

**THE  
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES  
OFFICIAL REPORT  
VOLUME 7  
PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE NATIONAL  
ASSEMBLY OF THE THIRD PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA UNDER THE CONSTITUTION  
OF GUYANA**

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**59<sup>th</sup> Sitting**

**2 p.m.**

**Thursday, 27<sup>th</sup> February, 1975**

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**MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**Speaker**

His Honour the speaker, Mr. Sase Narain, J.P.

**Members of the Government- People's National Congress (50)**

**Prime Minister (1)**

The Hon. L.F.S. Burnham, O.E., S.C.,  
Prime Minister

**(Absent)**

**Deputy Prime Minister (1)**

Dr. the Hon. P.A. Reid,  
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of  
National Development

**Senior Minister (8)**

The Hon. H.D. Hoyte, S.C.,  
Minister of Economic Development

**(Absent)**

\*The Hon. S.S. Ramphal, S.C.,  
Minister of Foreign Affairs and Justice

**(Absent)**

**\*Non-elected Minister**

\*The Hon. Green,  
Minister of Co-operatives and  
National Mobilizations

\*The Hon. H.O. Jack,  
Minister of Energy and Natural Resources (Absent)

\*The Hon. F.E. Hope,  
Minister of Finance (Absent)

\*The Hon. S.S. Naraine, A.A.,  
Minister of Work and Housing

\*The Hon. G.A. King,  
Minister of Trade and Consumer Protection

\*The Hon. G.B. Kennard, C.C.H.,  
Minister of Agriculture (Absent)

#### **Minister (6)**

The Hon. W.G. Carrington,  
Minister of Labour

The Hon. Miss S.M. Field-Ridley,  
Minister of Information and Culture

The Hon. B. Ramsaroop,  
Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and  
Leader of the House

\*The Hon. Miss C.L. Baird,  
Minister of Education and Social Development (Absent)

\*Dr. the Hon. O.M.R. Harper,  
Minister of Health (Absent)

\*The Hon. C. V. Mingo  
Minster of Home Affairs

#### **Ministers of state (9)**

The Hon. M. Kasim, A.A.,  
Minister of State for Agriculture (Absent)

#### **\*Non-elected Ministers**

The Hon. O.E Clarke,  
Minister of State – Regional  
(East Berbice / Corentyne)

The Hon. P. Duncan, J.P.,  
Minister of State – Regional (Rupununi) **(Absent)**

The Hon. C.A. Nascimento,  
Minister of State, Office of the  
Prime Minister

The Hon. M. Zaheeruddeen, J.P.,  
Minister of State - Regional  
(Essequibo Coast/ West Demerara) **(Absent)**

The Hon. K.B. Bancroft,  
Minister of State - Regional  
(Mazaruni / Potaro) **(Absent)**

\*The Hon. W. Haynes,  
Minister of State for Consumer Protection **(Absent)**

\*The Hon. A. Salim,  
Minister of State - Regional  
(East Demerara / West Coast Berbice) **(Absent)**

\*The Hon. F.U.A . Carmichael,  
Minister of State - Regional (North West) **(Absent)**

### **Parliamentary Secretaries (7)**

Mr. J.R. Thomas,  
Parliamentary Secretary,  
Ministry of Works and Housing **(Absent)**

Mr. C. E. Wrights, J. P.,  
Parliamentary Secretary,  
Ministry of Works and Housing

Miss M.M. Ackman,  
Parliamentary Secretary, Office of the  
Prime Minister and Government Chief Whip

### **\*Non-elected Ministers**

Mr. E. L. Ambrose,  
Parliamentary Secretary,  
Ministry of Agriculture

**(Absent – on leave)**

Mr. S. Prashad,  
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of  
Co – operative and National Mobilisation

Mr. J.P. Chowritmootoo  
Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Education  
and Social Development

Mr. R.H.O. Corbin,  
Parliamentary Secretary, Office of  
the Prime Minister

### **Deputy Speaker (1)**

Mr. R. C. Van Sluytman, Deputy Speaker

### **Other Members (17)**

Mr. J. N. Aaron  
Mrs. L. M. Brano  
Mr. M. Corrica  
Mr. E.H.A. Fowler  
Miss J. Gill

Mr. W. Hussain  
Miss S. Jaiserrisingh

**(Absent)**

Mr. K.M.E. Jonas

**(Absent)**

Mr. M. Nissar

**(Absent)**

Dr. L. E. Ramsahoye

Mr. J.G. Ramson

Mrs. P. A. Rayman

Mr. E.M. Stoby, J.P.

Mr. S. H. Sukhu, M.S., J. P.

Mr. C. Sukul, J.P.

Mr. H.A. Taylor

**(Absent)**

Mrs. L.

**(Absent)**

E. Willems

**Members of the Opposition - Liberator Party (2)**

Mr. M. F. Singh, Leader of the Opposition

Mrs. E. DaSilva

**OFFICERS**

Clerk of the National Assembly – Mr. F.A. Narain

Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly - Mr. M.B. Henry AMBIM.

27.2.75

National Assembly

2.10 - 2.20 p.m.

2. 10 p.m.

## PRAYERS

### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

#### Leave to Members

**Mr. Speaker:** Leave has been granted to the hon. Member Mr .Ambrose for today's Sitting.

### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS - FIRST READING

The following Bill was introduced and read the First Time:

Motor Vehicles and Road Traffic (Amendment) Bill 1975. [**The Minister of Home Affairs**]

## PUBLIC BUSINESS

### MOTION

#### ADOPTION OF ILO CONVENTIONS

“Whereas the Guyana Government has so far ratified twenty – six ILO Conventions including four of the six concerning basic human rights adopted by the International Labour Conference;

And whereas the International Labour Conference at its 34<sup>th</sup> session held in Geneva on the 6<sup>th</sup> June ,1951, and at its 42<sup>nd</sup> session held in Geneva on the 4<sup>th</sup> June, 1958, adopted respectively the following two Conventions concerning basic human rights:

No. 100 – Equal Remuneration for Men and Women for Work of Equal Value;

No. 111 - Discrimination (Employment and Occupation);

And whereas Guyana as a Member of the ILO, which is pursuing socialist policies and programmes based on egalitarian concepts and principles , has decided as an Conventions of the ILO;

And whereas Sessional Paper No. 1/1975 on the ratification of these two basic human rights Conventions contains conclusions which clearly set forth the Government intention to ratify the two remaining basic human rights Conventions to ratify the two remaining basic human rights Conventions concerning Equal Remuneration which provides for equal pay for men and women workers for work of equal value, and Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention which occupation for equal opportunities in employment and occupation regardless of race, sex, creed, social extraction, etc;

And whereas further bearing in mind that this Government has taken steps to promote a number of relevant and useful activities among various organisation in Guyana in observance if International Women's Year;

And whereas further bearing in mind that the workers, employers , and women's organisations in Guyana fully support ratification of these two basic human rights Conventions which are of particular interest to women and which pose no obstacles to full application and, indeed, are in accord with national policies and public opinion:

Be it resolved that this National Assembly adopt the conclusions contained in the Sessional Paper No. 1/1975 on the International Labour Conventions on basic human right, No. 100 concerning Equal Remuneration and No.111 concerning Discrimination Employment and Occupation) adopted respectively on the 6<sup>th</sup> June,1951 and 4<sup>th</sup> June, 1958, by the International Labour Conference;

And be it further resolved that the decision of this National Assembly be conveyed to the Director – General of the International Labour Organisation and to the Workers' and Employers' Organisations and other interest groups in Guyana," [**The Minister of Labour**]

**The Minister of Labour** (Mr. Carrington): Mr. Speaker, this year 1975 is International Women's Year. Today, this Parliament will debate two very important Conventions affecting the women of Guyana. Today, in this Parliament, is women's day. For that reason, the majority of the speakers today will be women. I am happy and proud to move this Motion and to belong to the party in Government, the People's National Congress, for no other Government in the history of Guyana has done so much for women of Guyana.

Today, we want to show in a more tangible way our interest in the affairs of women. We can boast of many things in the interest of women. The Parliament and the Cabinet are a

clear reflection of the importance which the People's National Congress places on women – their involvement in the political field over the years. The People's National Congress won for Guyana Independence. We are now a Republic. In the political field, there is no doubt we can measure the contribution of the Guyanese women.

Today, we are considering these two Conventions because we are satisfied that in Guyana, as in many other countries in the world, there are discriminatory practices against women, there are injustices, and there is unequal remuneration for women in the field of work. It is the Government's obligation to apply faithfully the articles of these two conventions. They strike at some of the main basic human rights that women would want to enjoy in Guyana.

Today, as we discuss these two Conventions, there is a clear demonstration of the Government's commitment in the field of national endeavours and strengthening of the position of women in the economic field. Such ambitions, as set out by the Government, would mean that we will have to make sure that there are the necessary facilities and institutions to equip the women with the necessary skills so that they can carry out their task after these Conventions are passed and the necessary legislation is made.

Guyana is a socialist country. We believe in egalitarianism. At this time in the history of our nation when it is our intention to use all means, economic and otherwise, to develop socialism, we must make use of our human resources. Women represent over 50 per cent of Guyana's population, therefore, we must make it possible for them to make in the economic field, a contribution similar to what they have made in the past in the political field. We are satisfied that these two Conventions can make it possible.

There is discrimination in Guyana against women. The fact is that, in some areas, women do not receive equal pay for equal work. The Government has no fear of introducing this Convention since, in the public sector, in the corporations, and in the various Ministries, every exercise in regard to collective bargaining for wages and working conditions and in the job evaluation in the Public Service, careful consideration was given to the position of women with

regard to discrimination and equal pay. But we must do this and make it law, so that certain sections of the private sector who show complete disregard for the women of Guyana in many fields of employment would see to it that there is no discrimination and there is equal pay for equal work.

I should like to say a lot more on these two Conventions but, as I have said, today is women's day in this Parliament. Guyana is a socialist country and believes in justice and in democracy.

On the first day of 1975 the Prime Minister made a speech in which he included references to international Women's Year. The Prime Minister has consented to speak on 2<sup>nd</sup> March at the Rally sponsored by GASWIG. I make these points and I give this information to make it clear to the women in this Parliament and to the women of Guyana that the Prime Minister and the People's National Congress are fully behind the women in their fight for equality and justice. **[Applause]** I will not repeat what the Prime Minister said on the 1<sup>st</sup> January. I will invite the women to go on the 2<sup>nd</sup> March and hear what he will say in respect of women in Guyana and the world.

Socialists as we are, when we speak of justice, when we speak of peace, when we speak of an egalitarian society, we mean all people of all races and of all sexes, and we know there are only two sexes.

We speak today of equality. What we set out in this Convention which is to be discussed throughout this year is that there should be equality and peace; that women should enjoy all the rights and privileges enjoyed by men. Cde. Speaker – Mr. Speaker, I am sorry it I said Cde. Speaker. I would like to quote from Mac – Tee – Tung:

“In order to build a great socialist society, it is of the utmost importance to arouse the broad masses of women to join in productive activity. Men and women must receive equal pay for equal work in production. Genuine equality between the sexes can only be realised in the process of the socialist transformation of society as a whole.”

We are satisfied that it is only under socialism that women can see real quality. This is to end not only the exploitation of man by man but the exploitation of women by men.

Today it is my pleasure and honour to move this Motion and give the women of this Parliament an opportunity to debate same.

**Mrs. Branoo:** Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak in favour of the Motion before the House. Like women all over the world today, Guyanese women are awaking to the dawn of consciousness. Guyana is an egalitarian society with a socialist philosophy. That being so it is the practice and the intention always of our Government to provide equal opportunities for both men and women so that they may qualify for the same type of job. Following on that, it is the practice of Government, whenever the occasion arises, to provide equal remuneration for both men and women in relation to the work they perform.

We have inherited, being a former colony, laws which have perpetuated the class system of the capitalist society and the distinction which that system has created between men and women. Whatever vestiges of that distinction remain in our laws are not the results of action of present Government, but of that hangover which, in spite of the revolution, still persists in the ears of some of the people in our midst.

Our Government will at all times try to remove those vestiges and to adhere to the socialist objective and, in the true spirit of the egalitarian society, will promote legislation to fully reflect its belief in the ideal of equal pay for equal work for all men and women in Guyana.

In Colombia, weaknesses in the national economy meant that the available labour force was not utilised to the full. At that time the female workers had grown from 150,000 to 200,000 constituting 10 per cent of the labour force.

In Guadeloups, women comprise 20 per cent to 30 per cent of the labour force in the sugar cane and banana plantations and they worked only three to four months a year. For the rest of the year they are unemployed.

In France, the number of mergers and agreements between firms is steadily multiplying and this does not only affect small concerns but also very large ones. The aim is to dominate one particular branch of the economy. They will thus be able to face up to the extra national competition that exists in all the capitalist market.

In Japan, a woman's working career will come to an end after four years and, at work, they are hired only on a temporary basis, or as day workers or, if not, on a part – time basis. In African countries the percentage of women wages earners is very small in relation to the whole labour force.

**Mr. Speaker:** Hon. Member, Mrs Willems.

**Mrs. Willems:** Mr. Speaker, we the women who have the privilege of sitting in the National Assembly of the Government of Guyana under the banner of the People's National Congress are indeed glad to support the hon. Minister of Labour this afternoon in the Motion in front of this House. We are especially concerned about the women in Guyana but in order that women can really begin to fulfil their role in the society, we feel that Government should see that day – care centres be set up throughout the country of Guyana.

[Mrs. Willems continued]

2.30 p.m.

These centres, Mr. Speaker, should be located especially in the housing scheme areas and possibly also in the industrial areas. Assistance should be given to Government, by Trade Union bodies, Local Authorities and other organisations and, possibly, industrial firms. These day care centres should not be handled in a haphazard fashion but should be taken care of by men and women who have received specialised training of the very young in a similar manner in which kindergarten teachers receive their training. This would fulfil the criteria that the children under their care would begin to understand, from a very early age, the philosophy of the Government of this country in forming a truly socialist society in Guyana.

There is a great need for more involvement by women in the Labour Force. We have heard the hon. Minister mentions that more than 50 per cent of women are unemployed or should be involved in labour. Most of our women are involved in the secretarial work but there is a need for them to become trained in managerial skills. If we are to achieve the objective of feeding and clothing and housing the nation by 1976, they will need to become highly trained at an industrial and agricultural level and in the techniques of housing. This will then give them an opportunity if they receive the education put forward.

There are but a few avenues in which the women of our country could develop themselves and they help to achieve economic security for themselves.

We are happy to have given the privilege to speak here today, Mr. Speaker, and I should like to say: long live the women of Guyana: long live the women of the International world: long live women.

**Mr. Speaker:** Hon. Member Mrs. Rayman.

**Mrs. Rayman:** Mr. Speaker, I should like to welcome the Sessional Paper No. 1 of 1975 on the International Labour Conventions 100 and 111 concerning basic human rights as adopted by the International Labour Conference. Too long have we women been characterised as mere child – bearers and house – keepers. Undoubtedly, we spend some time in the upbringing of our children which can be very tedious but much of our time is not being constructively utilised. This has been mainly due to our heritage of custom and tradition which, I must say, are inimical to our socialist ideals.

We women have got a storehouse of energy and talents [**Applause**] which have been left unexplored and unutilised or underutilised. The time has come for us to play a role as women in the development of our societies and in particular of Guyana. Too often lip – service has been paid to us as the “better half” and still we remain in the confines of a home far removed from the outside activities. I believe more tangible appreciation of our services would be given by sharing in the reward for the task which is ahead of us. [**Applause**]

**Mr. Speaker:** Hon. Member Mrs. DaSilva.

**Mrs. DaSilva:** Mr. Speaker, sir, before I deal with this “Sessional Paper” which is before the House today, there are two typographical errors which I think ought to be corrected. On page 2 where it says: Convention 100: Equal Remuneration (Text appears at Appendix B) that should read “Appendix A”. The second one is on page 4 where it speaks of Convention 111 Discrimination (Employment & Occupation). It says that the text appears at Appendix C. That should read “Appendix B.” It is very fitting that in International Women’s Year we have before this House these two Conventions which are of special concern to women. The first one deals with Convention 100, concerning “equal remuneration which was adopted at the 34<sup>th</sup> Session of the International Labour Conference in 1951. The second one Convention 111 concerns Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) and was adopted at the at the 42<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Internationals Labour Conference in 1958.

**27.2.75**

**National Assembly**

**2.30 – 2.40 p.m.**

The International Labour Organisation, I.L.O., as it is familiarly known, began in 1919. It collects facts about labour and industrial conditions and formulates minimum international standards. It is an Association of States and is controlled by representatives of Governments and employers' and workers' organisations. Its purpose is to promote social justice throughout the world and it aims at eliminating international trade rivalry based on bad social conditions. The work of I.L.O. has proved to be one of the most successful adventures in international cooperation.

On the 20<sup>th</sup> September, 1966 Guyana took her seat on the United Nations and she was the 118<sup>th</sup> State to be admitted. Since then 20 more States have been admitted and there are now a total of 138 States which have membership in the United Nations, a truly formidable body of nations, all working together for the common good.

**2.40 p.m.**

The work of the United Nations can be divided into four groups – Security, Justice, Welfare and Human Rights. Today, we meet in this House to deal specifically with Human Rights as they apply especially to women. In ratifying these two Conventions, we are mindful of women the world over, but we will deal naturally, with women in our own country, in our own home, in Guyana.

The United Nations came into being early in the 1940's in the midst of a raging world war. Great Britain, the United States, Russia and China met and made the first draft of a new World Peace Organisation in 1944 at Dumbarton, Oaks, near Washington. The Charter of the United Nations was signed on the 26<sup>th</sup> June, 1945, and thus the now famous Declaration of Human Rights was born.

The United Nations has six major organs to enforce and carry out the work. One of them, the Economic and Social Council, has established relations with I.L.O. and hon. Members must not forget that this started in 1919.

[Mrs. DaSilva continued]

I have given this short background to show how Guyana is involved and why we are here today. Because of our involvement and because we are members of the United Nations, it is right for us to ratify these two I.L.O. Conventions.

We are told in the Sessional paper that there are six basic Human Right Conventions which, over the years, have been adopted by I.L.O. In 1966, when Guyana Became a member of I.L.O., the Government ratified 25 Conventions, including four connected with basic Human rights and now, not until today, 27<sup>th</sup> February, 1975, nine years later, has the Government of Guyana seen it fir to ratify these other two Conventions which deal basically with the rights of women.

It is worthy of note, that these conditions concern and effect the employment of women and one wonders why this Government which was in power then, waited nine whole years before it ratified the last two basic Human Rights which deal specifically with women. Why was this not done when the other four were ratified?

I hope that this dragging of the feet of the Government in this matter does not reflect its attitude towards the women of Guyana. We have heard many of the speakers this afternoon praising the Government's attitude towards the women of Guyana and we will willingly accept in good faith that the Government means to push and work for the Women of Guyana. We know that the hon. Minister of Labour is one who has the cause of the women of Guyana very dear to his heart. [Applause] It is known that the women are behind him. Look at them here this afternoon.

In this Parliament, the right of women is upheld and I am proud that I have the honour of being one of the nine women members of the Parliament of Guyana. Two out of the nine women are Ministers. Guyana leads the way, I believe, in this region in its women members of Parliament. Let us see now how else they lead the way.

Women of Guyana, as the Minister reminded us, form more than 50 per cent of the population. I am subject to correction but I believe even on a worldwide basis there are

[Mrs. DaSilva continued]

more women than men. However, what we are concerned with is that in Guyana more than half the population are women. It is generally conceded nowadays that women have a contribution to make to the community in which they live.

Further, it is acknowledged that women are co – partners with men in this day – to – day process that we know as living. This is the generally accepted principle and act contrary to it. There are still those who pay lip – service to it.

It is because of this, therefore, that it is necessary for Conventions such as the ones we are about to ratify to be drafted.

Our County has gone a long way with emancipation for women in every sense of the word. I beg to differ from the hon. Minister and the other speaker, I think it was the hon. Member Mrs. Branco , who looked upon it as a shaking off of our colonial past. The exact words on page 6 read:

“... The socialist policies of the Government are designed to eradicate from our society all vestigial forms of discrimination in employment and occupation, left over from our colonial past.”

I beg to differ. I am entitled to my opinion that our colonial past has really very little to do with women’s position. It is not the main reason. It is now being changed. We talk so much of our colonial past. It is really being played like an old gramophone record. I have no axe to grind for our colonial past. I am not talking in favour of our colonial past; it forms part of our history but for goodness’ sake, let us grow up and stand on our own two feet and stop moaning and groaning and trying to find something to blame. In the economic situation, the whipping dog is the fuel crisis; when we get anything here, it is the colonial past. Let us grow up and forget it and get on with the job. That is what we have to do.

What really has caused women to come into their own is, first, the efflux ion of the time, and secondly, the Second World War. Prior to that, whether we were under the colonial rule, whether we lived in another country or we were in Guyana, women’s place was definitely in the

**27.2.75**

**National Assembly**

**2.40 – 2.50 p.m.**

home. It was a question of a Victorian attitude; a woman's place was in the home and nowhere else. Very much as one said to the children then: A child must be seen and not heard. Keep the women down and keep the children down.

Due to the efflux ion of time and since the Second – [Interruption] I am talking about Guyana and every other country. Women were kept down. It was only the Second World War that brought it out because the terrific man shortage, whether it was a country actively involved in the war, say, Great Britain or Germany or Russia, or Guyana where a contribution was made. Because of the acute man shortage, women got the opportunity that they were waiting for. They got the breakthrough – the phrase that the members across that way like to use – and showed the men, in particular, and the world in general, That women could work equally as hard as men, that they were physically as strong and mentally as alert as hard as men. Women got their opportunity then and from then there has been no turning back.

**2.50 p.m.**

The women have gone on. They have thrown off the attitude of the men, even though there are still some men who say that a woman's place is in the home, and nowhere else but the home, that children must be seen and not heard. Women have gone a long way since then. It has to take the horror and the carnage of the world war with the ensuing man shortage to give women the power and the breakthrough they were waiting for. It took the suffering and the pain of separation forced on women to show that they could do them just as and very often a great deal better.

I want to make it quite clear that I am no fanatical women's libber. I, in fact, recognise the biological and the physical differences between men and women. And I agree with the French who say about it: "Vive la difference". But this does not prevent me from advocating the cause of equality of women in relation to remuneration for the work of equal value to that done by men, not of advocating the cause of no discrimination in employment and occupation.

Incidentally, as it has just come to mind, I was very saddened to hear the hon. Minister of Labour, whom I admire so much, selecting the only quotation on behalf of

[Mrs. DaSilva contd.]

women from Mao Tse Tung's writings. Could he not have got another one? Surely, there are others. I will get him some for the future.

Talking about things that the hon. Minister has said, I have often heard the hon. Prime Minister talk about it; the hon. Minister used it in his concluding remarks here. He used the word, "egalitarianism". Just what does "egalitarianism" mean? Would somebody please spell it out for me? I would like to have all the "i's" dotted and the "t's" crossed, the commas and the full stops. Just what does it mean?

If by it is meant that we are all born equal that we all have equal opportunities to progress. I will go along with the hon. Minister 100 per cent all the way. I believe in that interpretation of "egalitarianism." But if "egalitarianism" means that we are all equal regardless of our ability, I am afraid I cannot understand the logic or the reasoning behind that. We are all created equal. Christians are taught that we are made in God's image and likeness. I am sure, although I do not know the exact wording in the books of our Muslim and Hindu Brethren, that in their faith they must have some equivalent. How we make use of our equal beginning and develop our ability is different for each one of us. That is why it is foolish to say "egalitarianism" means that we are all equal regardless.

We must take into consideration the ability of the person when trying to measure the degree of equality. We must all have an opportunity to develop our ability and it is the duty of the State to provide us with this opportunity. First and foremost, we must have a healthy nation which is brought about by eating wisely and by having good medical services. Is the P.N.C. Government providing these? Is the State providing these good health and good medical facilities? Our houses in which a man from the low – income bracket and his family can live in peace and happiness. Is the State providing these?

[Mrs. DaSilva contd.]

Then we must have an opportunity for the child to develop the ability with which it is born according to how it is able. This starts off with a sound primary education. Is the State providing this? All we have to do is to ask the hundreds of mothers every year, at the beginning of a new school year in September, how many of them trudge from school to school to try and find a place for their child. There are not enough school places. **[Interruption]** We provide them in theory but not in practice. We have a high literacy rate in the West Indies; not in the world. These are the facilities we need to provide; equal facilities for children to learn.

When, therefore, the Ministers of the Government led by the hon. Prime Minister get up at the National Park, at street corner, at P.N.C. group meetings, or what have you, and talk about an egalitarian society, it is hysterical talk which confuses the illiterate, the semi – illiterate and uneducated, because they do not understand what is really meant. Will the hon. Minister please spell out the meaning of the Government’s interpretation of the words “egalitarian?” In this way, when we have sufficient opportunity for our people to develop their abilities, then we will be able to raise our general standard of living, and this will start first of all at the basic primary level. It was because the I.L.O. realise and know that women have the ability to give and to work and to perform equally with the men that they found it necessary to draft these two Conventions.

Unfortunately, there are still women in our country who are deprived of their basic human rights to earn a decent wage for the job, they do according to their ability. Let us look , first of all, at the reasons why women go out to work. Everybody will agree that the basic reason behind it all, in the majority of cases, is a question of economics – a question of dollars and cents, a question of being able to pay the rent when the month is finished, to pay the doctor’s bill when the child is sick, to go to the market and to be able to have a balanced diet of carbohydrates, greens, and proteins for the child. a Husband’s pay packet nowadays is just not sufficient. So, the basic reason behind it all is an economic reason.

**(Mrs. DaSilva Continues)**

I do not think there is any women in this Parliament this afternoon who will disagree with me when I say that because of the very nature of women the first and foremost consideration for a woman in her home. A woman, because of her nature, as I said, puts her home first. Her life revolves around her husband, if she has one, her children, her family and her home. She works more than willingly and cheerfully eight hours in a day to look after the home and her family without any thought of remuneration.

A woman does not want remuneration for the work she does in her home. **[Interruption]** If honours were to be awarded to women who do their jobs over and above the call of duty, I am sure every single woman, especially every housewife in Guyana would be so honoured. Every woman in Guyana would qualify for the award. I would like to ask the men in this House if they were to pay for the services of their wives in the home, how would they begin to reckon how much she ought to be paid? She is the wife, she is lover, she is mother, she is nanny, she is cook, she is teacher, she is maid, she is cleaner, she is gardener, she is seamstress, she is launderer and she is nurse. How would they begin to pay her? A woman who works in her home can never be paid. All the men who make a noise should stay quiet and work out how much they would give their women for their eight hours work over and above the call of duty.

In spite of this, because of this and as well as this, the women still have to go out to work. They have to do their eight or ten hours work normally at home, looking after the husband and children, doing marketing and doing cooking and the point the hon. Member, Mrs. Willems, made for day – care centres is very well taken and should excise the minds of the Government of Guyana so that we could get day – care centres to help those women who have to go out to work.

I am reminded by my friend, the hon. Minister of Information and Culture, across the way - I must bring it in because she has a very valid point – that the women's burden in the homes would be eased if husbands and men folk would turn around and help them, help them in every field of the work in the home, It is a very sad state of affairs, but this is something we have inherited over the years. We had it over the years in Guyana and in the West Indies region in particular.

Women in the home always, as the hon. Member Mrs. Philomena Rayman said, done nothing but bear children and look after the home, and the husband thinks it is degrading for him to pick up a towel and help to dry a cup and saucer. In the more developed countries of the world, the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Europe, the men as a matter of course, go and help their wives. It is not considered degrading, it is not considered a slur on their virility, it is just the accepted fact because in those more developed countries the men and women go out and work together to keep the home. When they get home they do the house work together and the man gets along with the carpet sweeper or broom, or whatever he uses, washed the clothes and helps his wife.

The time has come in Guyana for the men of Guyana to start thinking in these terms because they are glad when the end of the month comes to receive their share of their wife's pay packet. They are very glad for that. Let them turn around and help the wife in the afternoon when they go home from work at 4 o'clock instead of getting on the nearest Berbice chair and reading the morning's Graphic or Daily Chronicle. It is high time that the men in Guyana changed their attitudes because that is surely discriminatory and that is where the women need help.

I started off to explain why women have to work. Let us deal with the various income groups. Let us start at the lowest group of all, the most hard – pressed women, the most under – paid women who go out to work as cleaners and as domestic help. I want to make it quite clear that my admiration for these women is great. As a woman, and any other woman here would know, we need cleaners and domestic help and we must also stop our false sense of value of looking down on people and saying because you sweep the streets or because you are a domestic help with someone you are inferior to me. [**Mr. Hoyte:** “Why you call them the lowest.”] I called them the lowest income bracket. I did say income. Don't you try to confuse me! These people deserve care and consideration. They have one of the hardest lives because they have homes with children to look after, children to feed, clothe bathe and dress to get off to school before they go out and clean the office or help somebody domestically in the house. In this particular group of women, their sad plight is brought about by men in Guyana, in many instances. These are women who, for economic reason rather than for security, are forced to have various men supporting them so that at the end of the week they might have a little pittance to keep their

various children alive. But the men who are quite pleased to foster these illegitimate children do not stand up to their responsibilities as men therefore, the women have to go to the child support department where the money is collected or to see these men who do not give the women support. Hon. Members should go where child support is paid and they would see the number of women there trying to get the Court to collect the money that the men should be pleased and willing to fork out to pay to support the children that they fostered. It is this particular lower income group that suffers most from this. I am reminded and that's quite true, that some of the fathers even prefer to go to jail than to pay their child's support. This is something that has to be put right. I do not know how the Minister is going to fix this under the Convention but I am sure there must be a loop – hole somewhere.

We do not only speak on behalf of the women in the lower income bracket. We talk, too, on behalf of the women who come from a middle income group. Indeed, it is more expensive for these women, because of the more sophisticated way of life they lead. The more sophisticated you are the more highly cultured your standard of living, the more expensive it becomes.

### 3.10 p.m.

In this middle income group more money is needed to cater for their more expensive tastes – and I am not referring to expensive tastes in the sense of frivolous tastes but the more cultured and more sophisticated tastes. It has absolutely nothing whatever to do with class distinction. It is a question of the money that is available to a family and the more education and cultured a person becomes the more money is required by that person.

It is sad but very true that in the middle income group **[Interruption]** there is nothing wrong there. Everybody is divided up and you cannot do anything about it. Some people earn more than others. Some earn less than others. It is a fact of life. Some drive several cars, others walk. That is all very well and good but when you get down to the plain brass tacks, there are people even in Russia and China – for example friend Mao Tse Tung of China – who have got to the top and who enjoy the benefits there because of ability. However, there are still the poor ones underneath who, because they do not have the ability or did not have the advantage to learn to

Every single human being is entitled to dignity and respect but the fact remains that no matter how you look at it, there will always be those who have and those who have not. But we must try as much as possible, to lessen the gap that divides the haves from the have not.

It is very sad but true that the people in the middle income group are the ones that recognise, more than the other members of our community, the need for a sound basic education for their children. You just have to look at the children who play truant from school. You see them lined up to go to 10'clock matinee and that kind of thing and you wonder why they are not at school. First of all the State has not got enough officers in the Department to enforce the law which requires that these children should be at school.

But these children are not always out of school because they are being wicked little children or because they do not want to go to school. Very often the parents in that lower income group keep the child away from school on the flimsiest of excuses. Is it any wonder that so many of the children when they grow up, do not have the ability to compete for the jobs that are being offered?

The policy that they must plough the land and help to feed themselves is one which we wholeheartedly support. There are far too many children, especially from country areas whose parents make sacrifices to send them to extra lessons to learn typewriting when some of them can barely speak basic English. And talking about basic English, I was so pleased to read a couple days ago that the hon. Minister of Education has made a statement that English will be taught in our schools as it is the language of communication. So many people, nowadays, feel that we ought to speak careless. We speak careless amongst ourselves, fair enough. It adds colour to our language but we must remember that we are not a little country all on our own. To communicate with people we must speak and write English correctly. So I would like to congratulate the hon. Minister of Education, I am sorry she is not here.

I am talking about these children whose parents spend all this money to give them a little typewriting and shorthand, as they say. They flock Georgetown and there is no work in Georgetown for them. They should stay in the country areas where they belong. They would fit into lift of the area which is mainly farming. But it goes right back to what I said earlier on about our false sense of values and our need to recognise the fact that it does not matter what job a person does as long as it is done properly. That is the criterion. We must not look down on a person because he or she tills the soil or cleanse the streets and say that he or she is inferior to us because we may be Ministers of the Government or Bank Executives

There is another category of women who work - and I am talking now about married working women. Perhaps their children have grown up or maybe they have means of having them cared for and they belong to a business or a profession. These women feel that they have a contribution to make and whether they work in Banks, they do not want to see the years and the money that have been spent on their training wasted.

They do not want to give up their profession – and from this class of professional persons, Guyana is in need. It has often been said that we do not have qualified people for leaders of Guyana and so these people are very necessary to the advancement of our country. That is another group that goes out to work. Naturally, they go out to work and they expect to be paid for their services according to their ability.

On page 3 I should like to read what the hon. Minister of Labour and Social Security has to say on the position in Guyana .

I quote:

“Although no specific legislation has as yet been enacted in Guyana to provide for equal pay for men and women doing equal work, in practice, the principle of equal pay for equal work is reflected in all collective labour agreements signed between employers and unions. Moreover, the job Evaluation and Job Classification Exercises carried out in the Public Services and in the Guyana

State Corporation's group of public undertaking will ensure that jobs are properly evaluated and classified on the basis of objective criteria.

Both in the Public Service and in the Guyana State Corporation's group of public undertakings firm principles of pay are applied and job evaluation and job classifications form the basis for fixing pay without regard to irrelevant abstractions of race, creed, sex, etc.

The process of Collective Bargaining has inculcated in the minds of those involved sound principles of pay based on objectives criteria. In fact, workers, the Trade Unions, employers and indeed public opinion, accept as fair and equitable the principals of equal pay for men and women for work of equal value.”

These words read very well and on the whole they do sum – up the position as it pertains in Guyana today.

### **3.20 p.m.**

Unfortunately, we still have groups of people calling themselves businessmen who do not think along these lines and no ratification of Convention 100 by this House will ensure the application of the principal by all.

There are still in our country, employers – and these employers are usually men – who feel that because o job is done by a woman she should be paid less. He refuses to recognise the fact that a woman who is doing a job equal to man's – equal in ability and performance – should and must receive equal pay. In fact, he vary often prefers to employ a woman because she a better worker. However, he still insists and feels that she should be paid less and a woman is looked upon as a form of cheap labour. He feels that she is a source of cheap labour and accordingly uses her as such.

**(Mrs. DaSilva continued)**

I feel that the hon. Minister should give very serious consideration to the thought of enacting legislation to apply fully the Articles of these Conventions. As I said, fortunately, this type of employer is not in the majority but his nature is such that only by the strict enforcement of the law, will one make him treat his female employees on an equal basis with the men, with dignity and respect which is the right of every human being, regardless of how lowly their job.

By strict enforcement of laws, the nefarious practices of getting a worker- and it is usually a woman – to sign a register as receiving at the end of a week a salary, say \$25, when in actual fact the woman has only received \$15, will come to an end. This type of thing is still going on in our country and it is mainly done by so – called “small businessmen” where the employer gets richer at the expense of his unfortunate employees. She complies with request to sign the register for the wrong amount of pay received because she is afraid of losing her job because in these hard days with an over – rising cost of living, she cannot afford to lose her job.

Many of these people are workers in small business concerns. Many of them have no representation by trade unions because in many instances the firms concerned probably only have a couple of employees and these are the people that are discriminated against. Unequal remuneration is given to them because there is no means of their appealing to any organisation such as a trade union for help and that is why it is necessary for the laws of Guyana to put this right.

Under this law too, we can take care of unscrupulous businessmen. When I am speaking of now does now apply just to small businessmen. It has been known to happen in Government offices, in really “high places” where, a girl or a woman, in order to keep her job has to sell herself or give herself to her boss. She either does it or she loses the job. Again, she cannot afford to be without work. That is why those two special classes of women need the protection of the law. I again encourage the hon. Minister to think about this and to bring about, as speedily as possible, the enactment of such laws.

**(Mrs. DaSilva continued)**

Now, sir, I just have a few words to say on the subject of Convention 111 concerning Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) because in the first part of my contribution the two over – lapped. There are, however, two points on the question of Discrimination that I wish to address this honourable House on and these two points I particularly want to draw to the attention of the Government because it is the members of the Government who are the people responsible and who can correct the wrong.

Once again I wish to remind the Government that there must be no discrimination on the grounds of political affiliation when jobs are available to women. Two women apply for the same job; they have equal ability but one woman however is a known P.N.C. activist: the political affiliations of the other one maybe known. Maybe she does not work openly for any one party so that nobody is quite sure which party she belongs to; maybe she does not support any political party – and there are such people – and she believes that her vote is her sacred right and that she has a right when election day comes to go and cast her vote according to her conscience and that she does not have to tell the whole world for whom she voted. When those two women apply for the job, both women must be considered equally on the basis of their ability, performance and suitability for the job and preference must not be given to one woman as opposed to another because of political affiliations.

The second point concerns taxation which year after year, particularly at the time of Estimates, I bring up before this House, I refer to the practice which still obtains in Guyana of adding the income of working wives on to the incomes of their husband before assessment is made for tax purposes. This amounts in no uncertain terms to discrimination. Why should a man's income be taxed alone but if he has a working wife, her income must be added on to his before taxation? The only criteria that I can see for having this is that the Government gets more revenue because it pushes the family's income into a higher bracket and they have a higher rate of taxation. It is antiquated; it is colonial; it is time it was stopped.

(Mrs. DaSilva continued)

On this occasion on a debate like this, in our International Women's Year, I should like to ask the hon. Minister most formally to take up the matter with the Minister of Finance and put an end to this discriminatory practice of putting women's salaries with their husband's before they are taxed. I would ask the hon. Minister to give this his most immediate attention.

I am pleased to note Article 3 in Appendix B on page 2. I would like to quote the whole of Article 3 but particularly the last paragraph which refers to an annual report to be made. The Government of officers will have to be quite clear and examine their consciences when they are making this annual report to ensure that they comply with what the convention asks. If there is any whether in employing somebody because of her political affiliation or discriminating form of discrimination/against a woman by unfairly taxing her, I hope they will remember to state that in their annual report.

Article 3 of Appendix B states:

“Each member for which this Convention is force undertakes, by methods appropriate to national conditions and practices -

- a) to seek the co – operation of employers and workers' organisation and other appropriate bodies in promoting the acceptance and observance of this policy;
- b) to enact such legislation and promote such educational programmes as may be calculated to secure the acceptance and observance of the policy;
- c) to repeal any statutory provisions and modify any administrative instructions of practices which are inconsistent with the policy;”

Did the hon. Minister get that?

“to repeal any statutory provisions and modify any administrative instructions of practices which are inconsistent with the policy;”

like this business of taxation.

(Mrs. DaSilva continued)

3.30 p.m.

So just watch that you obey that clause in your annual report.

(d) pursue the policy in respect of employment under the direct control of a national authority:

(e) ensure observance of the policy in the activities of vocational guidance, vocational training and placement services under the direction of a national authority;

(f) indicate in its annual reports on the application of the Convention the action taken in pursuance of the policy and the results secured by such action.”

So the Minister has to give an account of his stewardship to the I.L.O. and we will be watching to see if he remembers those points.

On behalf of the Opposition, I now formally signify our acceptance of Convention No.100 concerning equal remuneration for men and women workers for work of equal value adopted at the 34<sup>th</sup> Session of the International Labour Conference held in Geneva on the 6<sup>th</sup> June, 1951, and Convention NO.111 concerning discrimination in employment and occupation adopted at the 42<sup>nd</sup> Session of the international Labour Conference held in Geneva on the 4<sup>th</sup> June, 1958. [Applause]

**Mr. Speaker:** Hon. Member Miss Ackman.

**The Parliamentary Secretary, Office of the Prime Minister, and Government Chief Whip** (Miss Ackman): Comrade Chairman – [Interruption] I apologize. Mr. Speaker, I have sat here and I have heard previous speakers deliberate at length on women’s right and equality. My contribution today will be based more or less on equality and if we have equality stressed and spelt out, I think three – quarters of our problems will be covered.

**(Miss Ackman continued)**

I can remember hearing our dearest Elinor – I beg your pardon, the hon. Member – talking about the Conventions, namely, that we ought to stop dragging our feet in this House so far as the Conventions are concerned. What I should like to remind her is that we came into the Government and we met those Conventions. This party in Government ratified those Conventions and this is only a matter of formality, for the legal part to be handled. **[Interruption]** Elinor, I think you are pushing your luck too far.

However, Mr. Speaker, I should also like to let her know that it was women, together with their men, who bought the village of Victoria after the abolition of slavery. At that time our women with their men were able to make decisions relevant to how they would rule. As a matter of fact, it was local government at that time, but it was the advent of the colonial master that decided otherwise. I should like her to put her record straight and to understand that this Government has only repeated history when it fastened its roots with the masses to make decisions, decisions which we are seeing and which will lead us on the road to socialism. To my mind, it is not the change which is confusing her; it is the rapidity of the change that is really confusing her.

It can also be said and accepted that the women especially those People's National Congress Women's Auxiliary have been in the forefront of politics for the longest while [as far back as twenty years ago] and I think that the Prime Minister of this country and the Leader of the People's National Congress would bear me out when I say that it was the work of the women, it was the equality of the women, it was the working together with men at that time that has really brought the leader to power, has kept him in power, and will always keep him in power, and will always keep him there. Because as long as the women are here, he will be there.

I should like it to be known also that the women of this party, the party in power, the party in this Government, are women, and we would like to be treated as women. We are advocating equality. We are not advocating that we should supersede our men, mind you, we are hoping that for the purpose of development, we can bring out the theme of Women's International Year: Peace, equality for development.

I heard the hon. Member asking about health and housing. I am wondering if the hon. Member has lived in Guyana for more than 24 hours. I am wondering if she has been going through our recently built – up areas. When it comes to housing, the places where we have know care to grow are now being converted into what we would term semi- pretentious buildings, all owned by the lower – income bracket people, people who have never thought of ownership until now and this is because of the opportunities offered by this Government. It is because of this Government that I should this Government. It is because of this Government that I should like to take the hon. Member on a tour around Guyana, because maybe she does not know Guyana or she would not have asked such a question about housing. The first thing that people who have been away from this country for over 25 years, speak about is their impression of the housing programme that they have seen.

I think when it comes to hospitals, there are times, even in every other country, even in the great country that the Hon. Member would perhaps like to tell us of -- **[Interruption]** Your emphasis happens to be on London, but even the great metropolitan countries, suffer at some time some sort of depression. Because of this, there are times when their hospitals and their medical services are not all that one would desire. I am saying as an emerging country we are suffering that period of transition and it is because of that transitional period that our medical areas need to have a shot in the arm.

Let me say this to the hon. Member. There are hospitals that take care of our sick within 24 hours. I can remember talking with the hon. Member and leaving this Chamber and obtaining medical aid and returning tom this Chamber for the same Sitting of the House. Where else could we have treatment like that?

(Mrs. Ackman continued)

3.40 p.m.

We went to the Casualty Department and we were able to get treatment. I think it is unfair to make that remark and it is time that the hon. Member stopped impressing people that she is alpha and Omega of everything that is good, or that her colonial masters have been Alpha and Omega of everything that is good.

When it comes to our educational system, it is about time that we accept the view that our women are happy, our women are grateful and thankful to this Government because it is this government that has given education, from kinder garden level to university level, free. **[Applause]** For this our women are grateful; we are happy. But the hon. Member did not mention this. This must be mentioned. Whenever there is a criticism there must also be praise.

The hon. Member has asked about the books. Can a child learn without books? Let us not talk about standardising the books, this will subsequently come. We have seen that the Prime Minister has given us free exercise books for our children. Why does the hon. Member not talk about this? We have seen that the Prime Minister has given our children scholarships. Why did the hon. Member not talk about this? I can say and the women of Guyana can say - and we can talk for more than 50 per cent of the women of this country – that our educational system is second to none in the world.

The political women of this country have played their part. We have been able to perform and to perform so admirably well in politics that we are now bidding for economic power. It is fair that many of the people will, like our hon. Member, ask” why not pay the women to prevent them from working? I wonder if the hon. Member here would tell us what happen with Dictator Bakery. I wonder if the hon. Member here would tell us if there were not many occasions when many of the employees of that bakery had to sign for what they did not receive. Capitalism reigned. But this is something that we come here and we talk about with our tongues in our cheeks. This is not the type of thing that we do. But what I am saying, however, is

that this country is now approaching socialism and socialism will take care of all the capitalist ideas and ideals.

The hon. member has also talked about illiterates and semi literates. If it had not been for the influence of a very good Leader, I think this would have been the best time to see the behaviour of the illiterates and the semi – literates. It is because of the influence of a very good leader that the hon. Member could say something like that and then be allowed to walk out of here. [Mrs. DaSilva: “Are you threatening me?”] I am not threatening you but you have said that when the Leader speaks it is only the illiterate and the semi – literates that he can motivate. [Mrs. DaSilva: “I never said that.”] I beg your pardon if you did not say this.

However, Mr. Speaker, we hope the woman of this country will be able to make use of training. We hope that women will not only want to sit at a typewriter, because this has been the **modus operandi** in the past for our women. Today, we seem to be channelling our thoughts to the agricultural sector and we hope to be able to be trained, to be able to mobilise ourselves to handle heavy duty equipment. We must be able to handle tractors, we must be able to drive combines, we must be able to handle every equipment that comes along in the field of agriculture if we are to take our rightful places alongside our men. Many people would say: If you want to be equal you have the opportunity of being equal. But they will not give us the opportunity to have the training to become equal.

I am asking that we be allowed to have training so that we can take up whatever kind of employment we need so that we may be equal to our men. We hope to be able to alongside our men. We are not in any way attempting to override our men. We want to be able to have consultation with them, we want to have our men talk with us; we want to comfort our men. We do not want our men to look back at us; we want them to look sideways and see us there.

In every field the women have acquitted themselves well. We have acquitted ourselves admirably enough to be able to remove the old adage that behind every good man there is a woman. We want today that whenever you see a good man just look alongside of him and there you will see his help – mate. Beside him is a good woman. I hope that at least we will have equality and as long as we have equality of opportunities we will be able to use the opportunities

**27.2.75**

**National Assembly**

**3.40 – 3.50 p.m.**

given to us by this Government, this Government that has a socialist programme whereby we will be deeply involved and be able to make our Convention a reality as stated by two previous speakers.

**Mr. Carrington** (replying): Mr. Speaker, it was not my intention to speak for a second time on this debate, but I am sure the men in the parliament today got an idea, an indication. The discussion serves as a barometer, indicating to the men how the women feel about society and some of the rights that they will demand. I want to say that this debate is not the end of debates in 1975. It is the Government's intention to put these Conventions, as I said earlier, into law. It is also the intention of this Government to have further discussions and debates on other rights for women.

I would like to reply to the hon. Member who made reference to my quotation from Mao Tse – Tung. Guyana is a socialist country. We must quote from leaders who have had the experience of the struggles of socialism. We must not quote from the leader if socialism whose countries are industrialised. We must quote from the leaders whose economics are that of agriculture. Eighty per cent of China's population live on the land.

**3.50 p.m.**

If the great leader of China is calling on the women to make a greater contribution in the economic field and 80 per cent of the population live on the land it means that he is calling them to make a greater contribution in the field of agriculture.

But why should we not quote from friend Mao Tse – tung? Is there any other nation in the world today with so great a population that can speak of self reliance? And why must we quote the socialist countries? Because it is in those countries we find that women enjoy greater human rights than in any of the capitalist countries in the world.

The hon. Member made reference to the fact that we have only now ratified the Conventions. Some of the biggest and the oldest capitalist and imperialist nations have not yet ratified these Conventions. Why? Because they are capitalists. We have ratified 26 Conventions and the rest of the human rights Convention. Why only now? The hon. Member knows as a fact

**[Mr. Carrington continued]**

that you can have laws, you can ratify Conventions, but if you do not have the policemen to take care of those laws, it is a waste of time.

The first thing we have to do is to mobilise the women into organisations. For the first time in the history of Guyana, this Government saw it fit to bring all of CASWIG, a Council on the Affairs and Status of Women in Guyana. And this Government says to them: “we have brought you together, we have now set the platform. You must say what you want.” We believe in participation to get the women together and then they say what they want.

At the first annual meeting of CASWIG, of which the hon. Member is a member, the women, among other things, said they wanted the ratification of these two Conventions and today we are ratifying these Conventions. But that is not all, Mr. Speaker. The Government has set up an advisory Committee and I made reference to the Police. When those Conventions are made law the women from CASWIG and those on the Advisory Committee have the power to visit the various concerns in Guyana, for example, restaurants, bakeries, hardware stores, factories and estates and examine the conditions and report to the Government their findings on conditions. Never in the history of this country has any Government seen it fit to mobilise the women, to look into their own interests. I find it necessary to bring these facts to this House because when we are finished we will pass the necessary laws to ensure that they are carried out.

But we made reference to domestics. There are a large percentage of women today in Guyana working in the field of agriculture. Much of the food we see today in our various market places is produced by women but too often we look at the women in the city, in the kitchen and in the factories. But if you go into the rural areas on the various plantations and estates, you will find many women working there in the sun and in the rain. We must also set out to protect them.

We have talked a lot about politics. The women, as I said earlier, have made their contributions in the political field. No known in Guyana that the Women’s Auxiliary of the People’s National Congress is the largest, strongest and most militant organisation of women in Guyana.

[Mr. Carrington continues]

Though I agree with most of what the hon. Member said – and frankly speaking, we must give her praise and congratulate her the way in which she presented her discussion and debate here. She departed out into space when she tried to entangle herself with the socialist policy of Guyana which no tide, or storm can turn back. She can twist it or turn it, she can find ways and means of speaking about egalitarianism. The smallest child in the street knows what this Government is talking about. The small man will be a real man. That is what we mean. Equality for all, regardless of sex.

I found it necessary to wind up this debate. to leave the women of Guyana, the women in this Parliament and those who took time off today to come to hear this debate, under no doubt that the Government of Guyana, the People's National Congress knows what contribution the women of Guyana can make in any and every field. All that we are doing is giving them confidence and support so that they can go on to work in all field to make this socialist country what we want it to be. [Applause]

*Question put, and agreed to.*

*Motion carried.*

**Mr. Speaker:** Hon. Leader of the House.

**The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Leader of the House** (Mr. Ramsaroop): Mr. Speaker, it is not proposed that the house should consider at this sitting the Confirmation of the Purchase Tax (Motor Vehicles) (Exemption) Order 1975 which is on the Order paper.

#### ADJOURNMENT

**Resolved,** “That this Assembly do now adjourn to a date to be fixed.” [Mr. Ramsaroop]

**Adjourned accordingly at 4 p.m.**

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