social and economic development.

In my talk to you today, I have tried to cover as much ground as possible, to paint a picture, not only of our present programme, but also of our plans and hopes and dreams for the future. We do not believe we have all the answers, but we hope that in your deliberations you will be able to point the way to solutions to at least some of our educational problems in Guyana. If in the process, something of value to your own territories emerges, then we should both feel doubly rewarded.