

Ministers (8)

Cde. U. E. Johnson, M.P.,

Minister of Co-operatives

Cde. J.N. Maitland-Singh, M.P.,

Minister, Consumer Protection, in the
Ministry of Trade and Consumer Protection

Cde. S. Prashad, M.P.,

Minister in the Ministry of Agriculture

Cde. Sallahuddin, M.P.,

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

Cde. R.E. Williams, M.P.,

Minister, Fisheries, in the Ministry of Agriculture

*Cde. Y. V. Harewood-Benn, M.P.,

Minister, in the Office of the Prime Minister

*Cde. H. Rashid, M.P.,

Minister, in the Office of the President

*Cde. R.A. Van West-Charles, M.P.,

(Absent)

Minister of Health, in the Ministry
of Public Welfare

Ministers of State (3)

Cde. M. Corrica, M.P.,

(Absent on-leave)

Minister of State for Culture, in the Ministry of
Education, Social Development and Culture

Cde. R.C. Fredericks, A.A., M.P.,

Minister of State for Youth and Sport,
in the Ministry of National Development

*Cde. C.E. Wright, M.P.,

Minister of State for Construction, in the
Ministry of Works and Transport

Parliamentary Secretaries (3)

Cde. A.W. Bend-Kirton-Holder, M.P.,

(Absent)

Parliamentary Secretary, Women's Affairs
and Housing

Cde. D.A.N. Ainsworth, M.P.,

Parliamentary Secretary, Education, Social
Development and Culture

Cde. B. Bhaggan, M.P.,

Parliamentary Secretary, Foreign Affairs.

*Non-elected Member

Other Members (23)

Cde. M. Ally, M.P.
Cde. M. Armogan, M.P.
Cde. B. Beniprashad, M.P.
Cde. J.B. Caldeira, M.P.
Cde. A.A. Chin, M.P.
Cde. J.P. Chowritmootoo, J.P., M.P.
Cde. E. B. Davidson, M.P.
Cde. H. Doobay, M.P.
Cde. A.B. Felix, M.P.
Cde. E.H.A. Fowler, M.P.
Cde. P. Fredericks, M.P.
Cde. E.F. Gilbert, M.P.
Cde. J. Gill-Mingo, M.P.
Cde. A. McRae, M.P.
Cde. J.M. Munroe, J.P., M.P.
Cde. R.N. Primo, M.P.
Cde. P.A. Rayman, M.P.
Cde. C.G. Sharma, J.P., M.P.
Cde. H.L.B. Singh, M.P.
Cde. S.H. Sukhu, M.S., M.P.
Cde. B. Tiwari, M.P.
Cde. C. Vandenburg, M.P.
Cde. H.B. Walcott-Nascimento, J.P., M.P.

Government Chief Whip

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

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

Members from the Regional Democratic Councils (10)

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

Members of the Minority (12)

(i) People's Progressive Party (10)

Minority Leader (1)

Cde. Dr. C. Jagan, M.P.
Minority Leader

Deputy Speaker (1)

Cde. Ram Karran, M.P.,
Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly **(Absent)**

Other Members (8)

Cde. J. Jagan M.P. (Absent)

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud, J.P., M.P.
Minority Chief Whip

Cde. N. Persaud, M.P.

Cde. C.C. Collymore, M.P. **(Absent)**

Cde. S.F. Mohamed, M.P.

Cde. I. Basir, M.P.

Cde. C.C. Belgrave, M.P. **(Absent)**

Cde. Dalchand, J.P., M.P.

(ii) United Force (2)

Mr. M.F. Singh, J.P., M.P. **(Absent on-leave)**

Mr. M.A. Abraham, M.P.

Officers

Clerk of the National Assembly – Cde. F.A. Narain, A.A

Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly – Cde. M.B. Henry

PRAYERS

NATIONAL ASSEMBLYANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER(i) Change in MembershipThe Speaker:

Comrades and Honourable Members, I have been informed that Cde. P.A. Rayman ceased to be a Parliamentary Secretary with effect from 1982-01-01. As Cde. Rayman was an elected Member of the National Assembly, she continues to be a member of the Assembly.

(ii) Leave

The Speaker: Leave has been granted to Cde. Jairam for today's sitting and tomorrow's sitting, and to Mr. M.F. Singh for today's sitting.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS, ETC.

The following papers were laid:

- (1) (a) Parcel Post (Surface Mail and Air Rates) Order 1981 (No. 44), made under section 16 of the Post and Telegraph Act, Chapter 47:01, on 24th June, 1981, and published in the Gazette on 24th June, 1981.
- (b) Air Mail Postage Rates (Amendment) Order 1981 (No. 45), made under section 16 of the Post and Telegraph Act, Chapter 47:01, on 24th June, 1981, and published in the Gazette on 24th June, 1981.
- (c) Rates of Postage (Inland) (Air Rates) (Amendment) Order 1981 (No. 46), made under section 16 of the Post and Telegraph Act, Chapter 47:01, on 24th June, 1981, and published in the Gazette on 24th June, 1981.
- (d) Rates and Postage (Surface Mail and Fees for Services) (Amendment) Order 1981 (No. 48), made under section 16 of the Post and Telegraph Act, Chapter 47:01, on 24th June, 1981, and published in the Gazette on 24th June, 1981.
- (e) Payment of Customs Charges by Sender (Amendment) Regulations 1981 (No. 8), made under section 97 on 24th June, 1981, and published in the Gazette on 24th June, 1981.
- (f) Cash on Delivery (Overseas Parcels Post) (Amendment) Regulations 1981 (No. 9), made under section 97 of the Post and Telegraph Act, Chapter 47:01, on 24th June, 1981, and published in the Gazette on 24th June, 1981.
- (g) Post Office Money Order (Amendment) Regulations 1981 (No. 10), made under section 97 of the Post and Telegraph Act, Chapter 47:01, on 24th June, 1981, and published in the Gazette on 24th June, 1981.
- (h) Private Letter Bags (Amendment) Regulations 1981 (No. 11), made under section 97 of the Post and Telegraph Act, Chapter 47:01, on 24th June, 1981, and published in the Gazette on 24th June, 1981.
- (i) Private Letter Boxes (Amendment) Regulations 1981 (No. 12), made under section 97 of the Post and Telegraph Act, Chapter 47:01, on 24th June, 1981, and published in the Gazette on 24th June, 1981.
- (j) Post and Telegraph (Late Fee) (Amendment) Regulations 1981 (No. 13), made under section 97 of the Post and Telegraph Act, Chapter 47:01, on the 24th June, 1981, and published in the Gazette on 24th June, 1981.
- (k) Postal Franking (Amendment) Regulations 1981 (No. 14), made under section 23 of the Post and Telegraph Act, Chapter 47:01, on the 24th June, 1981, and published in the Gazette on the 24th June, 1981.

- (1) Cash on Delivery (Inland Parcels Post) (Amendment) Regulations 1981 (No. 15), made under section 97, of the Post and Telegraph Act, Chapter 47:01, on 24th June, 1981, and published in the Gazette on 24th June, 1981. [The Vice-President – Works and Transport]
- (2) Annual Report of the Inland Revenue Department for the year 1980. [The Vice-President – Economic Planning and Finance]
- (3) (a) Annual Report of the Guyana Prison Service for the year 1980.
(b) Annual Report of the Guyana Fire Service for the year 1977. [The Minister of Home Affairs]

MOTIONS RELATING TO THE BUSINESS OR SITTINGS OF THE ASSEMBLY AND MOVED BY A MINISTER

The Vice-President, - Parliamentary Affairs and Party/State Relations – (Cde. Ramsaroop): Cde. Speaker, I am seeking your leave under standing order No. 83 to move the suspension of Standing Order 23 to enable the motion in the name of Cde. Caldeira to be taken.

The Speaker: Leave is granted.

Cde. Ramsaroop: May I with respect move the suspension of Standing Order 23 to enable the motion to be taken.

Question put and agreed to.
Standing Order No. 23 suspended

PUBLIC BUSINESS

ITEM 1 – APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEE OF SELECTION AND NOMINATION OF THE MEMBERS

The Minister, Consumer Protection, in the Ministry of Trade and Consumer Protection. (Cde. Jean Maitland-Singh): Cde. Speaker, I hereby recommend the following persons to sit on the Committee of Selection.

Cde. Ramsaroop, M.P.
Vice-President, Parliamentary Affairs and Party-State Relations.

Cde. O.E. Clarke, M.P.
Minister of Regional Development

Cde. R.H.O. Corbin, M.P.
Minister of National Development

Cde. U.E. Johnson, M.P.
Minister of Co-operatives

Cde. P.A. Rayman, M.P.

Cde. H.L.B. Singh, M.P.

Cde. H.B. Walcott-Nascimento, J.P., M.P.,
Government Chief Whip

Cde. H.I. London, M.S., M.P.

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14:15 hrs

Cde. N. Persaud: I beg to move that Cde. Ram Karran and Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud also sit on the Committee of Selection.

The Speaker: Unfortunately, Cde. Narbada Persaud, you have to get a seconder.

Cde. Mohamed Seconded.

The Speaker: Those are the ten names under Standing Order No. 70 to form the Committee of Selection.

MOTION

APPROVAL OF GOVERNMENT'S POLICY IN PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

The Speaker: Cde. Caldeira.

Cde. Caldeira: Cde. Speaker, I beg to move this motion:

“Be it resolved that this National Assembly approves of the Government's policy adumbrated in the President's Address which was made to the Assembly on Friday 1982-01-22.”

It is not without good reason, without careful and deliberate thought, that I have decided to make a few remarks on Cde. President's Address.

On page 7 of the booklet “Charting Our Destiny”, the President's Address, I would like to deal with the following and I quote:

“For instance, the world, unless it disappears, will always need food. For instance, the world will always need wood and wood products.”

Agriculture, the Green Revolution, must triumph. It is said that no crisis lasts, especially when sensible persons, after having assessed a very serious situation, carefully decide to defy all odds and realise that our agriculture must produce to its maximum so that we can produce for ourselves and on our local market and, at the same time, exploit the Caribbean and other international markets, thus using agricultural products as a greater foreign exchange earner.

There is no doubt that agriculture, which is known in some countries as the Green Revolution, will perform better in 1982. The undisputable fact is that a nation that cannot feed itself is not truly free. The stark reality is that no nation can defend itself unless it has the capability to feed itself. By agriculture I refer not only to the crops and livestock, to the plants we grow to provide food for ourselves and to generate export earnings, to the animals we rear to provide us with milk and meat and eggs: I refer to fisheries production, fish from the sea and from our inland waters as well as our vast forestry resources. All efforts are being made to have increased inland fishing. Sub-sector fisheries are growing daily and, in addition to existing fishing facilities, Government is gearing its programme not only to increase our fish

catch but to utilise much of the waste to which the fisheries contribute.

We depend heavily on agriculture, not only for the jobs it provides and the livelihood of tens of thousands of people: we depend on it also very crucially for our Foreign Exchange. If we lift the levels of our productivity we shall be underwriting the development of this country in the securest way.

Today, hundreds of millions of people are living on the brink of starvation and in like manner are dying of hunger all over the world. In addition to the starvation facing millions in the world today the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, the F.A.O., has predicted that the world will be short of food for a long time and this problem is confounded by the ever-growing population in the world.

This green land of Guyana is a God-blessed country and the Government of Guyana under the inspired leadership of the Executive President, Cde. L.F.S. Burnham, is God-blessed also. With the People's National Congress broad-based agricultural policy, a break-through is inevitable for 1982 and the Green Revolution will succeed not only in feeding our people but will also perform as a foreign exchange earner thus producing food for our lesser fortunate brothers and sisters in the world.

We on the Government side of this National Assembly realise that if the necessary facilities are created the farmers will produce more. Every effort is being made to help in this direction. The Food Crop Production and Marketing Project involves the establishment of six Marketing and five Extension Centres at a total cost of \$11,777 (G).

Kumaka in the North West will have a marketing and extension centre, the total cost of which is approximately \$2,692,000 (G). This centre should be finished by the end of 1982. Other centres are being erected in the agricultural belts right across the coastland of Guyana and should be completed early. An extension centre is being established at Acquero in the North West District at a cost of \$446,000 (G). Another extension and marketing centre is being built at Charity in the Pomeroon at a cost of \$3 million (G) and at Supenaam at a cost of \$1,400,000 (G).

A marketing and extension centre is being established at Parika at a cost of \$2,372,000 (G) and at Kuru Kururu, on the Soesdyke-Linden Highway, at a cost of \$1,102,000 (G). A marketing centre is being built at Black Bush Polder at a cost of \$963,000 (G).

Under the Food Crop Production and Marketing Centre programme, two boats will be provided to the centre at Kumaka/Hosororo to facilitate the movement of its officers. Three passenger vehicles will be provided to the said centre to complete river and road transportation. We are hoping that this will enable the staff to give more effective service to the farming community which covers a very large area. A tractor, a trailer and agricultural implements will be provided to the centre to assist farmers in the area with the cultivation of their plots. Acquero will receive one tractor with a trailer and implements, as well as two outboard motors and boats.

The production and marketing programme is geared to assist small farmers who have farms from two acres to twenty-five acres to increase their production and productivity and to ensure a better standard of living. Farmers can easily obtain loans from GAIBANK.

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Cde. Caldeira: Cde. Speaker, agricultural production in the coastland area is very costly, it is a constant battle against the sea, and millions of dollars are spent each year to maintain and to build sea defence structures. Over the past three years, a sum of \$27.2 million has been spent on sea defence structures.

A concerted effort is being made to promote agricultural development in the hinterland. Because of different soil and climatic conditions, the hinterland regions offer us an opportunity to introduce in Guyana, crops which cannot be grown on the coastland, thus aiding in the process of agricultural diversification. Our soil is good for crops like onions and efforts are being made to encourage farmers to cultivate protein bearing pulses as well, for example, blackeye beans, pigeon peas, red kidney beans, cow peas and mung. The development of agriculture in the hinterland will also increase the food self-sufficiency of the areas, thus decreasing dependence on food flown in from the coastal areas at a considerable expense. It will also provide new or expanded income and earning opportunities to our brothers and sisters in those regions.

Cde. Speaker, with the completion of the Tapacuma Drainage and Irrigation project by mid 1982, 42,000 acres of land will come under immediate cultivation. Already the effects of this investment are being experienced, with some rice farmers reaping over 35 bags of paddy per acre. The M.M.A. will be in operation for 1983, and 125 acres of land will go into production shortly. When fully taken up, the rice lands will yield an additional production of over one million bags of paddy per crop.

In forestry, we have about 70 per cent of our green land of Guyana covered by forest containing valuable timber, which we can and must exploit to its maximum for our development, as a major foreign exchange earner. Within recent times, positive steps were being taken to exploit the forestry, for example, the new sawmill complex at Mabura Hill which is expected to be a major foreign exchange earner. Our forestry programmes are geared with a view to streamlining existing operations, and to explore new marketing opportunities for our woods abroad. The by-products of our forest will be used. Recently a ply-wood factory was built which utilises vast quantities of all types of our wood. Greater use can be made of our non-traditional soft wood.

Cde. Speaker, Essequibo was my father's land, my mother's land. It is mine. It is yours. It is ours and ours it shall always be. We are determined to develop Essequibo to its fullest potential, to develop its hydro electricity potential, its petroleum, its gold, its diamond, and all its valuable minerals we know it possesses, its agriculture and its forestry resources and no threat from anyone will prevent us from developing Guyana. [Applause.]

Cde. Speaker, in this year of defence, it is better to die defending and building our country than to live as a second class citizen in your own country. Cde. Speaker, we shall defend our mother land, Long live the President of the Co-operative Republic!
Long live the People's National Congress! [Applause]

The Speaker: This motion will require a seconder. Yes, Cde. Primo.

Cde. Primo: I rise to second the motion put forward by my colleague and in doing so, ask this Assembly to accept this motion fully. Allow me Cde. Speaker, at this time, to make my contribution in this honourable Assembly. It is my firm belief, Cde. Speaker, that what is embodied in the Presidential Address “Charting our Destiny”, is something that we ought to look forward to, something which we as Guyanese should be able to contribute to to our best ability, so that together we can move forward in this land of ours to make this country something we can be proud of.

Cde. Speaker, the entire world is today facing a crisis. A crisis of development. A crisis where people are looking forward to a comfortable life, not only for themselves, but for those that they have brought into this world. We in Guyana today are caught up in that crisis and coupled with what the President has outlined in his report, we have got to look forward to a better life. Cde. Speaker, the Cde. President has made it clear that for us to succeed in this world, we have got to think of our resources – human and natural – we have got to think of the development of all our resources for the benefit of our people. We have got to think of our economy and with the world today falling short of the economy, we in Guyana, by some means, will have to do something to raise the standard of our people.

That is why, Cde. Speaker, the diversification of agriculture in this country today is gaining momentum. With that diversification, if we look forward to what is to come and what we are to gain from the diversification of agriculture, we will see that all of us will have to make a considerable and significant contribution to the development of our country. If we take into consideration our three main agricultural products are rice, bauxite and sugar, those three together are falling short.

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(Cde. Primo continues)

So we will have to look elsewhere to develop some other industry and to do this, Cde. Speaker, the Government has placed emphasis on the development of forestry. The creation of a forestry industry, which to my mind will create more job opportunities, will give us a more standing and a pleasant economic salvation. The forestry industry, together with the three I mentioned, would be able to stimulate the economy, would be able to give us that impetus where our economy can float from time to time. The forestry industry if we look at our vast interior we will see, stretching from the east right onto the west, the timber, the woods which to my mind if well harnessed, well managed and well organised can play a meaningful role in developing the economy. That is why the forestry industry has created and will create a viable and more positive economic salvation. The Forestry Ministry, Cde. Speaker, has its mission and the mission that sets out clearly to – this mission is to actively promote and develop the development of the Forestry industry in Guyana by initiating, co-ordinating and evaluating activities in the various sectors of the industry and to ensure that the forestry policy of the Government is accomplished. If we should develop the forestry industry, if we should take all the woods in this land of ours we can develop it so that people would benefit. It is not for internal development alone. It is not for the people of Guyana but we can create such things so that our Caribbean neighbours, our Caribbean brothers can benefit from what we create. Cde. Speaker, the Forestry industry has many potentials whereby we can really take into consideration the by-products of forestry production such as charcoal, can earn us some well-needed foreign reserve that we need. Foreign currency. If we can harness this forestry products we can be able to build, we can be able to take control of the commanding heights of our economy because, Cde. Speaker, rice and bauxite, as we know is falling. The world market today is going down on sugar and we have got to look elsewhere for the development of some industry whereby we can bring together to assist in our economy and we chose the forest to get things from it. We chose the forestry industry because in the past those who used to manage the forestry industry managed it for themselves and those around them. But with the setting up of our Ministry of Forestry we can be able to look forward to a meaningful operation, a meaningful extraction of all the types of woods that we have. All types of wood. You think of it. What we have in Guyana. We have so many and all we had to do was to go into the industry and make it a success. Cde. Speaker, the forestry Ministry has formulated a policy. The forestry policy has been drafted in order to facilitate Guyana's regional development plan. The interpretation of this policy and the derived management plan must take cognizance of other land use and demand, as well as planned for the development of our necessary infrastructure within the region. We have got those. There is more need therefore, for co-operation with other land users interested in maximising the benefit of this country. Close liaison will be required with those responsible for mineral resources, soil and water conservation, wildlife protection and management. Cde. Speaker, if we look at the policy of the forestry ministry we will see that a lot of work has got to be done. A lot of work, a lot of preparation, a lot of infrastructural development. That is why we have created the Guyana Forestry Commission and this Commission has its mission also and the mission is to manage the forestry on the basis of sustained yields and other benefits to be derived therefrom, and at the same time actively pursue and promote the maximum production and utilisation of the resources for the economic diversification of the industry for both local and export markets. The mission of the forestry commission is to manage properly all the resources in the forestry industry. We have got also to look at our energy. We know that

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there is an energy crisis not only in Guyana but throughout the world and Guyana today is looking elsewhere to develop energy to the maximum, other energy, and we therefore, take into consideration a product from the forestry which is charcoal. The development of the charcoal industry in our country would depend on how we utilise our forestry products. It will depend on how we train and organise our coal manufacturers to take this industry from where it is to a better and more productive unit.

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(Cde. Primo continues)

The charcoal industry also has its part to play in the development process of our economy. It also has its mission. It also has to work in close collaboration with the Forest Commission. The Forest Commission will have the over-all responsibility to see that this unit works to produce its maximum, not only for the local market but for export, whereby we can gain the foreign reserves that we need.

We also would like to create a charcoal production unit. This unit has its mission and the mission is to motivate and organise large-scale production of quality charcoal in Guyana, to mobilise and organise the necessary institutional support, to support production of charcoal, to provide technical and other advice and training, to ensure that a high quality of charcoal is produced at marketable prices, to organise a proper system of marketing of charcoal produced locally and to sell this commodity in the overseas market.

Cde. Speaker, today, as I have said before, and many would say after me, we are in a crisis, the entire world. Guyana is seeking to get out of this crisis and to make itself known to the world. But for us to do this, our production and productivity would have to be at the maximum. If we in this Assembly can sit down to put our thoughts together, sit down and positively make our ideas felt on what is projected in the President's address, "Charting Our Destiny", we can find ourselves moving higher and higher, not only for the benefit of us in here but for the benefit of those outside whom we seek the co-operation of. I urge all of us in here at the same time I am seconding this Motion, to make our deliberations clearly felt with understanding and with positive meaning. I urge all of us in doing what we have to do that when we leave here and this Motion is passed by us, that the people outside would realise that we have made it easy for them to follow.

Cde. Speaker, Guyana is my country, Guyana is our country, and if we are to develop Guyana it cannot be developed by one section or by individuals. It has to be developed by all of us. Whatever development there is in Guyana all will benefit. I urge you, all and sundry, to make your contributions as meaningful as possible for the passing of the President's Address.

Motion proposed.

The Vice-President, Public Welfare (Cde. H. Green): Cde. Speaker, may I first take this opportunity to offer congratulations to the Cde. Leader and President for his address which he delivered here on 1982-01-22, last Friday. This address, it is clear to me, has established the maturity of our political leader and I think it makes it clear to those who did not notice it before, that he is the leading politician and statesman in our region. You know the stature and the greatness of a man not when the going is good. You recognise a great leader when he could give leadership and direction when things are rough. I believe, Cde. Speaker, that on Friday we heard him set the framework upon which we need to work, to move from what is a difficult position to a situation where we can manage and where we can continue to work for the betterment of the people of this country. As has already happened by the two speakers who preceded me, other Members on this side of the Assembly and perhaps even on the other side, will deal with areas that have to do with specific subjects and matters. On our side we will hope to emphasise the importance of agriculture and how we can make full use of our material and human resources.

Central to the development effort will be the development of what human resources we have and, at the same time, putting in place systems and mechanism to ensure the fullest use of our people and their energies. For after all, no matter how well we plan, no matter what financial help we obtain, no matter what schemes are properly executed or conceptualized, the involvement of our people will be vital. Cde. Speaker, as you know, in the southern part of this country certain works are going on. But even if we find oil and our demand for a new world international economic order is met, the of a dis-oriented or unprepared workforce would quickly any such advances which we may obtain. It is for this reason that we in Labour will continue our efforts to involve and to inform the leadership of the Guyana Trade Union Congress, to inform them of the realities of our situation. We expect that with their involvement and with a better understanding and a determination on their part to build, the leaders of the T.U.C. will persuade their members, who are indeed the workers of our country, to make a united and a strong effort to put their brains and muscles to the service of our people and to the service of the country of which we are a part.

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(Cde. Green continues)

I wish perhaps at this stage Cde. Speaker, to assure the workers of this country that this People' National Congress Government remains committed to making the essentials of feeding, housing and clothing available and reality to our people, but I say that Cde. Speaker, because in the present state of the world, it is just not possible to advance the programme at a pace desired by the President and the government. To advance it at a speed needed by the people of this country. What are these realities, or to use a popular word these days, what are these constraints? We are a part of a world that is doing all sorts of things and we need as we always appeal to workers to understand our history, our past, to really brackle with the press, to understand what is happening in the world today and with determination to charter the course with our Leader for the future, as his speech was properly titled "Charting Our Destiny". Cde. Chairman, what is this world? We are part of a world that has gone crazy, with the emphasis by the powerful and influential nations is not on real sustained development for a country such as ours, but it seems willing to concentrate on arms, armaments and in many cases on destabilising countries that are there to do things and demonstrate our willingness and our determination to be independent, to be free, and to really make contributions to the development of our people. In many countries today because of the attitude by the powerful states more men and money are being utilised on the military than on health and education combined. Our so-called civilised world and the modern historians question how civilised we are. This civilised world east and west and some of our friends seem to want to lay the blame on one side. The civilised world today spends sixty times as much furnishing a single soldier than it does educating a single child. That is the world in which workers in this country must operate. Many instances of course exist where the value of arms supplied by the developed and powerful countries exceed by far the total aid given to the civilian population. Cde. Speaker, the arms race in 1980 devoured five hundred million dollars. When you work it out you get a staggering figure on one million dollars per minute. Compounding this madness by the Leaders of the rich powerful states we see the unfair terms of trade and I have no doubt my good friend the Minister of Trade will deal with some of this. But in terms of the workers of this country it is important for us to recognise what it means to our economy. In 1974 fourteen tons of sugar, the proceeds from fourteen tons of sugar the people of this country could buy a single tractor. By 1978, we had to sell twenty-five tons of the same sugar to buy the same tractor. Last year it took the proceeds from thirty-four tons of sugar to buy a single tractor. Very often when we get up and talk about the improper terms of trade the colonists and the technicians tend to couch it in sophisticated language. As an ordinary man I prefer to see it in these harsh and real terms. What can we do with the things we sell? In 1970 one ton of sugar bought forty-eight barrels of oil. Last year that same ton of sugar would only buy ten barrels of oil. I do not wish to burden this Parliament but I can give legion instances of the unfair terms of trade. There is no way Cde. Speaker, we can control the effects here in Guyana of Inflation, for example, there is no longer talk about low costs houses, we talk about providing houses for low income people. The least that one can build a decent three-bedroom house is between thirty and thirty-five thousand dollars.

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Yesterday my daughter approached me to buy half a dozen pencils, I think she said they were 3B and 2B. She is in the common entrance class and out of ignorance I gave her one dollar to buy the pencils, she laughed at me because the price of one such pencil was one dollar and five cents. These are things over which we have so little control. World Health Organisation, which covers all the countries of the world plans to eradicate malaria, the major killer in the third world, had to be slowed down because of the lack of funds. The cost of this programme to eradicate malaria was 450 million dollars. Cde. Speaker, less than half of the amount the same world spends daily for military purposes. World Health Organisation - we have moved it, let your friends support it. World Health Organisation spent 83 million dollars over the last ten years to get rid of small pox. Again in the world, primarily the developing world Asia, Africa and Latin America that amount is not even enough to purchase one modern strategic bomber.

Yesterday I was in New Amsterdam and when I read the Arms Report by the United Nations I said that those figures had to be incorrect, but the amount that went to eradicate small pox could not buy a strategic bomber and I called my colleague the Cde. Minister of Foreign Affairs and I said this must be some typographical error and he said no, those figures are absolutely correct. Cde. Speaker, we need to see what the situation is and what we can do in Guyana against that background, and when in 1964 December Cde. Leader of the People's National Congress talked about consultative democracy, some who are still around scoffed. We in the P.N.C. have steadily worked towards the realisation of this concept adumbrated by our Leader.

(Cde. Green continues)

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Fan out, meet-the-people tours. We, in fact, tried many techniques to do this, particularly in relation to the most important sector of the community, the working man and woman.

During the regime of the People's National Congress, all workers, including sugar workers, were recognised by the unions of their choice and dialogue with workers in field, office and factory has become meaningful, deep and part of the new arrangements. There have been, and still are, many obstacles to the free flow of ideas between workers and decision-makers, but it is this free flow of information and ideas which, we feel, will ensure the maintenance of a healthy and stable relationship between management and non-management workers.

In my experience there have been two main obstacles to the flourishing of this consultative democratic approach so far as the labour force in our society is concerned. First, there has been a fundamental distrust between management and non-management workers. This is understandable and, as I said, we need to look at our past, based as it was on the class interests of the two groups, but the management class, or group, in those days were direct owners of industry with all their productive enterprises in our economy while the non-management workers merely sold their labour to these institutions. In fact, they sold it to the highest bidder.

These divergent class interests were acted out in a series of confrontations over the years which even today have left a bitterness and suspicion which could make industrial relations, no matter what the model, very difficult to understand and to act upon.

Sometimes we don't give ourselves sufficient credit since this Government, led by Linden Forbes Sampson Burnham, since we nationalised and now own and control the important sectors and areas of the economy – these class interests are really without a base and really we see only a shell of antagonism based on our former class differences. All workers today, by reason of the change of ownership, now stand in real partnership to each other, whether they are management or non-management. In fact, if you look at the group of managers, they have all come basically from the labouring class and non-managerial group. In other words, the country belongs to us as Guyanese and we all have a vested interest in production and productivity.

In November 1964, the Cde. President called for peace to bind up the wounds of the past and to initiate a new era of consultative democracy. Some reacted with a call for campaign of non-cooperation and civil disobedience and this kind of campaign has been an unfortunate feature of our ethic over the past period. It does not only witness attempts at industrial sabotage but acts such as arson and destruction of machinery and acts by some people to manipulate the workers. We have had our share of politically-motivated strikes in this country, but the workers of Guyana now have remained solid in their commitment to carry on the struggle. [Applause.] As the Cde. President noted, we have a climate, industrial wise, that is relatively stable.

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(Cde. Green continues)

I am happy to note that the industrial climate is relatively stable and though there still exists room for improvement in the process and timing of consultation, this process is now accepted as a norm of life. I would like to pay tribute publicly to all the leaders of our local trade union movement for bringing maturity to the question of development of a country and, to my mind, for their commitment to the well-being of the work force of this country. It has not been easy and at times remain difficult.

It is true, as the Cde. President noted, that we have seen reducing levels of production and productivity. It is true, too, that the workers, management and non-management, must bear a great deal of responsibility for the decline in the levels of efficiency and production, but the worker is not alone to blame. We are all caught up in a world recession that is relentlessly pushing our backs to the wall. It is only by a united will and a willingness to fight back that we will succeed.

We on this side and, indeed, the workers of this country draw inspiration from our leader, Cde. Linden Forbes Sampson Burnham. [Applause.] We draw inspiration from the party as a vanguard party, but this will have to cut across party divisions, political pique, sectional interests, pettiness and administrative inefficiency. It has to cut across disoriented values. It is not now merely a challenge facing us. It is, indeed, a struggle in 1982 for survival. Life has grown tough all over the world. In the United States, the richest and, perhaps, the most powerful --

The Speaker: Five minutes more, Cde. Green

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Cde. Green: Most powerful country in the world. Cde. Speaker, if I may quote from News Week, January 18, 1982 page 26. They say that “the unemployment rate for December has soared by half a percentage point to 8.9 per cent leaving 9.5 million Americans out of work – and suddenly the only question was how much the new year’s jobless rate would exceed the postwar record of 9 per cent. In Washington, the prospect was contemplated with a touch of gallows humour.” It was no laughing matter, for the economy was deteriorating with alarming speed. More than three-quarters of the increase in unemployment over the past six months was a result of an actual decline in a number of jobs rather than growth in the over-all labour force. Cde. Speaker, in the USSR the speakers are appealing to the people to recognise that the increments that they expected will not take place. In the USSR, there is a short-fall of grain and other agricultural products because they have perceived that they have problems.

Life is tough, particularly for the working man with little or no skills. In Guyana, it is always tough for this man. Under the leadership of this party, we have seen him rise with hope and determination never to yield or submit in his effort to secure a better way of life for himself and his country. Under this government, Cde. Speaker, we saw that little man get a breathing space to lick the wounds of previous governments and administrations inflicted by centuries of exploitation, and to deal with the battle ahead. We saw that man acquire a house either by self-help or by hire purchase. Between 1970 and 1980, this Government provided over 30,000 housing units for the people – the working man of this country. We saw that man improve his quality of life, send his children to school, improve his living conditions, provide in some places where he did not anticipate, electricity and water which the entire nation has to pay for. Every Guyanese has benefited in one way or another from this Government in office.

Our middle income earners have also benefited. Money is made available for them to do things they did not anticipate previously. What this government has not allowed, has been the exploitation of man by man. We know how tough it is.

The Speaker: Two minutes more, Cde. Green.

Cde. Green: We as a Government face everyday the increase to which I referred. Many people with skills opted out of the society. Cowards! But those cowards leave behind them certain obligations. The tendency has been for people with skills to go abroad, they leave their parents who we have to take care of and their children whom we have to educate. Others find it difficult to adjust in other ways. My mother used to say, “if you can’t get what you want, you must want what you get.” Too many of our citizens are still too choosy about jobs and of work.

The pressures on some sectors of the economy must necessarily be greater than others. In addition, we have had an uneven development. Sometimes the priority in certain areas of employment is the very areas people tend to shy away from. It is the lowest in the priority of the unemployed. We have faced this problem over and over again. As the person responsible for labour... ..

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The Speaker: Cde. Green, I am afraid you will only get 30 minutes.

The Vice-President, Parliamentary Affairs and Party/State Relations

(Cde. Ramsaroop): I beg to move the proceedings of this Assembly so that the Cde. Vice-President be given an additional 15 minutes to conclude his presentation.

Question put, and agreed to.

Cde. Green: Cde. Speaker, as the person responsible for labour, I can state that, conscious as I am, some agencies have laid off workers, and others may be forced to do so during this year. Yet it is true in Guyana today, that if every able-bodied Guyanese would overcome what is in fact a serious psychological hurdle. They can all be gainfully employed and make a decent living. There is no degradation in honest toil. The Cde. President in the third paragraph of page 10 said, "It is the duty of Guyanese to appreciate the need in many cases for developing new occupational preferences and skills." Of course, many will need to be trained, and others will need to be re-trained.

Many work situations must be seriously examined and proper corrective action taken. An imaginative pre-employment apprentice-ship scheme has been started by the Central Recruitment and Man Power agency, for too many of our people still find employment at a time when they do not know to work, and work to them is a strange art. Some enter work places and a work situation where there is low productivity and bad work habits and the new entrant soon develops these bad habits. I discovered, last Saturday when I met some supervisors from the City Council, that they have a habit of foremen lending money to work men and that led to all sorts of difficulties in their relationships. That is why the Cde. President's call to set up a more effective monitoring system is timely. We hope that all management staff and personnel will take immediate measures to translate this into reality. This problem continues, because many still insist on being square pegs in round holes, aspiring to jobs they cannot do or in some cases, jobs that do not exist. Others have what we know in Guyana as false pride. Yet these very comrades would do these very jobs they refuse to do here in the developed societies. I refer particularly to work demanding physical labour. We have jobs available for the people of this country, Cde. Speaker, picking up agricultural products. In the sugar estates, developing agriculture and venturing out on their own to take for themselves the risk of beginning new enterprises, some of them so seriously, and have succeeded.

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(Cde. H. Green continues)

There are inhibiting factors which we will face and which we shall discuss during this debate. Cde. Speaker, it is important as we proceed to 1982 that people accept work that is available. Cde. President referred to the inefficient and the unproductive. He also observed that those who produce, the efficient and the productive, will be rewarded. It is for this reason that discussions with the T.U.C. continue and we have asked all managers and all workers and all unions to continue the discussions so that at every single worksite in every enterprise we will have imaginative incentive schemes put into place so that the appropriate rewards for the efficient and the productive can be given, because it is unfair sometimes to work in the same environment with a man who is lazy and unproductive and at the end of the day he receives the same salary or wage that is no different from yours. We hope to create a system where the reward goes to those who produce and those who perform so that he is not given the disincentive of receiving the same salary as the lazy but given the appropriate incentive for the extra effort he would have made. Cde. Speaker, I want to mention one other area in our work force. In collaboration with several women's organisations in this country we are helping our women to enter into areas of employment that were traditionally reserved for the menfolk. As you know it is this Government that completely removed discrimination against women and our women receive equal pay for equal work and I believe this is something we can boast of with pride. This is not a fact in many other countries today. Our women, many of them, are in fact leaders of households, the only wage-earners, are responding and in fact, Cde. Speaker, our women are now entering areas like the National Guard Service and the security services, municipality, and there is no limit that this Government will make full use of what has been hitherto a wasted resource in our society. Cde. Speaker, I wish to commend this address for acceptance by this Assembly and to show you, Cde. Speaker, that not withstanding the difficulties once we have the Leader of this nation charting our destiny we shall succeed.

The Speaker: Dr. Jagan.

The Minority Leader (Cde. Dr. Jagan): Cde. Speaker, we have heard from those who support the Government. I took the opportunity after the Friday circus to ask someone who is particularly concerned about what was happening in this country what he thought about what happened last Friday. He said the occasion was resplendent with pomp but the speech was empty. Nothing in store for the disillusioned, the alienated and the discontented. 1981, the President told the Assembly, was a bad year and 1982 will be no better. Of course, in the whole speech there was the usual propaganda and when one listens to members of this Government, both inside and outside this Assembly, one hears as if these people are just fighting to come into the Government. After 17 years they are still telling us about the glories and the wonderful assets in forestry and minerals and water and charcoal. What a disgrace. We are told about the world crisis. The President said everyone is suffering, east and west, north and south, rich and poor. The Vice-President told us a little while ago that the world has gone crazy, and of course in the President's speech he did not forget to mention the boogey man – Venezuela. He said the threat is real, therefore 1982 will be the year of defence. Defence of what? Defence of starvation, malnutrition, hunger? Look at it. Headline in the Chronicle says 'Guyana barely survives 1981.' Look at it. Chronicle – 20th of this month. Poverty, rummaging for milk cans and bottles, children. One past Mayor of Georgetown said this kind of rummaging was going on, she opened her mouth and said too much. Potatoes which were condemned, people were going, children and others were going in the rubbish heap and collecting them for food, because she dared to say that her head rolled. Cde. Speaker, not only poverty like that. Look how they are fetching water. Chronicle – beating the water problem. Donkey carts and Head: fetching water. Jackass, yes, alright. That is what you all brought this country to – jackass carts. More hopes. Hope for more power next year. However, load-shedding will continue, explained G.E.C. boss. We bring experts all the way from England. Tell us how much you are paying them every week, every day. After you wreck the place you got to bring them to rehabilitate, and taxpayers got to pay. Inefficient service. Paying through their noses. That is what the Guyanese are to defend. The President says this is the year of defence. He said the People's Militia must be strengthened. A plea is made to the people to demonstrate their patriotism by buying defence bonds. And said the President "survival itself let alone forward movement will require hard work, sweat and blood." The President continued: "It is no consolation to point to failures, poor industrial relations and missed targets in other countries. Ours is the task of identifying our failures and single mindedly setting out to eradicate the causes thereof without fear or favour."

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(Cde. C. Jagan continues)

Then he went on:

“The nation looks, and is entitled to look at this, the highest forum, for leadership and sincerity rather than words and empty cant.”

I regret to say that the President himself indulged in empty cant. He failed to give us a real class analysis of the world situation. Like the Vice President who spoke, we got a distorted view of what is happening, talking about the world has gone crazy. The capitalist world has gone crazy, why doesn't he say that. From 1970 there were three recessions in the capitalist world. So they try to confuse. Instead of talking about the socialist world, capitalist world and imperialist dominated Third World we get generalised terminologies about east and west, north and south, rich and poor. Why they do not go to Chandisingh and let him give them some lessons in ideology. Maybe he got brainwashed too. The recession, unemployment and unachieved targets, the President said, are part and parcel – what he talked about – of the world crisis of capitalism. That is what he must say here. And they know it but they do not want to say it because they have put their hands into the crocodile's mouth, the I.M.F. and the capitalists.

Of course, they present also a distorted picture, that the whole world is affected. Of course, the capitalist crisis has affected the socialist world, we know that, because the socialist world is not immune from the capitalist world. But I can give you scores of statistics from a paper I have just written comparing the growth rates in the capitalist world and in the socialist world from 1950 to the present time, and more particularly, to the last ten years, where the growth rate in the socialist world is twice as much as in the capitalist world. Why they do not say that? Why they do not say that in the socialist world there is steady advancement or real wages, improvement of the conditions of the working people, slow because of the capitalist crisis – but nevertheless constantly improving. They do not want to say that because they want to generalise their failures by saying everybody is failing, including the socialist world. This is a deception on the Guyanese people, to deceive them, to lull them into a false sense of security.

The words “hard work, sweat and blood” are familiar. We heard them before in the slogan “eat less, sleep less, work harder”. Ten years ago we heard that. We are hearing it all over again. What the President should have told us was how the working man whose monthly take-home pay after tax in February last year was \$250 and whose expenditure was \$654 – as the T.U.C. pointed out in its Report – was expected to work harder, make more sacrifices and buy defence bonds in the face of rampant inflation of probably 40 per cent last year. Let them tell us that. They want to make the workers into magicians, like they are. Magicians do not solve economic problems. They can pull rabbits out of the hats but we know that they are not real rabbits. Is the President unaware that at the time Brazil was threatening Guyana in 1975/1976 when things were not so bad as today for the working people, that the defence bonds scheme was a total fiasco? Tell us how much you raised. Let the finance man get up and tell us how much you raised then. Two million dollars? You were hoping to raise \$13 million. Now you are beating the same drum all over again and now to this National Assembly, the highest forum which, according to the President, the nation looks to for leadership.

Cde. Speaker, you may have seen the press statement that we issued on our non-attendance last Friday. We said that we were not concerned with pomp and ceremony. We have referred to the many, many questions which remain unanswered in this Parliament. We referred to the many Motions which have not even been put on the Notice Paper much less the Order Paper. So if we want to talk about this Parliament we have to go back because this is a complaint not only which we are making now. It is something which was made years ago.

I remember in 1971 in this Parliament when we gave support to the Government to help to nationalise Demba. We gave them Parliamentary support so that they could get a majority. The President got up in the Assembly and said the following. This is from an article called the “The Peace Plan’ of the Argosy at that time, written by Rickey Singh. It stated:

“The Parliament is to meet more often on Wednesdays to allow debates on Opposition Motions and Questions and the Public Accounts Committee of the Parliament which scrutinises the expenditure on public funds is to meet more often as requested by the Opposition group.”

In 1971 we were complaining – probably before that – about the way the Parliament functions. Cde. Speaker, you know you always say that your hands are tied. The then Prime Minister said, “okay, it is going to work like a Parliament”. Up to today it is not working as a Parliament. How all of a sudden the Parliament becomes the highest forum in the land? To do what? To draw salaries? Look how many of them. That is not all the Prime Minister said then. He said many other things and I want to refer to some of those because if an attempt was made to get genuine co-operation in this country – the Vice President said a little while ago that instead of co-operation there was non-co-operation, there was sabotage – we would not have been in the mess that we are in today. Listen to some of the things they were supposed to do: Representation on Boards, Corporations and Committees. This is what the Paper says:

“The Opposition P.P.P is to have representation on all Government Boards and Committees, including the Bauxite Corporation, to be set up, and Dr. Jagan is to be consulted by Mr. Burnham on appointment on such Committees.”

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(Cde. Dr. Jagan continues)

It is better not to talk about the Elections Commission because you know, Cde. Speaker, what is the opinion about that. I do not want to talk about that, the thing they all call Elections Commission. It is dead like Jackson who is dead with it. Then we have this about anti-corruption and anti-discrimination. It said Dr. Jagan is to submit to Mr. Burnham proposals for the creation of a permanent anti-discrimination, anti-corruption committee. This Parliament subsequently set up a Parliamentary Committee, but it never functioned, it never completed its work, it is dead. You wanted to kill it. That is why you all have made corruption into a way of life in the country. Fair employment practices – the government will pursue a fair employment policy and make no exception with respect to Guyanese trained in the USSR or the Eastern European countries on P.P.P. scholarships. All of them gone, most of the hundred odd have left the country and gone away because they would not give them jobs. Last year they raised after ruining the country salaries by 39% because they say brain drain. But brain drain is due not only because jobs were not given to those people who were trained in socialist countries but also because they are fed up. People who are in the service are fed up because of political interference. What Pat Thompson called ‘nit picking’ fed up.

Question of peace. There is to be no denial of the right of peaceful demonstration. It is here. In Europe hundreds of thousands of people are marching, complaining about how many billions are spent for the arms race. Those people are marching and influencing policy on disarmament. In Guyana if you march in the street you get burst head. Only recently it happened. Mr. Burnham said here that there will be no denial of the right to peaceful demonstration. It is a report of what he said in the Parliament.

The Speaker: Dr. Jagan it is reported that he said that because you said that was Ricky Singh’s statement. I am not concern with that, the important thing is a report is different from what is said in Parliament.

Dr. Jagan: I am sorry we do not have the hansard or else I would have read from it.

The Speaker: Comrades, please let’s hear Dr. Jagan, when you all were speaking he was not interrupting.

Dr. Jagan: The Vice-President said all workers including sugar workers have had recognised the union of their choice. Cde. Chairman, that is here. The Government then led by the Prime Minister said, to use his exact words, ‘to make arrangements shortly to ascertain which Union sugar workers would prefer to have so that there will be made an end to the current jurisdiction dispute’. In 1975 for the purpose of Union recognition there was a seven-weeks strike in the spring crop and six weeks in the autumn crop. If this was fulfilled there would have been no strike. Yet he is now talking as if this was a grant to GAWU; actually GAWU won the poll which Carrington conceded. That is why his head was rolled. Now they are trying to undo what Carrington had done; he had agreed to a poll which GAWU had won by 98% of the votes. And then they have other things here too. He said that the Privy Council will go, but in the place of the Privy Council there will be a Caribbean Court of Appeal.

Judges and Magistrates giving ‘cow boy’ decisions, political decisions. Look what happened in the treason trial. Director of Public Prosecutions like that should not serve in this country.

The Speaker: No, Dr. Jagan, if you want to bring a motion you have to do that, you cannot attack the Director of Public Prosecutions.

Cde. Dr. Jagan: I will bring it, but when will the motion be put on the Order Paper. Will you allow me to speak. I want to put the records straight because today you hear a lot of talk about sabotage, non-co-operation and so forth and only recently one man who goes by the name of Journalist put his foot in his mouth named Carl Blackman and this is what he said, this is Sunday Chronicle 17-1-82 – after they fire him they bring him back to write nonsense, this is what he said “the prospects are daunting, it is too much to ask Opposition parties to change into good little boys and help in the battle for survival.” Many of the strikes over the past years were aimed not so much at improving the lot of the workers but rather at oiling the wheel of chaos. Many of the recent fires though categorised as accidents seem more like sabotage designed to wreck the economy.” How is it the P.P.P. had called for enquires into these fires. Why is it we are not hearing, why are they being covered up, why? Probably it has to do with corruption. Burn up the records, all the thieving that is going on, so nobody can prove anything. Yes, I repeat the strikes in the Sugar Industry, two main ones – one had to do with recognition would have been avoided if the Government had carried out the promises made in 1971. The second one – if they had paid the people and not robbed them through the levy-the 135 days strike in 1977 would have been avoided, and now the Yankees are saying that the Cubans instigated the strike.

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(Cde. Dr. Jagan continues)

That is another matter. Today we hear that efficiency lagged as also did production. But the seriousness of the situation has not been revealed by the President. If efficiency has lagged, we have to ask: Whose fault? If Cde. Hamilton Green – I am not talking now about Vice-President – one-time General Secretary of the P.N.C., takes on the placement of people, by-passing all the institutions of the state to put round pegs in square holes, how do we expect that they will become efficient?

The Speaker: You have only three minute more.

Cde. Dr. Jagan: Half an hour has finished so quickly?

The Speaker: So the clock says.

Cde. Dr. Jagan: We have moved from a “Year of Consolidation” in 1971 to a “Year of Defence” or the “Year of Survival”. That is what we have.

The Minister told us of the difficulties of the world in recession but what he studiously avoided to tell us was that the products – rice, sugar and bauxite – have not suffered in any way so far as shortfall of market is concerned. There is no shortfall in international markets for our products. You have not been able to produce. Why? He said that we will give rewards to those who deserve them. What about the rice farmers? The rice farmers have gone to the previous Ministry of Agriculture. The previous Prime Minister put out statistics, cost of production, income, and showed that they were losing over \$300 a bag for rice. [Cde. Ram Karran: “Per acre.”] The Prime Minister met them before he went to Canada and said he would see them when he came back. Up to now he has not seen them. That is the situation today.

In the rice industry, what is the position? 16,000 families out of 49,000 have dropped out of rice. For the spring crop of last year, 45.6 per cent of the land was cultivated. In the autumn crop, 49.5 per cent of the land remained uncultivated. This is a fact of life. Why? Because you have treated the rice farmer in a way which does not follow what you are saying, namely, that you will reward those who are producing. The result is that they leave, and the trek to the city is there and you want to send those in the city back to the land. Tell us what happened to Matthews Ridge where we had the manganese enterprise. How many millions were poured into that and what happened there?

The Speaker: Two minutes more, Dr. Jagan.

Cde. Dr. Jagan: The same thing can be said in sugar. They reached the 95 per cent target in sugar but from a recovery rate of about 11 to 12 tons of cane to one ton of sugar, it has now gone to 15/16 tons. Why is that? Not because the workers are not cutting the cane, but because they have round pegs in square holes. They have destroyed the cultural patterns which existed before. They do not know anything about them. They say that we sabotaged. What about the bauxite? The P.P.P. has never

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claimed that Linden and Kwakwani were its strongholds. How is it that this year the President said that if we reached 75 per cent of production for 1981 we would be lucky? Therefore, I think the Government should seriously begin, if the members are real patriots, to examine its conscience and not come here with more and more platitudes, with more and more inane statements about all our forestry and charcoal and this and that, statements which have been heard ad nauseam in this Parliament. For those who, like the Chronicle and the present Vice President, say that the P.P.P. is not co-operating let me just point this out.

The Speaker: I take it that you are finishing off now. I will give you another minute or two if you will finish off now.

Cde. Dr. Jagan: No, I am continuing.

The Speaker: I don't know if you will get an extension of time. It is four o'clock. The sitting is suspended until 4:30.

Sitting suspended accordingly at 16 hours.

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On resumption –

The Speaker: When the suspension was taken Dr. Jagan had finished his 30 minutes.

Cde. Ram Karran: I move that he be given an extension of 15 minutes.

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud seconded.

Question put, and negatived.

The Speaker: Cde. Bhaggan

The Parliamentary Secretary, Foreign Affairs (Cde. Baggan): Cde. Speaker, fellow members of the National Assembly, comrades: Today I am exceedingly happy to be accorded this pleasant opportunity to be, firstly, a subscriber to the debate on the Cde. Executive President's Address to Parliament on Friday, January 22, 1982, to mobilise and motivate our nation's resources for the defence of our territorial integrity as against Venezuela's aggressive and unjust claim to five-eighths of the country –

Cde. Dr. Jagan: Mr. Speaker, we are leaving in protest.

[Cde. Dr. Jagan and other members of the P.P.P. withdrew from the Chamber.]

Cde. Bhaggan: - and finally to do so as being recently appointed Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. My indebtedness of thanks to the vision and reward of the all-embracing People's National Congress.

Today our country is plagued with threats and open aggression by our continuous neighbour of great military might. Our country is perched into a holocaust and the greedy aggressor stands bellicose for land grabbing and expansionism. Whatever our physical limitations are and might be we have learned to take inspiration and discipline from the words of our dear leader, Cde. L.F.S. Burnham – "They shall not pass."

[Applause.]

History has supported that expansionist Venezuela has no right of claim to more than five-eighths of our land mass, and posterity would sanction that our course of action not to yield nor submit to their demands is right and sustaining. Cde. Speaker, I do not want to burden this Assembly with the historical, moral and legal implications of our territorial integrity. The fact is that throughout the course of and after our country became independent, we have been discussing, we have been negotiating, we have been doing our best to see how far we can reach in a practical manner so that we can live in pure friendliness and understanding. I wish to state very briefly that the claims that are made by our neighbour against our

small country has a clear history. We can all remember that previous to 1897, and even in earlier times, there were conflicts and disputes between Venezuela and the United Kingdom in respect of boundary demarcation between Venezuela and the then British Guiana. We know that the conflicts resulted into a number of things, mainly that there existed a controversy caused as a result of a Venezuela protest between herself and England. It is the beginning of this controversy between Great Britain and Venezuela that has caused our country to be swiftly dragged into this untidy atmosphere. So, because of the strength and power of Venezuela, because of here insistence, she has been able to persuade the President of the United States, the then President Cleveland, to submit to an arbitration.

In the years 1897, on the 2nd February, the Treaty of Washington was signed and was duly ratified by the two countries, and so we had the Arbitral Tribunal on which Venezuela and Great Britain were equally represented. The signatories of the Treaty as history tells us were Julian Pauncefote, of United Kingdom and Under Secretary of State, and Jose Andre, Venezuela Ambassador to Washington, on behalf of Venezuela.

We firmly believe, as well as historians in particular, in Article XIII of the Treaty on which our case is forcefully based. I wish to quote Cde. Speaker, from that Article. “The High Contracting Parties engaged to consider the result of the proceedings of the Tribunal of Arbitration as a full, perfect and final settlement of all the questions referred to the Arbitrators.” The Tribunal met subsequently in Paris and handed down the award on October 3, 1899 describing in full and in details, the boundaries between the two countries. In accordance with the Treaty, both sides appointed Commissioners to survey the area of the boundary between to two countries, and by 1905, the Commissioners marked the boundary and embodied it in a map which was duly signed by both Venezuela and Great Britain. Signing on behalf of Great Britain was H. I. Perkins and C. Wilgress Anderson, and on behalf of Venezuela, Dr, Abraham Tirado and Elias Toro. For at least half a century after the Agreement had been signed, Venezuela honoured it in word and deed and maps published in 1911 and 1917 respectively, reflected the boundary as demarcated in 1905. As we go down, Cde. Speaker, as our country was moving towards Independence in 1962, Venezuela announced to the world under unilateral measures that the award given in 1899 was “null and void”. In other words, in a very subtle way they sought to re-open the whole issue without supportive evidence, but relying on reports of an alleged conversation recollected 50 years ago by very junior lawyer who had presented Venezuela’s case. The notes were released posthumously after the death of the author of the happenings, and also of all the participants connected with the event at the end of the 19th century, when they were all actually dead.

Venezuela very concretely took her iridescent claim to the United Nations when the then British Guiana had independence talks, and mounted a massive campaign against her. In 1966, negotiations continued and it resulted in there being a Mixed Commission comprising of representatives from each country, with the task of seeking a satisfactory solution for the practical settlement of the controversy between Venezuela and the United Kingdom which had arisen as a result of the Venezuelan contention that the Arbitral Award of 1899 was “null and void.”

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(Cde. Bhaggan continues)

In the second place, Cde. Speaker, the Geneva Agreement in Article 5 (2) states: “no new claim, or enlargement of an existing claim to territorial sovereignty in these territories shall be asserted while the Agreement is in force, nor shall any claim whatsoever be asserted otherwise than in the Mixed Commission while that Commissions is in being”. One of the principle objectives of this Article provides for a limited forum thus avoiding the escalation and a worsening world scene and also that no act taking place while the Agreement was in force should constitute a basis for asserting sovereignty over any territory. But while the Mixed Commission was doing its work and during its first two years Venezuela clandestinely engaged in acts of aggression against our homeland. For example she occupied the Guyana side or the Guyana half of the island of Ankoko, in the Cuyuni River. She organised within the territory of Guyana secretive meetings with Amerindian chiefs and I can safely say that as a result of some secretive meetings we had in 1969 a situation called “The Rupununi Uprising”. We must understand also that these Amerindian chiefs are still the indigenous citizens of Guyana and they sought their backing. We also witnessed that she endeavoured to give sanction against representatives who wanted to support our homeland and throughout the period thereafter followed a series of acts of aggression and of hostility against us. We have been victims of pressure, victims of international subversion and international blackmail in all international fora. Our most ambitious undertaking is the establishment of a U.S. billion dollar hydro power plant, is to be located in the area of Upper Mazaruni district close to the Venezuela border has been subjected to pressure and blackmail. But thanks to the Hoyte initiative who argued convincingly of the economic values and not for political considerations before the Directors of the World Bank. In addition we have witnessed Venezuela blocking loans and other forms of assistance giving instructions to her functionaries and agents by their warning and displeasure with Brazil in sponsoring and participating in joint projects with us for voting against developing countries, most recently in the non-interference in internal matters of state at the recently concluded 36th session of the General Assembly of the United Nations and taking sanction against countries wanting to support and develop our hinterland. Cde. Speaker, it is our objective and intention to bring the territorial controversy to a peaceful settlement. We have not and will not abandon the effort for a logical and practical solution. We are desirous of strengthening our relations of goodwill and friendship with Venezuela by virtue of our neighbourliness. For this reason in 1970 the Protocol of Port-of-Spain was signed based on an moratorium of twelve years. This was a fine demonstration of our spirit of goodwill, desire and understanding and thereby making the provisions not to add to the gravity of claim on either side. We witnessed the twelve years of moratorium proved well. We also recognised that provisions in the Protocol allows for the automatic renewal of the moratorium and either Guyana or Venezuela can call for an end to it, and in this case an end to it has been made by Venezuela. The Protocol comes to an end on 18th June, 1982 and the parties concerned shall return to the Geneva Agreement towards working out a solution and further should stick to Article 33 of the Charter of the United Nations. But, Cde. Speaker, beset with greed, ridicule, rascality and vice, Venezuela has persistently and callously advanced a deliberate campaign against Guyana at every opportunity, function and institution. She advise the Nairobi Conference on new and renewable sources of energy that she would not recognise any co-operation given to Guyana for development in the dispute area, to the European Community to withhold participation in the region and in addition to those I previously mentioned. Guyana’s position is in accordance with the

signed treaties and Agreements. We have scrupulously stuck to our discussions but Venezuela's attitude and behaviour are inconsistent and dishonourable and this allows for dismay and for little optimism on the question of the frontier.

Venezuela has acquired a stockpile of sophisticated weapon of destruction including F16 fighter planes which undoubtedly mean a military solution to the controversy. Cde. Speaker, everyone knows that Venezuela has no claim to our country's soil. We pledge in accordance with our Constitution to defend our national sovereignty, to respect human dignity and to cherish and uphold the principles of freedom, equality and democracy and all other fundamental human rights. Moreover, our Constitution in Part 1, Chapter 1 states, "The territory of the State comprises the areas that immediately before the commencement of this Constitution were comprised in the area of Guyana together with such other areas as may be declared by Act of Parliament to form part of territory of the State". It stands to reason that Venezuela has no respect for the dignity of a young state that is charting her own destiny, that Venezuela is guilty of international felony and is angrily ferocious. Cost it what it will even to the last patriot we shall defend our homeland. The three documents, Cde. Speaker, the Treaty of Washington 1897, the Award of the Arbitration Tribunal 1899, and the Agreement with regard to the Boundary Map signed on January 10, 1905, constitute the legality of our country's case.

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(Cde. Bhaggan continues)

This is the Year of Defence and impregnated with it is the issue of our territorial integrity, our economy and our revolution. At no time can Venezuela prevent or preclude us from owning, controlling, improving and developing all of our territory, including the disputed area. For as our dear Prime Minister so often said, “this land is my land, this land is your land, this land is our land.” I say with him today, this land is ours, Essequibo is ours. Not a square centimeter, not a blade of grass for vicious Venezuela.

The unjust claim undoubted is really a serious one and it is our obligation to see that it is completely erased. In the midst of the prevailing territorial dilemma we urge mobilisation on all fronts on this issue. We have solidly embarked on the road to socialism, to a fuller and better life from which there is no detour. In keeping with the concept of the tenets and principles of socialism we have been able to move towards an egalitarian society, nationalisation of major industries, ownership and control of dominant economic sectors of our country. We have been able to motivate our inhabitants into active self-help activities and the true spirit of self-reliance. The socialist revolution is in the making and by education and persuasion we have been morally and socially uplifted and the status of Republicanism has rendered us new orientation. Guyana’s location is strategic for many activities and this in itself is an international threat to those countries of the other camp. In this regard our country is a direct target of attack and sabotage and consequently efforts of economic, industrial and cultural self-reliance are undermined by deliberate attempts by our well known antagonists.

My presentation unapologetically states that the resuscitation of the Venezuela claim is nothing more than to reverse our revolution. This is simply because their claim has no validity, no content, is empty and is only saturated with malice, lust, greed, hospitality and international venom. In these networks of violent activities and the Protocol of Port-of-Spain coming to an end, as patriots we must prepare for eventualities. In this year of Defence preparedness is more than a request, it is an imperative demand. We must be geared to defend our rights by the serious mobilisation of our financial natural, human and institutional resources.

The claim for production and productive activities is most desirable. Savings, full and intelligent utilisation of our resources must be explored to the maximum in the defence of our homeland. Our compatriots, though industrious they are, must be prepared to be engaged in occupational activities to help themselves in understanding our socialist ideology and thrust and these are the pillars to foster and raise the consciousness of our inhabitants and for the preparation of their minds must be undertaken by certain institutions and agencies. No doubt, workers and adult education programmes would be adequately strengthened and institutions such as the Kuru Kuru Co-operative College, Guyana National Service, Cuffy Ideological Institute are best suited. Production for defence is an economic foundation –

The Speaker: Four minutes more.

Cde. Bhaggan: -- in moments of national stress and must not be cast aside. There needs to be areas of expansion and scope towards this end particularly in training and re-orientation of the masses. Every endeavour ought to be economically viable and by the resolve of the people and by their understanding our efforts certainly will be attainable. In “Charting Our Destiny” presented on January 22, 1982, the Cde. Executive President stated on page 6, paragraph 4:

“This is not the time for any Guyanese to ask whether the Venezuela threat is real. This is the time, it is submitted, when this House, this Country, this Nation must prepare energetically but soberly, to respond decisively to this threat whether it takes the form of military and/or economic aggression.”

Cde. Speaker, we are existing in a thunderbolt of activities which are directed against our territory. In this circumstance the motto so often propounded by our Prime Minister, “each on teach one” would bring us into social interaction thereby strengthening our cause of national unity from which we can draw on a common reserve for territorial defence of our dear country.

In this year of defence, our people must be ideologically prepared to sustain the revolution. Saboteurs and clandestine activists are assiduously in employ to destroy the gains of the revolution. In this endeavour we must co-ordinate and monitor in an effective manner the diverse activities. Education and training institutions are to implement programmes which are necessary in the national interest and to render support for the political and economic policies which the nation and Government faces in the light of present day activities and difficulties. Moreover, the resolve of our people would be strengthened to defend our revolutionary gains and territory and to continue on the path so chosen.

Programmes and policies would be outlined and geared for all disciplines particularly for national development and demands. Greater emphasis on ideological education will be laid in order to motivate everyone for effective positive attitudinal changes in order to enhance production and productivity and also to develop a commitment to national efforts.

Cde. Speaker, the issue at stake is grave and demands full scale attention and preparedness. Our people will be better equipped and in a more direct way accede to the tasks ahead. Our people will be more receptive after attending conducted courses and seminars in the struggle towards socialist transformation and development. Knowledge and acquiring of new skills will generate new work performance. The socialist ideology will unfold itself

The Speaker; You only have half minute more

Cde. Bhaggan: Guyana is an independent socialist developing country and as such she is free to chart her course of direction. Moreover, no country has a right of her own to prevent us from pursuing our goal because of what we are and what we will be. Our people have come to be stronger in their resolve. They have added to the strengthening of faith in their homeland, of strengthening of spirit of obligation and sacrifice and of being ideologically conscious more than ever. In this year of defence we would have to mobilise to the fullest – ideologically, economically, industrially and culturally.

[Even though we shall still pursue a course of peaceful solution with Venezuela we shall prepare for the worst since she has dishonoured her agreements. Venezuelan threats to invade our territory are critical, dangerous and real. She violated our air space, she is not prepared to extend the Protocol of Port-of-Spain and for this reason, said the Minister R.E. Jackson, Minister of Foreign Affairs, “we are in a constant state of alert, we are going to resist./ Thank you, Cde. Speaker.

17:00 hrs

Cde. Beniprashad: Cde. Speaker, first of all, I would like to take the opportunity, although belatedly to extend to you Cde. Speaker, Members and Officers of this National Assembly, greetings and best wishes, also fruitful deliberations which would ultimately lead to the improvement in the general situation of our beloved country Guyana in 1982, but in order to achieve this it would undoubtedly require hard work and good management.

We are very fortunate in Guyana since we possess the necessities for becoming self sufficient in many areas of basic need. This gives us a hope of surviving the awful World Economic Crisis. But we have to get about exploiting these resources very wisely and intelligently.

Every living creature has to eat food to survive, and it is evident that the world is suffering from a food shortage. We heard about millions of people dying from starvation in other countries, so there is and would always be a great demand in the world for food and other materials which could be produced in Guyana.

Our country is an agricultural one and therefore we have a good opportunity in surviving the economic crisis through increase of production in food and other items not only to become self-sufficient but to supply other countries and earn much foreign exchange.

Our Government has a wonderful programme for the recovery of our economic crisis and the development of the country as a whole. For example, with the implementation of ‘Land to the tiller’, more Guyanese would be involved in farming, more forestry products would be exploited and our country would be able to earn more through the exportation of these commodities in which more employment would be there for Guyanese.

Women in Guyana have been able to gain self-employment by using natural resources in their communities. The women of today have been able to make use of our fruits which before the people were throwing away. Today, the women have been able to make use of the fish to make salt fish, mackerel and they have been able to make appetising meals. There is a garment factory is which we are creating employment for the women of today.

Using coconut in several ways to make ornaments such as ear-rings, ash trays, hand-bands and broaches, also a wide variety of delicious meals and other delicacies.

Bamboo which were ignored in the past is now used for making ash trays, furniture and wonderful decorations.

All these things I have mentioned has been possible through the education, total involvement, dedication, a will to survive the economic crisis and the inspired leadership of the People's National Congress.

In the effort to become self-sufficient, a Leather factory is being constructed in New Amsterdam, also a boot and shoe factory which would provide footwear for Guyanese based on local materials and which would be cheaper than when they were being imported.

Cde. Speaker, our cotton production would be expanded, not only to increase production in textiles but also for the production of edible oil for export. In order to improve agriculture, our Tractor Assembly Plant which has produced eighty two last year will produce several hundred units this year and our farmers would be in a better position to cultivate the land and with the availability of more machines much more land would be put under cultivation.

The production of food and forestry materials would be accelerated this year which would generate added foreign exchange for our country.

Bauxite which is one of our major exports would hopefully be produced in larger quantities since Guyana is prepared to increase its production. Our Government is making every effort to reduce significantly on the consumption of hydro carbon fuel which use up a great deal of our foreign exchange.

Certain local materials such as Bagasse would be used to generate energy, which would be much more economical. In fact, the search is on to identify local articles to substitute certain imported ones and this would also save us a great deal of foreign exchange. Bagasse would also be used in our sugar industry to generate energy for the factories and here is where we would be able to produce sugar at a cheaper cost.

Some of us have seen, while others have heard of the exploration for oil and the plan for harnessing our Hydro Power potential.

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(Cde. Beniprashad continues)

This would also improve our economic situation to a great extent, since it would tend to boost industries in our country while Guyanese would be supplied with cheaper electricity. The hinterland would be more beneficially occupied.

Our Government is paying serious attention to our economic situation and is making every effort to have it improved but added to the problems of our country are the unfavourable prices which we receive for our exports like bauxite and sugar and it is significant that this year has been designated Year of Defence. Apart from defending our territorial integrity, we would also have to defend our economy for the harmful effects of the crisis and here is where every one is involved. We would have to produce more in every sector; we would have to be more efficient; we would have to stop malingering on the job; we would have to be more regular and punctual on the job and all of this leads to increase of production which is vital for our survival.

The newly established regions will also assist in the resuscitation of our economy since they all have valuable resources which would be properly and urgent exploited.

We cannot deny the fact that physical production was not up to standard in most areas. Apart from unfavourable weather conditions in our rice and sugar industry, which was, indeed, a contributing factor, it cannot be denied that bad management, indiscipline and bad performance, at all levels were responsible to a great extent. In 1982 we have the chance to correct ourselves and improve the situation. We must thrive towards this end in order to escape some of the problems we encountered in previous years. Our Government does not put itself out of blame and has accepted its share.

The trade unions are also involved and should play a greater role at work places where some irregularities take place, to ensure greater understanding of the workers. The trade unions would have avoided several strikes through which valuable man hours and revenue went down the drain. The trade unions could have educated the workers in order to achieve higher production and ultimately the targets.

Some of the managers are no exception, since we can contribute some of our failures to bad management within certain work forces, bad management of certain machineries and even bad management of certain corporations.

The whole world has problems and the whole world is affected by this crisis. There were times when the international economic crisis was in a more serious situation, when the unemployment rate was very high and many other problems were existing. We in Guyana did not have any say in the situation although it affected us severely, but thanks to our first Executive President of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana, through whom we have gained nationhood we can now rule our own destiny. Therefore, all that is needed today is for us to correct the few mistakes we made in the past are rally to our Leader for success in the future.

Despite all these difficulties, our Government has paid out \$57 million to employees at all levels and, as a result, there should be an increase in production at all levels in 1982. Added to our troubles, Cde. Speaker, in the Venezuelan threat to our territorial integrity and the economic pressures to which we are consequently subjected.

We do not have to wonder if the Venezuela threat is real since we are aware of the fact that Venezuela has armed itself with every modern weapon and voted against the Resolution in favour of non-interference in the domestic affairs of other countries.

Venezuela is also trying to interrupt progress with our hydro project which would boost the economy of our country and promote rapid development of our economic situation. This is the time, therefore, for every Guyanese to prepare energetically but soberly to respond decisively to this threat in whatever way necessary. We must produce more and be prepared to defend our country to the end this Year of Defence to see progress in Guyana.

Long live the Co-operative Republic of Guyana

Long live the Executive President of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana

Long live the People's National Congress in Government. *[Applause]*

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Mr. Abraham: Mr. Speaker, at the onset of my contribution to this debate this afternoon, let me begin by stating unequivocally the position of the United Force with regard to Venezuela's intention of dismembering our country. We believe passionately that every square centimetre of this beautiful land called Guyana belongs to us, Guyanese, [Applause] belongs to you Mr. Speaker, and to me. In so far as this belief goes, we are prepared to defend this our homeland and consider it a matter of gravest urgency that President Burnham summon immediately the leaders of the opposition parties and representative groups to discuss strategy and methods of defence, so as to ensure maximum involvement of Guyanese in defence of their motherland if or when this becomes imperative.

Sir, the President concedes that 1982 seems to hold no better promise than a bad 1981. He went to great pains to enumerate the factors that he felt are responsible for the bleak economic condition that engulfs this country. One agrees with him, sir, to a certain extent, but one is convinced that the President is only hitting at the periphery of the problem. We agree that, and I quote the President:

“when depression and recession, unemployment and unachieved targets have deeply affected countries east and west, north and south, rich and poor”

and that

“Even the rich countries complain of the inhibitions imposed by fluctuating rates of exchange”

and that

“failure to reach targets can be ascribed to circumstance entirely beyond our control, like bad and or unseasonal weather, etc.”

Sir, we agree that a combination of these adverse factors has had a telling effect upon our economy. But then, Mr. Speaker, Guyanese do not lack for capacity and ability to harness those human factors which if properly channelled by the Government, can make for an early but eventual recovery of our economy.

I think, sir, that the President is on to a solution, when as head of State, he admits that his Government accepts its share of the blame for lagging efficiency and production. This admission, however, reveals only the tip of the ice-berg. Mr. Speaker, we will attempt to reveal that ice-berg. We shall begin with the President's submission that – and I quote:

“it cannot be denied that a substantial contributor to failure was weak and unimaginative management, indiscipline and lackadaisical performances at all levels.”

This, I submit sir, is the reason for our distressing economic situation. This is the malaise that runs deep in the fabric of our country. People are just not performing, much less producing. If the Government is honest with itself, they will see that they are the culprit mainly responsible for this state of affairs.

Sir, let us briefly examine the factors that contribute to weak and unimaginative management:

- (1) Those in managerial positions could very well be square pegs in round holes.
- (2) Some of those in managerial positions are there because they are because they are political appointees, party boys – sometimes their only qualification being that they are party members – as such they believe they are above reprimand, sometimes even act above the law. They become arrogant in attitude much to the annoyance of workers, than almost overnight they join the new elite club.
- (3) Because of undue interference, by the party – and by this I mean the People’s National Congress party – and of the depressing political atmosphere at their jobs, many excellent managers and men of caliber have fled the country and more are simply fed up and are leaving. This brief outline constitutes what I consider are factors that are responsible for weak and unimaginative management that the President speaks about.

We come now to consider what might be the causes for indiscipline and lackadaisical performances in the country. Is it downright laziness on the part of workers? No, sir, I am of the firmest conviction that in order for a people to put out their utmost in terms of performance and production, certain basic requirements must be met. Foremost among these sir, is the element of democracy. Democracy must be seen to be in operation at all levels – from the election of the Government of the country, to who would have a say in the nomination of members of their board or committee. This lack of democracy at all levels, Mr. Speaker, I opine, is the root cause of all the bitter feeling that breeds indiscipline and poor performance generally. The masses, who are the workers, only become more cynical when under their very eyes, they see the process of democracy being whittled away as for example, what passed as a Referendum in Guyana two years ago. So priority one: restore democracy at the highest level by giving the people free and fair elections. Venezuela – then may not be so bellicose towards us if she sees a Government freely and fairly elected in this country enjoy the popular support of Guyanese.

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(Cde. M.A. Abraham)

Hand-in-hand with the requirement of democracy is the element of consultation. Do workers feel they are important enough to be consulted on major policy decisions that will affect their lives? Are they fully involved in the decision making process. Are representatives on Boards and Committees truly their spokesmen or are they imposed on workers? Next requirement is the Trade Union Congress truly carrying out its role as bargaining agent for and on behalf of workers. Is it protecting workers' rights and their cause? Perhaps, Sir the TUC can emulate the now out-lawed solidarity union of Poland and learn lessons of militancy and workers representation. Last but not least, is the average worker satisfied with his pay? Does his pay packet rise in proportion to the rising cost of living? If his earning power shrinks would you blame him for becoming demoralised and frustrated and not performing as he ought to? Sir, it is only when you guarantee a man a decent wage, when a worker can put a decent meal on his table and when we can see him reasonable housed and clothed then we can summon him to greater efforts in production. Sir, what do you think is the overall effect on production in this country when there hangs over the country the spectre of large scale retrenchment? Some have estimated the figure at 17,000. Already 658 Guyana Rice Board workers have been retrenched. Is this any motivation for greater production? Rather the gap between Government and governed will widen. As a result of this the masses will be further alienated from their Government. Sir, can we be productive in conditions of fear, uncertainty and insecurity? Citizens fear for their lives in today's Guyana as the crime rate spirals. You and I are aware of the spate of burglaries along the coast in recent times. Often these burglaries end in death of the homeowners. Survivors of gun-shot wounds in the hospital say many of the bandits appeared in G.D.F. outfits. Choke-and-rob thrives in the city unabated. No less a celebrity than the Mighty Chief himself. We all know who the Mighty Chief is. He is the popular P.N.C. sponsored Calypsonian. He was mugged one day in High Street in broad daylight and of course relieved of his Barbadian dollars. It came over on the news. I myself, Sir have been a victim. I was lucky to escape with my life. Popular Amerindian Welfare Officer, Miss Stella Odi Allie, I am reliably informed, had her house burglarise. Poor lady, when she reached home that afternoon, found her home cleared. One time minister, Phillip Duncan, was relieved only last month of his money while on his way home. From the vantage point of the Amerindian residence, the Regional Chairman of Region 9, inmates of the hostel and I saw an Amerindian being mugged on afternoon in clear day light at about 4:00 p.m. in Princess Street and the two 'choke' boys dashed into an alleyway and made good their escape. What is Government doing about the choke and rob situation. Sir, the cases of injustice and miscarriage of justice are many and varied. To cite one case, young Ramkisson Saymer died last week while in police custody at Brickdam look-up. It is said that Saymer's body showed clear evidence of violence and torture. Isn't this barbarism in the Police Force? One youth, Desmond Jaimee, an Amerindian of Moruca got off lighter though he suffered a cruel beating at the hands of the police in the area. Sir, I call for an immediate investigation into these two matters. Generally speaking, justice must be meted out to all without fear or favour, impartially after due investigation and never should it appear that justice is only on the side of the powerful or that some persons in Society are more equal than others.

Coming to the food situation, especially as it applies in the interior, more specifically in Rupununi and Northwest. This morning it was announced over the radio that flour is now 67 cents per pound elsewhere. Sir, you could imagine what blackmarket prices would be like in the far-flung areas

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where flour is a scarce commodity and where flour has to reach these places by plane, land-rovers, jeep, tractor and even bullock carts. Those who attempt to produce and I am speaking about the Rupununi again, have had frustration in plenty in getting pay for their produce. Except for a few isolated cases the majority of farmers have had difficulties in getting their produce to Lethem, due to the lack of transportation. If and when crops do reach Lethem farmers have to wait weeks, even months before receiving their pay. The harassed G.M.C. Official says “the money ain’t pass yet” or simply “no money” Farmers have had to sell to private buyers at a lower cost, because, sir, like everybody else they must survive. Cattle farmers after waiting for their animals to be slaughtered for over two months at the abattoir at Lethem have had to fetch their animals back 70 odd miles from the village whence they came. Is this type of situation conducive to productivity Sir? I say no. Rather it does nothing but generate frustration among people, among workers.

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(Mr. Abraham continues)

Agreed, sir, the times are hard. We are exhorted to greater sacrifice and effort. Do we see such sacrifices and example in thrift reflected on the part of our rulers? Such sacrifices are most difficult to see. It is a basic tenet that in order for a people to respond to the call for sacrifice, the people must see their Government officials setting the example. Rather, we continue to see more pomp and splendour and high living, if anything at all.

As I listened to the news last night, President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania made a stunning statement. He said that many of his top officials are corrupt and are accepting bribes. That, I believe, is getting at the root of his country's economic problems. Sir, maybe President Burnham can, in all candour, apply Nyerere's words to the Guyana situation as being the cause of our economic dilemma. He can then move swiftly and decisively to set things right.

The Speaker. Cde. Harewood-Benn.

The Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister (Cde. Y. Harewood-Benn): Cde. Speaker, let me first of all join Vice President Green in expressing our appreciation and gratitude for the mature guidance presented by our President last Friday. This year, 1982, has been designated Year of Defence. We all know and appreciate that it will be a year of crisis when, in order to survive, we all will need to acquire, develop and maintain a passion for achievement that surpasses all our previous efforts. There are financial problems, there are economic crisis and there is our greedy neighbour who covets our Essequibo. But this year, I submit, can be "opportunity year" when we all find ourselves, when we all finally and successfully pass our identity crisis, when we appreciate with great pride as well as humility that we belong to the Guyanese nation and that this country is ours to build, to enjoy for ourselves and our children and their children to come.

On February 22, 1976, our Leader said, and I quote:

"We all shall have to work and perform beyond what we previously believed was the call of duty. Such are the dictates of the revolution upon which we have embarked."

This call, Cde. Speaker, is even more insistent now as we face the very bleak prospects of this world situation.

In this call to duty our Public Sector has a most significant role to play. All developing countries facing the challenge of accelerating economic and social development must depend on the capability, motivation and performance of their public sector. The Government workforce has to be an indispensable element in national development. In addition to this, we in Guyana are totally committed to the development strategy which places man as the centre of development. Economic development is to us inconceivable except in conjunction with total human development. It is dependent on the active participation of the whole people and this presupposes both the smooth running of the institutions and agencies of society and the wholehearted support of all individuals and all groups. Because the Public Service generally co-ordinates and implements the programmes on which institutions and agencies within a society base their foundation, it must necessarily mean that it is upon the Public Service that a lot of the responsibility for the success of our new approach to development must ultimately devolve.

You will be aware that the machinery of public administration, before independence, emphasised a static rather than a dynamic approach to social and economic development. Public administration had, in terms of our colonial status, a passive role. Out of this there developed, I know, many industrious, many very efficient public servants who, without a doubt, were examples of industry, examples of devotion to duty, as well as examples of high standards of discipline. However, because of the limitation of scope and the very strict colonial parameters within which they gave service, I am convinced that many failed to get the opportunity to maximise their real human potential. Happily now, there are no such limitations, no such barriers. In fact, the needs of our society and our Government's role in filling those needs, dictates the kind of public administration that is a positive and catalytic force – the old method – where administration, based only on a set of Public Service rules which often lacked flexibility, is not incapable of dealing with the real issues of Independence and Republic status. In short, we need a revolution in administration. In our development effort, we must come to terms with cybernetics. We must increase the use of the computer to improve our management information systems and our economic planning. Our public administration system has to develop the capabilities for collecting and processing information, for analysing and developing policies, for formulating programmes, implementing those programmes and projects. In this context, the need for a variety of competence in systems, personnel and procedures is certainly without question. We must also examine more closely the importance of performance and productivity criteria as primary considerations in development administration. Our country's commitment to the establishment of a socialist society must also influence our revamping efforts.

Cde. Speaker, it must be apparent that now more than ever we need to be bold, imaginative and enterprising in our public administration thrust. Our need to maximise the use of relatively scant resources, to manage effectively, cannot be over-estimated.

How are we going about this challenging and worthwhile task in our public service? Let me first of all indicate our mission. The Public Service Ministry has over-all responsibility for structural organisation, maintenance and development of systems and general management of the Public Service with a view to ensuring the highest possible level of human resource development within the Service for the support and implementation of Government's programmes and policies.

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(Cde. Harewood-Benn continues):

Prior to translating this into action programmes, a team of officers accompanies me on visits to all ministries to meet and talk with workers. There has also been regular dialogue with the Public Service Union on wide ranging matters. The above all helped to inform a relevant and meaningful programme of activities in 1981 and 1982.

Cde. Speaker, rules and regulations from the underpinnings of our system and we need to take a closer look at our Public Service rules. We have been examining the rationale for these rules in terms of present day needs and demands. Public Service rules you will know Cde. Speaker, were inherited from the colonial system and were revised in 1972 and again in 1976. What resulted was system improvement, what we need now is system development. We are now undertaking a revision with a view to getting rid, for all times, of those remnants of colonialism which have been counterproductive. Remnant, eg., are involve in our disciplinary procedures. When a worker can remain at home for four years after being interdicted from duty, still, Cde. Speaker, receiving a salary for all that period. Remnants like having a person acting for eight years. Remnants when seniority as opposed to meritocracy is counted. Remnants involved in a system whereby one spends twenty five dollars in order to process a Cheque valued \$1.55. these are remnants of colonialism and are clearly counter-productive. In fact, there is to be a retreat at Kuru Kuru, following months of hard work, to formulate a first draft for discussion by all concerned agencies; we have a target date for April 1982.

To effect the most desirable changes in the Public Service, the Public Service Ministry has been pursuing the following:-

- (i) ascertaining the views of workers on the state of the Public Service as it affects their own operation;
- (ii) obtaining views on the career opportunities and the attractiveness of the Public Service;
- (iii) enquiring into the extent of the effectiveness of the Public Service to satisfy the demands of our new constitutional, political, social and economic imperatives;
- (iv) assessing the levels of management potential in the Public Service with particular emphasis on the need to install on a firm and continuous basis, an effective succession management plan for the Public Service;
- (v) assessing the training needs at all levels;
- (vi) re-examining the role of the Ministry as an initiating agency, putting more emphasis on its responsibility for setting standards in training and development, general performance, management and work environment; which has also been engaging our attention and we have been working closely with the Trade Unions in the Public Service;

I believe that a labourer is worthy of his hire and that regardless of our commitment, the hope of reward can help to lighten as well as sweeten labour – I believe in fair remuneration within our financial limitations. However, the economic incentive should not be the only motivation – work, real work, the desire, the duty, the need to do a day's work for day's pay should also be very relevant.

You may say, Cde. Speaker, that all of us work – but when we examine work, according to Newton's law, we may get something of a shock – Newton ways work involves not only force but distance moved. In our developing country where identifying and achieving targets is a priority, I submit it is Newton's definition that must inform our work situation. We must work for positive results, only then Cde. Speaker have we worked. Since nationalisation and independence we have been making sustained efforts to come to terms with the fact that we are no longer clerks, however glorified, but managers in the real sense of the word, to recognise that we are inextricably linked as a support to what essentially a business enterprise. We in the Public Service know that we have to set the example for the rest of the service. Careful and regular monitoring of our spending and performance, we are trying to find even more ways to conserve, we are encouraging the use of imagination and creativity in our work places, to help teams to cope with the worsening economic crisis in 1982. Regular and close monitoring of the security systems we have recently put in place in our various Ministries and Departments. Close monitoring of our 1982 work programme – our operations. Greater attention to the development of the staff with whom we work. This is the only way in which we can really impact on the rest of the service. We have, in terms of setting the example, to pay greater attention to development education programme that help all our workers to understand the environment in which they live and work – local, regional and world-wide. Renewed efforts to put in place a great number of incentive schemes must also be placed as a priority and making our managers much more aware of the necessity for accountability.

Our own standards of performance must be very high. We must not compromise when there is the question of high standards. There is a need for thoroughness, attention to detail, careful planning, care for our workers, neat presentation of work, a sense of propriety when it comes to dress, giving a fair day's work for a fair day's pay. We have to be sensitive to the needs of the Public who visit us in our offices, fields or factories or who speak to us on the telephone.

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18:00 hrs

(Cde. Harewood-Benn continues):

We have to pay more attention to our environment. There should be much more concern for order. We, responsible as we are for the management of the Public Service, must ensure that supervisors supervise and managers manage. Rules have been looked at. Education and training come next. Our Cde. Leader in his speech on Friday has committed the Government to the task of providing facilities for training and re-training. We are sensitive to that task, to the demand of that task, because we appreciate that with all the enthusiasm in the world, all the loyalty in the world, all the commitment in the world, know-how is also absolutely necessary.

Our Service now offers greater opportunities, career opportunities, for its workers because of Government's commitment to the development of people and the need to recruit technical and professional personnel to manage our public affairs. Public officers now have the opportunity to be trained in a number of disciplines being run by local educational institutions. A public officer, according to his own preferences, may choose to obtain a degree, a diploma or a certificate with a view to developing his potential and enabling him to grapple with his duties and responsibilities more effectively. Our Service is constantly being streamlined to satisfy the daily demands in our Governmental system.

On-the-job training – Basic Skills: we are seeking to remedy the critical situation arising from a shortage of accounting skills at all levels. The Ministry has been attacking the problem at the technician level by provision of a local three-tiered system of accounting training:

A proposed higher Diploma in Accountancy,

Diploma in Accountancy

Certificate in Accountancy,

Principles of Accounts,

all of these in an effort to ensure that Guyanese benefit from training and can then take their proper place.

In addition to the above, On-the-Job Training is provided for Secretaries, Office Assistants, High Speed Writers, English and Report Writing for public servants, Records Managers, Supervisors. Ours too is the responsibility to make the regional system operational by providing the skills needed. The involvement of man in development supports the implementation of a regional system which will result in the more intimate involvement of each individual. Our thrust in the Regions is not in the area of Basic Management and Project Management skills. There is an urgent need, we concede, for both of these. We have begun in six regions but much more needs to be done. Incidentally, our training programme for Confidential Secretaries in the regions is scheduled to begin in February.

The Government of Guyana Award Programme is intended to provide the nation with certain basic skills in areas needed for its development. Every year finds us more and more refining our systems to get the maximum from the investment by the people of Guyana. The Government of Guyana is assiduously pursuing the economic and social development of this country by the education and training of Guyanese at all levels. The development of our human resources is a high priority item. For this reason, the Government has been spending between five and fourteen million dollars yearly for in-country

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as well as external training for the provision of a cadre of skilled Guyanese. We can report that our monitoring systems and the information programmes promoted by some of our Missions overseas have produced positive results.

In addition to our own efforts, the Government of Guyana in 1982 has been the recipient of technical assistance for training from some friendly countries of both East and West and I take this opportunity to express our gratitude to those countries.

We are also responsible for administering the scholarship programme which form part of the Technical Assistance Programme from Guyana to other countries, for example, Namibia. Under the latter programme twelve Namibians are in Guyana pursuing courses at the Government Technical Institute.

One of our many responsibilities is ensuring that management development and training is provided for those to whom are entrusted the nations resources, human and material.

Sometimes, in our enthusiasm to provide basic skills, we have tended to pay too little attention to the crisis in the area of management skills for those who are called upon to manage. We are remedying this. The development of management skills definitely is a priority. To further this, we are in the process of making arrangements for the establishment of an institution of Management Sciences. The nucleus is already in operation at Diamond Estate in the form of the Guyana Management Development and Training Centre. It is expected that very shortly Guyana Institute of Management Sciences will take place of G.M.D.T.C.

This Institute will provide management training and development courses, seminars in functional management for all levels in the Public Sector. It will assist in improving the quality and relevance of existing management training and development programmes. It will give advice and guidance to all agencies, enterprises and institutions in the Public Sector.

We have right here in Guyana a wealth of expertise in this very area which expertise we are not exploiting because of the absence of an organisation which is sufficiently national or sufficiently professional to attract such persons. I expect that this Institute will in 1982 give special attention to Executive Development and Training in the Public Sector, that is, corporations as well as the traditional Public Service.

Further initiatives in this area have also been made. Work has already begun to seek to resuscitate the administrative cadet scheme which we will call Management Trainee Scheme. It must be emphasised here that we need to make greater use of our local institutions.

Associated with education and training, I may make mention of our proposal to establish a National Equivalency Board. This Board will establish criteria for evaluation of qualifications. It will evaluate, for the purpose of employment, promotion or admission to higher levels of education, certificates offered by local and foreign institutions. It will seek to advise employers and educational institutions on the results of such evaluation.

A National Training Council is to be set up.

The Speaker: Five minutes more.

Cde. Harewood-Benn: The functions and advantages of this Training Council are obvious.

In ‘Charting Our Destiny’ our esteemed Leader exhorts us to manage wisely. Our Management Services Division, in collaboration with State Planning Secretariat, has been working to ensure that Ministries are effectively structured in keeping with their functions to carry out tasks assigned.

We have a new approach to budgeting and monitoring. This ensures that public funds are spent wisely and there is the very necessary accountability at all levels. Our public sector must perform efficiently. Our social and economic welfare depends on this. Many of our public enterprises have in the past been evaluated like public institutions which is to say, not at all. Since they must be made efficient, they must be made more like private enterprises with quantified performance indicators to serve as a first approximation to performance.

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(Cde. Harewood-Benn continues):

This, Cde. Speaker, is not to say that they are to be evaluated like private enterprise, but rather that like a private enterprise they must be evaluated.

Permanent Secretaries must become more familiar with financial statements. They must understand the systems, they must examine the technology used, established and maintained. Is it appropriate or is it the “quintessence of inappropriate technology.”

Cde. Speaker, we must rid ourselves of the belief that private sector enterprises are necessarily more efficient than public sector agencies. Experience tends to prove this, but remember, that the most efficient financial organisations are central banks and most are publicly owned. They maintain efficiency because of their need to maintain the influence that they exert, and to ensure that their standards consistently compare favourably with those of their international contacts. How much more laudable, how much more demanding are our objectives, related as they must be to our development goals and aspirations; to our task of improving the quality of life of all Guyanese?

Our Leader led the way many years ago when he called us to feed ourselves, clothe ourselves, and to house ourselves. To heed that call now is of the greatest urgency, now in this year of defence, 1982. Cde. Speaker, we have as inputs the strength, the foresight and the dedication of our Samson. To these we must all add our improved management ability, our determination never to yield or submit, creating an unbeatable combination. We seek in Guyana to create a just society. We cannot seek a situation where the patina of superficial prosperity merely glides a fragile and very vulnerable economic core. We must build on a firm foundation.

We are in a brave new world, Cde. Speaker. This is the world that belongs to those lucky enough and enterprising enough to carry the makings of that world within themselves. Cde. Speaker, we must be part of this brave new world, in a Guyana replete with resources exploited profitably for use by all. This Cde. Speaker, in the words of our esteemed and beloved Leader is our task; is our honour; and I submit also our greatest privileges.

[Applause]

The Speaker: Comrades, the Sitting will now proceed until 18:45 hrs Cde. Jack

The Minister of Energy and Mines (Cde. Jack): Cde. Speaker, since 1973, I have had occasion to bring to the attention of this Assembly the serious situation which faces this country with regard to the escalating cost of energy. I recall that last year when I presented to this Assembly the Bill to create the Guyana National Energy Authority, I spent some considerable time explaining to the Assembly, and through the Assembly to the population at large the serious situation that we were in, and the need for the Energy Authority, and also the need for us to be aware of the use of energy, and the benefits that we could derive from conservation of that energy.

In his address on the 22nd of this month, the President forecast that this year there should be a significant reduction in the consumption of hydro-carbon fuels. Cde. Speaker, despite the fact that we have alerted the population to the immense burden which escalating prices for hydro-carbon places upon the Guyana economy, I have to tell this Assembly that it does not seem to have emerged so far, the corresponding awareness on the part of those whose duty it is, to use large sections of energy particularly in the major corporations in this country. The result is that in 1980, our energy Bill was something of the order of \$331 million. The preliminary figures available to us for 1981 shows a rise to \$447 million, an increase on 1980 over 1980 of some 35 per cent. This increase in 1981 has taken place against a background of falling production, so that it would appear that the energy cost related to a unit of production has continued to escalate while the price of energy itself has also continued to escalate. In 1982, with the serious situation which faces us, we can definitely not afford to continue in this trend.

The Energy Authority is less than one year old. During its short existence, it has been compiling data and analysing statistics so as to be able to have a clear picture of the energy consumption patterns in this country. It is unfortunate, however, that the various agencies which have been called upon to supply the necessary information have not been doing so. It would seem that there is not a belief that we are truly in a serious position. Furthermore, it seems as if the various agencies which have been called upon to supply information have not been able to see yet, the relevance and correlation between the energy picture that they would present to the energy authority and the general planning which must take place when we prepare our national budget.

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(Cde. H. Jack continues)

For this reason it is going to be necessary this year to launch an intensive campaign to cause an awareness, or I should say a greater awareness, in the minds of all of us in Guyana of the relationship between our consumption of energy, our production of articles for the sale and our standard of living. More than that if we are to make any serious dent on the serious foreign exchange situation we will have to reduce our importation of hydrocarbons. Unfortunately, we find ourselves the victims of the industrialised nations' latest perception of what is proper, despite the fact that those projections arise out of a mature industrialised economy and ours is a young, immature and growing economy. For instance, only today I saw a worker cutting some grass, with one of these petrol cutters with a circle cutter where he stood up, pointed it the grass, exerted no energy but utilised the energy of either diesel, gasoline or some other form of hydrocarbon, this at a time when we are in a real difficulty with regard to foreign exchange to import petroleum products. The Energy Authority has embarked upon a plan to increase our awareness of the relationship between the use of energy and our own productive capacity and this year will be closely monitoring the operations of all the corporations with regard to the use which those corporations make of energy. For instance, we would want to know how much energy it takes to make a particular unit of production and how much energy it takes to make a particular product. Only in that way will we be able to relate the amount of production with the amount of energy that is used. At present the position is that users of energy buy petroleum or use electricity and when that is exhausted they use more. There is not – and there are few people in this country who can tell you that it costs in terms of energy to produce whatever it is that they have produced. So it is going to be necessary for us to step up an awareness of this problem and to bring to the minds of all of us in this country that vital relationship between energy used, standard of living and cost. On the domestic side there will be a programme which will bring to the notice of housewives how much each individual electrical appliance takes in terms of energy. So that the housewife can herself plan her own energy budget and not wait until he or she gets the electricity bill and then complain about the high cost of energy. But they should be in a position to make a plan before hand and estimate how much they are going to spend out of their personal budget for energy use. Of course, we could not have been speaking about energy without mentioning the G.E.C. Last year has not been a particularly good year for consumers of electricity in this country. G.E.C. has been plagued with a number of problems in this country including a shortage of spare parts and the necessity to rehabilitate some of the equipment, a shortage of foreign exchange and a reluctance on the part of consumers, both private and public, to pay their bills promptly. The G.E.C. has instituted this year a commercial department and that department will be charged with the responsibility of accelerating both billing and collecting so that the revenue situation as regards G.E.C will come into some balance with the expenditure side. We expect that as a result of the equipment which we will be getting in early this year there will be a significant reduction in the outages which we suffered in 1981. However, this will only take place if users of energy pay for that use, so that we can have the money to acquire the necessary equipment.

Among the things which the Cde. President mentioned was our continuing promotion of alternate sources of energy. With regard to the Upper Mazaruni Hydro-electric project, despite the softening

aluminum market which has resulted in a number of aluminum companies cutting back on the production of aluminum and in many cases canceling arrangements which they have made in various countries for the establishment of new aluminum smelters, we will be going ahead with the prosecution of the development of the Upper Mazaruni. Already we have signed a contract with the Swedish Engineering Company, SWECO. To do a study of alternate sites and we are engaged in finalising arrangements with them now to carry on the extra work which needs to be done to bring to a conclusion the technical data which is necessary for the Upper Mazaruni. We expect that later this year we will have that information. In the meantime we have been aware of the fact that Upper Mazaruni will not come on stream as soon as we had hoped and anticipated. In the intervening period, therefore, we have been looking at a number of alternate sites, some of them in distant parts of this country where the energy produced will be for local consumption and others which could become part of an integrated national energy system. For instance the Wamukarru Hydro-electric project has been studied by Montreal Engineering Company and we expect that by the end of this month or early next month we should have the final feasibility study at hand. There have been indications that one of the friendly governments with which we have been developing relations is prepared to assist us, both at the financial and technical levels in the realisation of this project, and I would expect, therefore, that by the end of 1984 or the early part of 1985 we should have Wamukarru in the Rupununi region in operation. Apart from that we will be continuing the study on Eclipse Falls in the northern part of this country, though the studies for this project have not advanced as much as have the studies for Wamukarru. But the project of most immediate application, in the context of hydro-electric development appears to be the Tumatumari hydro-electric project. Members will recall that at Tumatumari we have an installed capacity of 1.5 megawatts of power. It is envisaged that this site will be further developed to enable us to install capacity to the level of 50 megawatts and that this project could be completed by the end of 1986.

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(Cde. Jack continues):

The feasibility study for this project should have been at hand by the 15th of this month. The most recent information I have is that it will be presented to us by the end of this month.

Unfortunately, the cost of Tumatumari, in keeping with the cost of other projects which are subject to the inflation factor in the world, has gone up from something like US\$80 million to something like US\$130 million. We have been in discussion with the World Bank, the Canadian Government and other international lending institutions and the present indications are that we should be able to put together the necessary financing to start this project by the end of this year. Apart from this, we expect to be having in hand during the middle of this year a report on alternate sites which could be developed in case we found that we were not in a position, due to the state of the aluminum market, to develop the Upper Mazaruni Hydroelectric Station in the time which we had set for that development.

Turning from hydropower to other forms of energy, my Ministry is engaged in looking at our various peat deposits and the project for peat development in conjunction with external agencies is being developed during the course of this year. The fact is, however, that whether one speaks of hydroelectricity, or peat, or wood, or coal, or what have you, one is faced with an initial capital expenditure running into millions of dollars. And so although we have a number of sites available to us for development we will have to take into account the national priorities and set out a schedule of development which can run in conjunction with those priorities. So while it is true that we will be able to develop these other sources, what we have to do in 1982 is to rely primarily on conservation.

There are some who believe that if and when we found oil all of our problems will be over. This, of course, is not the case. Guyana is in a very favourable situation as regards oil exploration at this time. Over in Surinam there has been a discovery of limited quantities of oil so far that the consensus of opinion is that Guyana has similar oil to that near to our northern coast. At this moment there are two Companies with concessions to explore and exploit oil. One is, of course, Homeoil and other is Dennison Seagull. Homeoil drilled a well late last year. Actually, the well was concluded in the early days of this year and while there was not a find of oil the indications from the structures which were found were sufficient to continue the optimism which is held by that Company to allow them to start very shortly their second well. We expect that in a matter of days the second well in the Rupununi will be started. Also offshore we expect that during the course of this year there will be further work and, possibly drilling done by Dennison Seagull.

With regard to the oil, which is heavy oil, which we believe we have along our northern coast, we have been in discussion with the World Bank and I.D.A. with a view to getting financial assistance to carry out the necessary studies. Already, we are in a position to sign a contract, something in the region of US\$2 million for the prosecution of this phase of hydro carbon investigation. The prospects, I am told, are very favourable and the oil in this area should be at very shallow depth, something in the region of one thousand feet and not more. That means that with our own drilling equipment in this country we should be able to carry out necessary the exploration work.

Turning once more, however, to the conservation which I started with, I want to bring to the attention of this Assembly that this year for the first time the National Energy Authority will be producing an energy budget. That energy budget means that every Corporation, every company that does business in this country will be expected to produce a budget showing its use of energy and relating its use of energy to its actual needs. It is the compilation of all of those budgets that would go into the national energy budget which will be presented to the Stated Planning Commission. It means, therefore that if Corporations do not set out to produce a budget they may find that some time later this year they have a difficulty in convincing the National Energy Authority of their need for a particular quantity of energy.

We restricted the sale of gasoline and petroleum products on Saturdays and Sundays during the course of 1981 and even part of 1980. From all of the indications, it seems that persons have used various tactics and strategies to get around this restriction. In many cases they have broken the law by storing gasoline in their homes – that is against the law – and I have been told of persons putting in double tanks in their Motorcars and I am told that that is against the law. I am even told of some instances where filling stations are selling petroleum products at a time they should not be, and that is against the law. It has been decided that this year there will be an intense campaign to ensure that the law is strictly adhered to and I think that this is a very good opportunity to alert the public so that they will not say that they did not know that starting in February there will be an intense campaign to ensure that the law is complied with. So that anyone who has his can filled up with gasoline at his home has an opportunity now to put him in order.

The Speaker: the Sitting of the House is suspended until 8 p.m.

Sitting suspended accordingly at 18:40 hrs

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Minister in the Ministry of Agriculture Cde. Seeram Prashad,: Cde. Speaker, internationally, the nations of the world are witnessing an economic recession, the like of which has not been since the early part of this century. Its effects have been so widespread, so deep and so prolonged that no nation, industrialised or non-industrialised, with the possible exception of the oil producing countries, has escaped its dire consequences of inflation, high interest rates and mounting unemployment. In the United States of America, unemployment has reached the figure of 7 million; while in the United Kingdom, the figure is of the order of 3 million. In other industrialized countries, the unemployment figures follow the same pattern. I have referred to these countries to remind ourselves that the current economic recession is not a malaise with which only the developing countries of the world are afflicted.

All the countries referred to have employed various devices and strategies to assist in finding solutions to the plight but the crisis has been found to be so deep and stubbornly embedded, that no single strategy or combination of strategies have proved even temporarily successful.

What then is the position of this nation in the economic crisis now prevailing? As long as seven years ago, this Government and the Leader of this Party had, in and out of season, warned the nation of the danger ahead, and had exhorted our people to strive to increase production and productivity in every sector of our economy.

Needless to say, it is not sufficient for us to look at, or find comfort or solace in what is taking place in other countries, more strongly entrenched economically than we are. It is essential, instead, that we take, by our own initiatives and efforts, positive action to halt any tendency to a downward trend in our country, to close ranks and prepare for a forward thrust on all sectors of our economic front. The way ahead, however, will not be easy. It is beset with difficulties, dangers and pitfalls almost at every turn. Our struggle for economic advance, therefore, has to be waged on two fronts. Firstly, a frontal assault to increase our production with a view to increasing exports and enhancing our foreign exchange earnings. Secondly, a defensive action to reduce imports by substituting more local products with a curtailment in the use of foreign exchange reserves.

The overwhelming problems of developing countries in the economic field have been aggravated by the periodic rise and fall in the prices of primary commodities. This has led the developing countries to demand new arrangements with a view to obtaining stabilised prices at fair and reasonable levels. A common fund to stabilise prices through the creation of buffer stocks was even proposed; no agreement has yet been reached since the developed importing countries have not yet agreed to approve these proposals. Low unremunerative prices, however, are only one of the problems faced by developing countries. Their other problems continue to engage attention and are the subject of negotiation at what is known as “The North-South Dialogue”. Unfortunately, progress in all these areas have been discouragingly slow. What is even more perplexing is that the existing international economic situation would not justify any reliance on aid or financial assistance for development from doner countries of the developed world the financing of development works must, therefore, rest chiefly on the developing countries concerned. It is against this background that reference was made by the Cde. Leader and President in his address to this Assembly to certain economic objectives to which we must aim our

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forward thrust.

With clear foresight, this Government had long ago identified the means to be employed and the main instruments to be used to promote the economic progress of the country. The instruments to which I refer are the Regional Democratic Councils and the State Planning Commission. Cde. Speaker, I said “main instruments” advisedly, because as I proceed, I shall refer to other ancillary and subsidiary instruments, which also perform very important roles in our economic sector

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Cde. Seeram Prashad: The State Planning Committee has the responsibility for central planning of the economy within the framework of the Socialist philosophy and objectives of the Government, and in real terms advises the Government of the most effective, efficient and rational utilisation of the human, material and financial resources of Guyana in order to achieve the most rapid economic growth consistent with the continuous improvement in the standard of living, the quality of life and the general, material, and cultural well-being of the nation.

1981 saw the emergence of a new and enlightened system of local democracy. It commenced when the Regional Democratic Council were elected at the end of that year. Their establishment should be regarded as the first step by Central Government in extending democratization to the rural areas. The Regional Democratic Councils are charged with responsibilities for the official mobilization and management of the resources in their respective regions: human, material, financial and economic. It is natural, therefore, to find that many functions formerly performed by the Central Government should now be transferred to the shoulders of the Regional Democratic Councils. As a result of this devolution of responsibility, public officers in their respective regions are now accountable to the Local Democratic Organs who are themselves the duly elected representatives of the people.

The purpose of this new democratisation of responsibility is to confer on the regions the authority for management and decision making in the development and progress of the regions. All this involves the motivation of the people mobilising their energies and inspiring them with ever-increasing dynamism and direction towards more production. This new system of local democracy has come not a day too soon, and the task confronting the Local Democratic Organs should not be underestimated because, let us be under no delusion, if production in all sectors of our economy is to be increased, it can be attempted only through the efforts of the people, harnessing their interests, their energies and their willingness to co-operate. In this respect, the Regional Councils operating in the rural areas have a most important role. It is intended that under the new arrangements referred to, the Regional Democratic Councils will give support and co-operate generally with the other Local Democratic Organs within the region.

Of all the other strategies employed by the government to generate drive and dynamic to our economic advance, pride of place must be driven to co-operativism, because co-operativism is enshrined in our New Constitution as the corner-stone upon which our economic structure should be founded. Indeed, it can be said that co-operativism is rooted in the socio-economic history of the people of Guyana.

Cde. Speaker, I need hardly remind this Assembly that it is the declared policy of the government to foster co-operativism as a major instrument of national development because co-operativism includes all forms of self-help, community and co-operative activities, which attract people in working together for their own good and that of their communities. It also provides the opportunity for workers' participation in ownership, and exposure to the problem of management. In short, co-operatives are the pivot around which our whole socio-economic organization and development resolves. At the outset, perhaps, lack of proper training in business methods and the management of co-operatives and the over-enthusiasm of inexperienced members had led to setbacks in the progress of some co-operatives. These deficiencies,

however, are being corrected by training at the Kuru Kuru Co-operative College which specializes in the training of co-operators.

Plans are also in train to co-operativise some local state enterprises. At present co-operatives exist in the following disciplines: agriculture, manufacturing, wholesaling and retailing, banking, insurance, laundering, land clearing, stevedoring and other services.

(Cde. Seeram Prashad Continues)

The lynch-pin of our economic structure for agriculture comprises mainly sugar and rice. If these industries can attain their full export capabilities to accrue earnings from foreign exchange, this will place this country in a position where it could pay for consumer goods and durables so vitally important to maximising the growth of our economy. Because of this, our national investment in agriculture in recent years has been considerable, but we have already begun to derive appreciable benefits from this investment. It is generally accepted that agriculture must play the foremost role in our economy. The steps taken by this Government to promote and encourage this role of agriculture involves certain principles, chief of which is that of nutrition which includes the provision of adequate supplies of food in terms of quality, quantity, variety and price, for the needs of our own population and for others in what has elsewhere been referred to as the “hungry eighties”. With the achievement of these objectives, not only will there be immediate improvement in the nation’s foreign exchange balance through increased exports but also reduction in the importation of certain food items since domestic production and acceptable alternatives would replace several imported commodities. Moreover, economic surplus would be generated to provide the capital for additional investment in other sectors of the economy. Additional advantages would include improvement in rural development, increased employment, consumption and real income. Some of the task set would be performed in the short and medium term as follows: increase in production of legumes, fluid milk, vegetables oils, roots vegetable and cotton; the expansion of the acreage of land for the increased production particularly of sugar and rice; production for export of ground vegetables and fruits, beef and port; raising the average annual income per far household to not less than \$600 per annum; provision of 2,000 new jobs in agriculture and related industries.

To assist farmers in achieving these goals, they are being encouraged to organise themselves in production groups and co-operatives. Private efforts, particularly in the public sector, are also being mobilised for the production of certain crops especially those which require large capital outlay and machinery. For example.

The Speaker: Five minutes more

Cde. Seeram Prashad : For example Guyana Sugar Corporation is now involved in the production of legumes, oil palms and cassava flour. As a further incentive to farmers, they are also being provided with direct incentives such as duty free concessions for the purchase of machinery soft loans and guaranteed prices for their produce. In accordance with government’s philosophy of “land to the tiller”, state land have been distributed to farmers at low rentals for farming. Already over 450,000 acres of state land have been distributed to farmers. It is the intention of government to make available to bona fide farmers good agricultural land not beneficially occupied, so that these lands could be productively utilised. At the same time, the Food Crop and Marketing Programme also introduced in December, 1979 is progressing satisfactorily. Under this programme Gaibank is targeted to disburse \$3 million by December, 1982 to 800 farmers with holdings of 25 acres or less for the purpose of increasing production of the following crops: plantains, eddoes, peanuts, blackeye peas, cassava, yams, corn, tomatoes, oranges, coconuts, pumpkins, cabbage and onions.

The extension services of the Ministry of Agriculture are to be provided with an Extension Consultant,

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5 extension centres, 5 demonstration plots, and improved land and water transportation. In addition to these arrangements the Guyana Marketing Corporation will be provided with 6 marketing centres, 7 trucks, 6 jeeps and crate factory, so that it would be in a position to purchase and distribute all the crops offered for a sale by the farmers, under the programme.

The Speaker: Two minutes more.

Cde. S. Prashad: Cde. Speaker, I must direct the attention of the Assembly to considerable advance made over the years on aspects of technology as applied to the rice industry. These improvement have occurred because of the Government's abiding interest and concern for small farmers who comprise the majority of producers in the rice industry. No consideration of the rice industry would be complete, however, without some acknowledgement of the work done by the Rice Action Committees which operate in all of the five rice producing regions.

Rice production in the regions is being done at two levels. At the farmers level and the regional level. The co-ordination at the farmers level is the responsibility of the Rice Action Committees. The Rice Action Committees constituted as they are, which farmers' representatives from the different locations within the Regions and with representatives of the various agencies directly or indirectly involved in rice has the necessary resources to deal with the day-to-day problems of the rice farmers.

The Regional Democratic Councils working in close consultation with the Rice Action Committees are responsible for co-ordinating the efforts of the Rice Action Committees with that of the other agencies, public or private, to ensure they are provided with the necessary support. Cde. Speaker, I wish to conclude this dissertation on a high note in the wise expression of Confucius when he said "he who will not economise will have to agonise".

The Speaker: Vice President Hoyte.

The Vice President, Economic Planning and Finance (Cde. Hoyte): Cde. Speaker, the programme outlined in the Cde. President's address to the National Assembly on Friday last has as its prime objective the defence of Guyana, as he himself said, the defence of our territory against would-be external aggressors, the defence of our economy at a time when the world is beset by serious economic problems and the defence of the hard-earned gains of the Guyanese revolution. This programme is entirely consistent with the ... of 1982, which has been described as the Year of Defence. But the programme has to be financed; and the prevailing conditions in the world today, and more particularly in Guyana, are going to make that financing very difficult.

As Cde. Seeram Prashad, my colleague, said a few minutes ago, the world continues to be in deep recession. All the forecasts indicate that there is unlikely to be a change in this very serious situation in the month of 1982. It is interesting to note that the growth of the economies of the industrialised countries of the world are either very low or negative. It is interesting to note that in all of those countries the unemployment figures at the end of 1981 was higher than it was at the end of 1980. It is clear that during the course of the last year the situation in those countries deteriorated badly.

Today, in the United Kingdom, the unemployment rate is pushing hard on 12 per cent, representing an official unemployment figure of well over three million workers. And in the mighty United States of America, undoubtedly by the richest country in the world, the unemployment figures are verging on ten million, well over 9 per cent of the work force. While all of this is happening on the developed world, the oil importing countries in the developing world have been experiencing the same difficulties the latter have been also afflicted with certain problems which are peculiar to them since, because of the way the world economy is structured, they are appendage to the economy of the developed world. Their economies are buffeted by high oil prices which continues to escalate and to have a serious effect upon their net foreign exchange receipts and upon their production. They continue to be buffeted by the adverse terms of trade which, in our case, may be illustrated by a very simple example. For example, in 1978 one ton of our calcined bauxite bought about nine and a half barrels of oil but in 1981 one ton of calcined bauxite bought only seven barrels of the same oil. Additionally, the depressed prices for the exports of the developing countries have served further to put their economies in disarray. In these circumstances their debt burden has become almost intolerable.

Here, in Guyana, we have suffered the full impact of all these adverse external factors and we have seen the result of this in low production and in low standards of efficiency. As the Cde. President said, these things are to be blamed wholly on the external cost, for we ourselves have to accept a large measure of responsibility for the indifferent quality of our production and efficiency.

We have a particularly difficult problem as we consider the financing of the programme outlined by the Cde. President, namely, the threat which Venezuela has mounted against us both in military and in economic terms. There are a few people who like to be contrary; some of these are Members of the Minority party, I regret to say. They have been saying that the Venezuela threat is not real. I would think, Cde. Speaker, that in the light of all the available evidence one has to be a cynic or a traitor to this

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country to maintain that position, in the light of the fact that there have been some eighty or more incursions into our airspace during the year. Traditionally there is economic campaign which Venezuela mounted against us in the multilateral institutions like the World Bank and in various countries of the world. So I repeat that in the light of all these circumstances, the financing of our programme is going to be a difficult task. Traditionally, we have depended upon external and internal sources of financing. The external sources are going to contract in the course of this year. The official development assistance will not be at the level at which we have enjoyed it in the years gone by, even in 1981. The flows from the multilateral agencies, such as the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank, will also be reduced because of the problems which those Banks are having with replenishing their resources and the new rules which are being instituted which will make the price of the money they lend much higher and the terms more stringent. Commercial banks, too, are becoming a little timid about lending because of the fact that so many developing countries have reached a stage where they cannot service their debts.

(Cde. Hoyte continues)

As a result commercial banks are pulling in their horns, so to speak, in so far as their exposure in non-oil producing developing countries is concerned. For a multiplicity of reasons, some of which are applicable to the other institutions to which I have referred, the other sources of financing, that is, 'suppliers credit', will also not be available on terms which may be considered to be easy. These sources will not supply inflows at the level we have experienced or enjoyed in the past. Perhaps it is appropriate at this time, Cde. Speaker, to refer to the Trinidad and Tobago Oil Facility of which we were beneficiaries in 1981. This Facility was established by the government of Trinidad and Tobago to help countries which are its traditional oil customers. It is certainly the most generous of such facilities which have been established and we have benefited from it in 1981 we have already through the Cde. President and other Ministers of the government expressed publicly our gratitude to the government and people of our sister Caricom State. But in 1982, any resources coming from that facility will be at a much lower level than that which flowed in 1981 because the formula prescribes that the flows will be at a diminishing rate over the life of the facility. Cde. Speaker, in these circumstances, although external flows will continue to be needed and will continue to play an important part in financing our programme, the mobilisation of internal resources will be crucial to its financing and to the achievement of its success. There are perhaps three reasons for this. First, I have already referred to the fact that external resources will be reduced. Second, I think that we need to keep a strict watch on our debt burden and avoid, as far as practicable, any recourse to further borrowings, and, third, Cde. Speaker, is the principle of self-reliance which we preach as a people and to which we claim we are committed. Nobody is going to take us seriously unless we demonstrate the will to mobilise our own resources first of all –

The Speaker: Cde. Hoyte, just a minute. Cde. Leader of the House, what is happening? We are having vehicles passing up and down. The arrangement is that the Police should see that these things do not happen when we are in session. If the Vice-President has to compete with the noise outside, I certainly would not be sitting.

Cde. Hoyte: Cde. Speaker, we need to demonstrate that we are serious, that we are prepared to mobilise our own resources, that we are prepared to start from a basis of self reliance before we can reasonably ask people outside of Guyana to contribute to our development. In fact, it is the foundation of self respect and respect by other people. Therefore, Cde. Speaker, in financing the programme for 1982 we have to pay very great attention to the mobilisation of internal resources. But in considering this matter, we need to bear in mind that it is not merely a question of garnering revenue and savings. We need to pay strict attention to the avoidance of waste. We need to mount a war on waste in all its forms and manifestations. This would include, Cde. Speaker, preventing with all the power at our command, the inefficient use of resources, whether they be human, material or financial and the mis-application or wrongful diversion of such resources. In doing this, we have to strengthen the measures we have already been taking to improve our planning and control mechanism to ensure that every cent we invest in this country gives an appropriate return and, indeed, Cde. Speaker, gives the return which has been planned from the investment. To do this, we have to look very carefully at the organisation of our bureaucracy, and I use that term in no approbrious sense. We have to look at our mechanisms and our procedures; and we have by constant monitoring and evaluation to make sure that these are appropriate to our needs and will enable us to achieve our objectives as successfully as we wish. But in doing this, Cde. Speaker, the

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further expansion of local democracy is very important. Unfortunately, there is still some resistance to decentralising of authority particularly decentralising of decision making. We see it every day, we experience it everywhere, but we need to keep pressing on. We need through education and, if necessary, coercion to get people and agencies at the centre to understand that the future of this country lies in involving as many people as possible in the task of its development and so the Local Democratic Councils have this critical role to play, not only in 1982 but in the development of our country and in the management of our resources in the years ahead.

(Cde. Hoyte continues)

Additionally, Cde. Speaker, we have to strengthen our revenue administration and control agencies, such as the Inland Revenue Department and the Customs Department, in order to reduce leakage and irregularities which have been responsible for the diversion of large sums of money – millions of dollars – away from the Public Treasury and into the pockets of unauthorized persons. These things have started and the process will be intensified.

But I would like to make this point about organising for the involvement of people in the mobilisation of resources. It is not merely a question of money. We need to harness people's energies, their enthusiasm, their creativity, their imagination so that they could apply all of these attributes to the task of managing and developing the areas and communities in which they live. And this, to my mind, Cde. Speaker, is sufficient justification for the continued expansion of local democracy which the President has remarked will be attempted in the months and years ahead.

We need to increase our national savings. We have not been doing too well recently. I would now just wish to mention a few figures relating to our national savings. In 1978, Cde. Speaker, our gross national savings amounted to \$211 million; in 1979, \$171 million; in 1980, \$149 million; in 1981, \$65 million. It has been a steady rather steep decline. Those sums represented the following percentages of our G.D.P. In 1978, it was 18.7 per cent; in 1979, 14.5 per cent; in 1980, 11.2 per cent, and in 1981, a mere 4.5 per cent. Now, national savings at the level of 4.5 per cent of our G.D.P. cannot really be said to represent the principle of self-reliance to which I have referred, because, certainly, we are not making a sufficiently determined effort to mobilise our internal financial resources. But having said that, Cde. Speaker, I should also remark that in a situation of low production and heavy financial losses, there would be very little savings to mobilise. It is perhaps apposite at this stage to remark that in two of our major industries, the losses in 1981 were shattering. From the unaudited figures which I have seen from Guymine, the bauxite industry in 1981 made a loss of nearly \$100 million. But, it is said that this is the first time in the 10 years of the existence of the National Company that it has made a loss, but the first time it has made a loss, it has been a loss of staggering magnitude.

Guysuco from the figures I have seen will be making a loss of about \$75 million. I would not wish it to be thought, Cde. Speaker, that this poor performance is attributable only to the short-comings of the people in the industry, that is, management and non-management workers or to the short-coming of the people in Guyana. There have been these short comings, but there have also been other factors some of which I have referred to in my brief reference to the world economic situation. The bauxite prices are soft because of the recession in the industrialised world. All of us will have read of the fact that the automobile industry in the United States and other industrialised countries is virtually at a standstill. And many industries which depend upon aluminium, or use aluminium in large quantities are either bankrupt, not producing, or producing at low levels.

The price of sugar, Cde. Speaker, which reached as low a figure as £147 to £148 sterling per ton, contributed significantly to Guysuco's poor financial performance. It is ironic that in a year when the production was reasonably good, the price should have been so terrible.

One other factor that has bedeviled Guymine more than Guysuco, though both of them to some extent, has been the fluctuations in the foreign exchange rate. Guymine for example, attributed some \$20 million of its losses to fluctuations in foreign exchange rate. Cde. Speaker, it is because of these circumstances that we have to do everything possible to raise the saving rate. We cannot do this by increasing taxes. The people of this country already, I think, bear more than their fair share of taxation. We have to look to the production base. We have to look to our performance in the area of efficiency, and we have to make a conscious effort to conserve our resources to make sure that our financial resources, slight though they may be, are not frittered away and dissipated.

(Cde. Hoyte continues)

In this respect, therefore, I would like to draw attention to Defence Premium Bonds, which the Government would be issuing. On the first of June last year when I made a statement in this Assembly, I announced that the Government was going to issue Defence Premium Bonds. We have had some problems in getting these bonds from the Security Printers but now we have been advised that they will be ready by the middle of next month, these bonds will give an opportunity to people who are patriotic, to people who want to play some part in the defence of their country, to make that contribution. Perhaps I should spend a few minutes to say something about the characteristics of these bonds. The bonds will be issued in denomination of twenty-five dollars and one hundred dollars they will be bearer bonds. They will be encashable at any time after six months after, their purchase, which means that they are virtually cash. Every month there will be a price drawing so that the holder of the lucky bonds will receive substantial cash prizes. The bonds have the characteristics of a sweepstake, except that, unlike the sweepstake the investment is not lost. If you buy a sweepstake ticket and you do not win, well your money is gone. When you buy a Defence Premium Bond and you do not win you still have your bond and, more than that, you have another chance to win as long as you keep your bond there is always a chance every month that the number of your bond will be drawn. Cde. Speaker, in order to ensure public confidence in the integrity of the scheme, the scheme will be managed by a Committee of Management comprising both Government officials and persons in private sector. The Committee will include representatives of the Bank of Guyana and the Ministry of Finance, the Trade Union Congress, the Guyana Consumers Association, various service associations like the Lions Club and representatives of the Minority Parties.

Cde. Speaker, it is interesting that the Leader of the Minority Party, Cde. Jagan was complaining earlier today that Government did not give members of the Minority an opportunity to become involved in things, an opportunity to be consulted, an opportunity to play a part in the management of national affairs and yet it is to be regretted that although he was invited by the Governor of the Central Bank to send a representative to sit on this Committee of Management he refused. Consequently we have only the United Force being represented. Suffice to say, Cde. Speaker, that that place is still there and whenever the Leader of the People's Progressive Party changes his mind, if he ever changes his mind a representative of his Party can sit on the Committee of Management, because this Committee of Management has got nothing to do with the P.N.C. or the Government. It is not serving the P.N.C. It is not serving the Government. It is serving the people of this country. It is a Committee set up to ensure that the drawing is above board, that the people who buy Defence Bonds are not tricked in any way and that everything is done with due regularity. I have referred, Cde. Speaker, to the loss suffered by GUYMINE and GUYSUCO and to the fact that these losses would have contributed to the low public sector savings and low national savings. I was interested, I use a neutral word, to read in the Mirror Newspapers last Sunday, because I make it a point to read everything that is printed in this country as far as practicable. I was reading in the Mirror, the mouthpiece of the People's Progressive Party, an article which called upon the T.U.C. to resist retrenchment. The article said there were rumours that there was going to be retrenchment in various sectors of the economy and the T.U.C. must resist it. Now, that remark was either cynical or naïve. I would say first of all, Cde. Speaker, that the government has been in consultation with the T.U.C. has explained to the T.U.C. the economic situation in this country regarding the financial and economic outturn for 1981 and prospects for 1982 within the context of the global

economic situation. I cannot fathom the reason for this call by the Mirror to the T.U.C. to take such action. I do not know, Cde Speaker, that strikes can create employment. I do not know that low production can create employment. I do not know that losses can finance investment. These things create unemployment and no industrial action of any sort, strikes, go-slows or what have you can change the objective fact that we have not done well in production. Consequently, we have not done well financially and in situations like these the employees interests are likely to be affected. What is required now is not the kind of call made in the Mirror. Even the British Miners who used to be the most militant of Trade Unionists and workers seem now to have understood that striking cannot create employment, cannot increase or improve their well-being. Employment can be created only from increased production and higher levels of efficiency. What is required now, Cde. Speaker, is that the Government, the T.U.C, political parties, other people's organisations co-operate to create the conditions for restoring production to acceptable levels and for increasing the efficiency with which we get about our productive tasks. Indeed this is what is prescribed in the Constitution. The Constitution has not merely said that people should be entitled to certain economic rights. It says quite clearly and in equivocally that the enjoyment of these rights would depend on our creating the necessary economic conditions and it goes on to impose a duty on Trade Unions, upon social economic organisations, upon government, upon the people as a whole, to co-operate to bring about those conditions which will create a reality of economic rights enshrined in it. So, Cde. Speaker, the real question is this it is not a new question. It is posed in the popular song, now a national song written by Billy Pilgrim, 'Let us co-operate for Guyana', 'Can we do? Can we co-operate for Guyana? I am sure that all intelligent people will, all members of this Assembly, all Guyanese who are proud of their citizenship, of their nationality who respect them-selves will answer resoundingly in the words of that very song, 'Yes, we can'. [Applause]

The Speaker: This brings us to the end of today's business.

ADJOURNMENT

Resolved, "That this Assembly do now adjourn to Tuesday, 1982-01-25 at 14:00 hrs." [The Vice-President, Parliamentary Affairs and Party/State Relations.]

Adjourned accordingly at 21:15 hrs