

THE
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

OFFICIAL REPORT

[VOLUME 1]

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE
FIRST PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA UNDER THE
CONSTITUTION OF GUYANA.

13th Sitting

Monday, 31st October, 1966

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

The Assembly met at 8.45 a.m.

Prayers

[*Mr. Speaker in the Chair*]

Present:

His Honour the Speaker, Mr. A. P. Alleyne

Members of the Government

Ministers

The Honourable L. F. S. Burnham, Q.C.	- <i>Prime Minister</i>
Dr. the Honourable P. A. Reid	- <i>Minister of Home Affairs</i>
The Honourable P. S. d'Aguiar	- <i>Minister of Finance</i>
The Honourable N. J. Bissenber	- <i>Minister of Housing and Reconstruction (Leader of the House)</i>
The Honourable R. E. Checks	- <i>Minister of Local Government</i>
The Honourable E. F. Correia	- <i>Minister of Communications</i>
The Honourable Mrs. W. Gaskin	- <i>Minister of Education and Race Relations</i>
The Honourable L. John	- <i>Minister of Agriculture</i>
The Honourable R. J. Jordan	- <i>Minister of Forests, Lands and Mines</i>
The Honourable M. Kasim	- <i>Minister of Works and Hydraulics</i>
The Honourable W. O. R. Kendall, C.B.E.	- <i>Minister of Trade, Shipping and Civil Aviation</i>
The Honourable C. A. Merriman	- <i>Minister of Labour</i>
The Honourable J. H. Thomas	- <i>Minister of Economic Development</i>
The Honourable S. S. Ramphal, C.M.G., Q.C.	- <i>Attorney-General and Minister of State</i>

Parliamentary Secretaries

Mr. D. B. deGroot

- *Parliamentary Secretary,
Prime Minister's Office*

Mr. G. Bowman

- *Parliamentary Secretary,
Ministry of Labour*

Mr. O. E. Clarke

- *Parliamentary Secretary,
Ministry of Education
and Race Relations*

Mr. P. Duncan

*Parliamentary Secretary,
Ministry of Local Government*

Mr. J. G. Joaquin, O.B.E., J.P.

- *Parliamentary Secretary,
Ministry of Works and
Hydraulics*

Mr. C. V. Too-Chung

- *Parliamentary Secretary,
Ministry of Finance*

Other Members

Mr. W. A. Blair

Dr. J. K. M. Richmond

Mr. J. Budhoo

Mr. T. A. Sancho

Mr. W. G. Carrington

Mr. R. Tello, Deputy Speaker

Mr. R. G. B. Field-Ridley

Rev. A. B. Trotman

Mr. H. Prashad

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

Clerk of the National Assembly

- Mr. F. A. Narain

Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly (Acting) - Mr. M. B. Henry.

Absent:

The Honourable D. Mahraj, Minister of Health - on leave.

Dr. C. B. Jagan, Leader of the Opposition

Mr. A. Chase

Mr. B. H. Benn

Mr. Ram Karran

Mr. R. Chandisingh

Mr. H. J. M. Hubbard

Dr. Charles Jacob, Jr.

Mr. C. V. Nunes

Dr. F. H. W. Ramsahoye

Mr. E. M. G. Wilson

Mr. M. Hamid, J.P.

Mr. J. R. S. Luck

Mr. D. C. Jagan

Mr. H. Lall

Mr. M. Khan, J.P.

Mr. Y. Ally

Mr. L. Linde

Mr. R. D. Persaud

Mr. M. Poonai

Dr. S. A. Ramjohn

Mr. E. M. Stoby

Mr. S. M. Saffee

Mr. M. Bhagwan

Mr. Speaker: This sitting stands suspended while I have the honour to await their Excellencies.

Sitting suspended at 8.52 a.m.

Sitting resumed at 9.04 a.m.

**ARRIVAL OF THEIR EXCELLENCIES
THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL AND
LADY LUYT**

[*Their Excellencies entered the Chamber and took their seats on the dais.*]

Mr. Speaker: Be seated.

9.04 a.m.

**ADDRESS BY HIS HONOUR THE
SPEAKER**

**FAREWELL TO HIS EXCELLENCY
THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL AND
LADY LUYT**

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members of this National Assembly, Your Excellencies:

Today, we turn aside from Party conflicts, from the parry and thrust of Parliamentary life to pay tribute, to say goodbye to Their Excellencies Sir Richard and Lady Luyt, and we do so in circumstances quite dissimilar from those in which they made their advent into this country close on three years ago.

You will pardon me, sir, if I attempt to recapture some of the moods prevailing in this country at the time your appointment was made. I recall the hue and cry which resulted from the announcement of your appointment as Governor of British Guiana,

the exchange of messages between this country and the outside world.

You came here without any trampling of feet. There was no rhythmic beat of the steel band, no tintinnabulation to herald your arrival. You were an unwanted Governor. Both the leading political parties, the People's Progressive Party which was then in the Government and the People's National Congress, of which I then had the honour to be an active member, opposed your appointment, not because of any animosity against, or dislike of, the man Richard Luyt, but because of the spirit of nationalism which was sweeping through this country. We thought the time was ripe for us to have no more expatriate Governors. We should have a Guyanese as Governor.

On the 4th March, 1964, three days before your scheduled arrival, it was resolved in this very Chamber on a Motion by the hon. Moses Bhagwan, with an Amendment by the hon. Eugene Correia, "that this Legislative Assembly requests that the Secretary of State for the Colonies advise Her Majesty the Queen to revoke the appointment of Mr. R.E. Luyt as Governor of British Guiana and, in consultation with the British Guiana Government and Opposition, to appoint a Guyanese as Governor of British Guiana."

Now, if one should read through the Hansard of that particular debate, it would be most revealing. You would find no recriminations, no bitterness, against the man Luyt. The Members, to their credit, debated

[MR. SPEAKER]

a principle and, if you were to reduce the central theme of the arguments advanced on that day, into the form of a syllogism, it would run something like this: British Guiana is soon to be a nation; a nation is expected to manage its own affairs; therefore, British Guiana should be left to manage her own affairs and to have a Guyanese as Governor.

9.10 a.m.

I want to say, as I said a little while ago, that the theme running through all those arguments, a principle, was that the time was ripe for a Guyanese to assume the Governorship of this country. Anyway, it was against that background that a message came over the airways from that great African nationalist leader, the Honourable Kenneth Kaunda, in which he pleaded with our leaders to accept Mr. Luyt as, to use Mr. Kaunda's own words, "he is a first-class man". I want to say categorically that, over the passage of the months, you have proved yourself first-class, as they say in the academies of learning, to one of which you go shortly, *cum laudibus et honoribus*.

By sheer strength of character, a keen sense of justice and fair-play, a punctilious exactitude in the performance of your tasks, you have endeared yourself to the thousands of Guyanese whose destinies you held in your hands. You moved freely among them, you played cricket, your lady played tennis with them. You visited them in their homes, you made friends of them in the cities, in the towns, in the

countryside and in the Interior. You were indeed a very fine man and Governor.

We are going to miss you, you too will miss us, and when, in the twilight of life, you sit, hand in hand, and you turn the pages of the book of memory, may the recollection of these days you spent here arouse in you pleasurable and fragrant sensations; and so farewell. May you keep fit and strong and we look forward to the day when you will come back to us to stay. We hope it will not be long. [Applause.]

The Prime Minister (Mr. Burnham): Mr. Speaker, Your Excellencies, in this sophisticated and sometimes hypocritical world in which we live, saying goodbye is a compulsory formality with no meaning behind it. But this morning I desire to assure Your Excellencies that, when we wish you goodbye, we seriously feel more than a moderate tinge of sadness at having to part with two human beings, two people who have become so much a part of the Guyanese scene, and to whom, if we had already passed our citizenship law, we would have been most anxious to offer honorary Guyanese citizenship. [Applause.]

His honour the Speaker has, with his usual *penchant* for the historical, outlined the feelings, events, protestations, and attitudes which were abroad when Your Excellency was appointed Governor of British Guiana. I must confess that I had great misgivings not only because there was a Governor, who was not a Guyanese, being appointed to

British Guiana on the eve, so to speak, of Independence, but because he came from South Africa. I recall very vividly - and wondered at it at the time - the message from and the recommendation by my good friend President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia.

Then there followed a period which may be euphemistically described as one of unrest, during which Your Excellency had to take certain decisions in pursuance of what Your Excellency considered his duty. There were many occasions on which I disagreed either with the type of action taken or the apparent sloth with which particular action was taken. In the final analysis, however, I was generally - if I may say so with modesty and humility - in agreement with the action taken. I was struck, at that time, though it was not my good fortune to advise Your Excellency officially, by Your Excellency's high sense of duty and devotion to that duty, your willingness to take hard decisions in spite of their superficial or even outward unpopularity.

I recall meeting Your Excellency in another capacity after Monday, 14th December, 1964. I discovered at last why my good friend the President of Zambia had thought fit to issue a recommendation on Your Excellency's behalf. I matured to a large extent, I must concede, in that I was then able to recognise that a man is a man, a gentleman a gentleman, regardless of the accident of the locale of his birth. [Applause.]

During the greater part of the year 1965 Your Excellency was Governor. As such technically, under the then existing Constitution, there was reposed in your hand a certain reserve power, and you still have the right to make very important decisions and, if I am not telling tales out of school, I should like it to be known that, even from that time, Your Excellency behaved as a Governor-General rather than a Governor of a colonial territory. [Applause.]

Naturally, no one would expect a politician to agree with an expatriate Governor on all points, but I was struck by the fact that, even in your disagreement, you retained a sense of politeness and charm, and persistence in your point of view which, on many occasions, served to persuade me from actions which I might have taken or courses which I might have proposed.

In Your Excellency's conduct of affairs at that time, Your Excellency anticipated - though it did not call for a prophetic eye or mind to do so - the events to come, and few know of the sterling contribution, in a quiet and unobtrusive way, Your Excellency made to our Independence Conference of November 1965 and to the resolution of many difficulties which arose during the days when we debated various aspects of the proposed Constitution. There I was struck by the fact that Your Excellency was thinking as a Guyanese, though mindful of your duties and loyalties to those who were responsible for your original preferment and employment.

[THE PRIME MINISTER]

9.20 a.m.

I should like, at this stage, to say that the desire of the Government, which I head, to have Your Excellency as the first Governor-General of an Independent Guyana was not referable to a sense or feeling of courtesy or politeness, it was referable to the conviction that Your Excellency had served British Guiana well, and the smallest token we could have given of our appreciation of that fine service was to invite you to become, if only for a short period, the first Governor-General of an Independent Guyana. [Applause.]

The time has come for Your Excellency to go; the time has come for your charming and most friendly spouse to leave with you. The time has come for your younger brood to leave these shores. They, too, have become Guyanese for I noted from a picture in a newspaper a few days ago that they are simulating one of my childhood habits of running around without shoes. I hope that the climate of South Africa will permit them to carry out that most healthy habit.

The time has come, I observe, for you and your family to leave these shores to go to South Africa. I am not a believer in unnecessary politeness. You, sir, and the whole world know what is the attitude of my Government and my people in this country to South Africa, where you were born and where you now return to take up a most important post. But it is my contention, and I believe that anyone with a modicum

this contention, that it is a man's duty to return to his country whether or not he agrees with what is happening in that country. If, perchance, as I hope is the case here, he disagrees with what is happening in his country, he will make an effort to change the sorry scheme of things.

Sir, I hope that, from your high post of Vice Chancellor and Principal of the University of Capetown which has, in the context of South Africa, a reputation for liberalism and progressiveness, you will be able to exercise some influence on those who seem intent on having a blood bath in South Africa. From my frequent meetings with you, sir, and your fair lady, I am convinced that without entering into the field of politics - a most troublesome field, I can tell you - you can exercise some influence, and perhaps influence others to exercise a similar influence, so that what we see staring us in the future for South Africa may not become a fact, but that democracy will be established in that vast country from which you came.

In the Constitution it is written that on practically every occasion, save when you are choosing your private staff or deciding who should be Prime Minister, you should agree to my advice. But I have found during the few months subsequent to the Independence that there was a great deal of difference between the *littera* and the *sententia legis*. On many occasions it was you who have given advice. On many occasions I was the one

any action which I had otherwise been contemplating. It would seem to me that the least I can do on behalf of my Government, and on behalf of the majority of people in this country is to thank you for your kind services to our country, not only during the period when you were Governor, but also during the period when you served as Governor-General of an Independent Guyana.

You leave today, not because we want you to leave, not because we want a human being, a fine gentleman and an ambitious cricketer to leave Guyana with his charming spouse. You leave, sir, because this is a part of the unfolding of history and the realisation of a dream, the fulfilment of a Motion which was passed in 1964. There is absolutely no ill-will. We wish your family, along with you, long life, health and success in your new sphere, and we hope that some day you and your family will return here as guests to see how well we have done since you have left. As we say good-bye, we say good-bye to friends, we say good-bye to one who came here as a Governor representing the mighty Empire, and who leaves as a Governor-General representing the titular head of a Commonwealth of which we are a free member. [Applause.] Fare thee well Your Excellency, and if forever, still forever, fare thee well. [Applause.]

The Minister of Finance (Mr. d'Aguiar): Your Excellency, democracy places the accent on people, and I would like to place the accent on people in paying tribute to Your Excel-

believe, above all, it is as nice people that you have made your mark on our Guyanese people, not only in the narrow sphere of official duty, but in the wide and unlimited sphere of meeting the people on their own level. You leave a mark of deep affection behind you. In social work, in sport, and indeed in every sphere of human endeavour and activity you have made a mark on the people of Guyana.

Before you came to us, there was disorder and violence, and you had not been here long before order and peace were restored. You did not shirk very difficult decisions and duties. It is clear that the leader of those whose ideological password is violence could not bear to be present to praise, or even to hear praised, a man who was responsible for putting an end to violence. Your Excellency, my party and all the people who support it join with me, I am certain, most sincerely in paying tribute to you and in saying that we sincerely regret your leaving us.

9.30 a.m.

We were not amongst those who voted for your being changed. I think we realised that the time was coming, but it had not yet arrived, for a Guyanese to be made Governor, and we are glad that you did come. I can say in all sincerity that I have seen many Governors come and go, and this is the first time I can say I regret the departure of a Governor from Guyana. I would hope to meet yourself and Lady Luyt again if you return here, or in the course of my travels over-

[MR. D'AGUIAR]

Believe me, you have left a mark of affection on the hearts of many Guyanese. Today many people in this country have a feeling of affection at the bottom of their hearts for you, I am sure, although the leader to whom they gave their votes is not present to represent them in that expression of affection.

I wish you all success in the difficult tasks that lie ahead of you. I am sure that you will take to that very difficult country the philosophical value of liberalism, and that you will help to bring ultimate peace and happiness to that country as, I believe, you have helped to bring it to our country. [Applause.]

PRESENTATION OF GIFTS TO
THEIR EXCELLENCIES BY THE
PRIME MINISTER ON BEHALF OF
THE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE
OF GUYANA

[*The Prime Minister presented gifts to their Excellencies on behalf of the Government and people of Guyana.*]

Mr. Speaker: His Excellency the Governor-General will now reply.

REPLY BY HIS EXCELLENCY
THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL

His Excellency the Governor-General (Sir Richard Luyt): Hon-Speaker, hon. Prime Minister, hon. Minister of Finance, hon. Members of the National Assembly, my first duty, my important duty, indeed my compelling duty -

compelling and yet pleasurable duty is to say "thank you". I must say "thank you" to the Government and the nation of Guyana, certainly because I have received gifts as has my wife on their behalf this morning, and we are most grateful for those gifts. We will need no material possessions to keep fresh our memory of Guyana. I will, nevertheless, be happy to have gifts which, I am sure, are of Guyanese character and will, therefore, be doubly pleasurable to us as we use them; but my thanks must go very much further than that.

I hope that, through all hon. Members of this House, I can reach forth to the country as a whole. I owe deep thanks to Guyanese everywhere. Over the last few weeks, as my wife and I have moved around together in the capital City, and in other parts of this country, we have been received everywhere, from urban local authorities to village councils, from the great industries of bauxite and sugar to more humble peasant farmers of rice, from churches to social service organisations, from trade unions to sports clubs, from the most important in the land to the humblest, by many thousands with kindness, with friendship, and with generosity. These things have been showered upon us as well as gifts - gifts which, for the most part, we were delighted to find were especially Guyanese.

We have tried verbally and in writing to say how grateful we

are. If we have at any stage to anyone seemed to do so inadequately, may I assure all that our feelings are entirely sincere. I do not believe that any outgoing Governor or Governor-General could have had so much kindness and generosity offered to him. We are extremely grateful.

Mr. Speaker, I am grateful to you and hon. Members for having staged this ceremony here this morning. I appreciate it very, very much indeed, and I would like to say "thank you". But, as I am speaking to you this morning, I must do more than just review the last three weeks. If I stand a little further back, I must try to look at my period in Guyana - first in British Guiana from the 7th March, 1964, until today. Some of you may be intrigued to know that, when I was first appointed, I hoped partly that my appointment would not last long. Now there is nothing in that which should be taken amiss by any Guyanese. I had heard of the hospitality and the charm that I would find here; I had heard of the beautiful hinterland that I was to see; I had heard of the song and the laughter which has come in abundance, particularly in the last twenty months. All of these things I looked forward to very greatly; I found them and enjoyed them to the full, and I am grateful for them.

But there was another reason why I partly hoped that my appointment would not last long. Mr. Sandys, the then Secretary of State for the Colonies, in in-

structing me before I came out, described to me his understanding of the problems and the position in British Guiana. He took me through the decisions that he and the British Government had taken at the Constitutional Conference of 1963 when they were invited by the leaders of our three main political parties to resolve outstanding issues.

He told me then that he was not offering me the normal five-year appointment, and his reasons were simple. He forecast that there might be difficulties in 1964, but he looked beyond that and he told me that my purpose - and he would rely upon me to pursue this purpose - was to assist British Guiana to go forward after a General Election to Independence. He said to me in quite blunt terms: "I am not appointing you for five years, because if you are still Governor after three years, you will have failed". Presumably, he would not have wanted a failure by appointing me for a five-year term to linger on for a fourth or fifth year. Well, what I found was very much what I had been advised and warned.

9.40 a.m.

The year 1964 was, frankly, rough. It was tragic, but it was also triumphant. I do not call it a triumph in the sense of advantage gained by any one political group over any other, but you will remember we had at that period, and indeed for a few years before that, been wallowing in the mud of constitutional

[H. E. THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL]

stagnation. We had been floundering, even violently, painfully and yet futilely. We were making no progress. For all the tragedy of 1964, the triumph of it was that ultimately British Guiana rose above all that and emerged with an opportunity for a great future.

For me, there was a tremendous change in my responsibilities and duties as between 1964 and 1965. There was no change constitutionally; it was a change of fact. In 1964 I had to put first things first and security was always foremost in my mind and in my endeavours. Secondly, it was my duty to arrange a new registration of voters and to mount a General Election before that year had run its course. But by 1965 I could look forward differently. Then, I was once more back on the rails of what I believed to be British colonial policy.

Those of you who have for long been in touch with that policy may remember how Mr. Creech Jones, once Secretary of State for the Colonies, set it out. He said that the central purpose of British colonial policy was simple. It was to assist colonial territories to reach full responsible Government under conditions in which the people would have a fair standard of living and freedom from oppression from any quarter.

That outline of British colonial policy is the one under which I have worked all through

the 26 years of my colonial service. In 1965, we were able once more to pursue things in that way. By April of 1965, I was delighted to be able to restore responsibility for emergency powers to the Prime Minister and his Ministers, where it best belonged.

Later that year, you will remember, at the invitation of the Prime Minister the International Commission of Jurists looked into the racial balances in various spheres of Guyanese life and made recommendations which were boldly and immediately implemented by the Government. I believe, although I had no hand in that, that we had taken another important step forward in the building of the united nation.

And then in November 1965 there was the Constitutional Conference at Lancaster House, which was aimed at being the last Constitutional Conference and at bringing Independence to British Guiana. We wrangled hard for three weeks, but there was a common purpose, and where there is a will, and where there is a good will, there is a way. The way was found and we emerged from that Conference with a kind of Constitution in which I at least, and I am sure the British Government, and I hope our Government here, felt confident as being a good one for Guyana.

When talking about the basis of our Guyanese Constitution I would like merely to mention a

point about which people have often put questions to me. I have been reminded that I personally played no part in arriving at the decisions of the British Government at the end of 1963 as to the principles upon which the Constitution should be based, but, as Governor, it was my duty to preside while this Constitution was introduced and while the first General Election was held upon its provisions.

I have had plenty of opportunity to study the circumstances in British Guiana and the merits or demerits of the Constitution, and I would like to say that increasingly as I have gained more and more knowledge of the circumstances of this country, so increasingly am I convinced that the kind of Constitution that we have is the best one in our circumstances. [Applause.]

It is a task to build a nation in this land. This nation comprises people of six ethnic origins, different origins. If these people are all to go confidently and loyally to comprise this nation, then they must know that the Constitution does not put any one single group at any disadvantage vis-a-vis any other group, by accident of population distribution or anything else. As long as every man, of whatever ethnic origin he be, knows that his vote has equal weight as that of any other man, then, I believe, the Constitution is rightly based.

We would hope that in the years to come racial origin will

play an ever-decreasing part in the affairs of the Guyanese people and that, in time to come, we will not even see race; we will merely see Guyanese and we will see people with different policies. But, in order to achieve that, the right foundation must be there and, for that reason, I took encouragement and gave support to the Constitution that emerged from the Constitutional Conference of London, 1965.

Those decisions were stated at the time to be very satisfactory. They were more than that. They were exciting. Indeed, they were thrilling, and we came back here to this great year of 1966 in the history of this country. We started it well - a visit from the Queen and His Royal Highness Prince Philip, unique, joyous.

We then moved on to 26th May and we celebrated the arrival of what had been awaited and struggled for for long. I was delighted to see so many countries sending their representatives to come here and join in this celebration. I was delighted to see so many individual personal friends travel from far to be here on that great occasion. It was an occasion upon which Guyana became its own master, master of its own progress and its own destiny, and it was one for rightful celebration. As a Governor, I ceased to be, but I had already been honoured with the very great honour of being invited by the Prime Minister and his colleagues

[H.E. THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL]

to stay a while as first Governor-General, and the Queen had so appointed me.

9.50 a.m

I do want to emphasise how greatly I have valued this honour. It has been an experience of humility and of pride. It was, of course, always intended to be for a short period. That was my wish, it was the wish of the Prime Minister, and now it is time for me to go.

I do so sadly, but also gladly. It is always sad, and must be sad to leave fine friends, but I feel that in doing so I am not leaving the friendships. I hope to take those with me wherever I be forever more. It is only the friends themselves with whom we must part, for friendship, I trust, will never be severed. I am glad, at this time, to have a prior place, a higher place in sadness. I must be glad that my task has been completed. I hope, not too immodestly, to feel that it is duty done.

In saying this, I want to emphasise that I believe, as fervently as do all Guyanese, that it is right that the Head of State, the representative of Her Majesty the Queen here, should be a born son of Guyana. I wish him every good fortune in his high office and ask you, as I did for myself on the wharf on the 7th March, 1964, to give him your support. I have had that support in very large measure; please now make it available to my successor.

There is another possible advantage in my departure. Those who are not in the House this morning have found it impossible to accept me personally as Her Majesty's representative as Head of State. Well, my departure as well as the arrival of a Guyanese Governor-General provides at least the opportunity, an opportunity which I pray will be taken, to end division and for all the people to come together behind the person who is the symbol of complete statehood of Guyana.

Before I close, I must, once more, offer thanks for other things. The Prime Minister and all his Ministers, ever since they took up office in December 1964, have established a working relationship with me which has accorded with what, I am sure, were the intentions of the authors of both the British Guiana and the Guyana Constitutions.

As you have heard, we have not always agreed, but we have consulted in a way that I believe was proper for persons holding our positions. We have consulted and we have tried hard to find the right way. There have been occasions when one view has prevailed, and occasions when another view has prevailed, but, at no stage, even when our differences were sometimes considerable, has there been discourtesy, has there been any ill-will, and I am extremely grateful. I think it is right that the nation should know that, over these last 22 months since December

1964, this relationship has been made to work well and I thank all who contributed to that successful working.

I would also like to tell you and the many thousands of friends I have in this country, that I go not merely appreciating a happy formal relationship with the members of my Government, I go appreciating friendship from them. This friendship has come to me outside of Government as well, from peoples in all walks of life, in all corners of this country. To them all I say "thank you".

My two years and eight months in Guyana have been an unforgettable experience. I have shared with you trouble, achievement, joy, pain, celebration, anxiety. I have shared lots of hard work but I have also myself gained immeasurably in the richness of experience. I have also learnt so much more about human worth and human dignity and I assure you that I shall take this experience in its fullness with me wherever I go.

I must also stretch my thanks out a little further to the Public Service from whom I have had great help and loyalty; to the Police Force upon whom so many tremendous demands have been made during my period of office and from whom fine response has been gained; to the military forces, those of Guyana and of Britain.

You know when I came here there was already a British bat-

talion standing by in case of need. That British batallion was made two shortly afterwards and they did not merely remain standing by; they had to be operative for a long time. I believe that they have worked well and, indeed, that they had our interest at heart as much as most of us. They made many friends. Since May 26, their task here over these last five months has been to assist in the training of our Guyanese Defence Force. But now their tasks are over and I find it a satisfying thought to know that today, as I go, go too the last of the British soldiers. From now on, the Guyana Defence Force, young and proud, is your military strength. They are a fine Force and I wish them luck. Indeed, as I look into the future, I wish not only them good luck and every success, but all who live in this land, and the land itself.

At the moment, achievement is perhaps still largely assessed in terms of opportunity, opportunity to go forward to build a great and better life for all Guyanese right here in Guyana. There has already been much foundation laid by hard work in preparing for this better life and to take advantage of this opportunity. This hard work is going to be very necessary. There is so much to be done after the years of strife and stagnation, years which are going to need toil, sweat, dedication and good leadership. I have no reason whatsoever, from my experience here, to have any anxiety

[H.E. THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL]

about the availability of all those needs. You have got them, make use of them.

Already Guyana, in a very short period since Independence, has acquired stature in the Commonwealth, notably at the last Prime Ministers' Conference which was our first. We have also acquired position at the United Nations where our voices could be heard. But it is probably right here in this country that the greatest work will have to be done, and this is where I hope that every Guyanese will really join in and make his contribution by work and by loyal dedication to the cause of the nation's well being.

10 a.m.

Differences of opinion are, of course, permissible, but it is not permissible for anyone to attempt to frustrate decisions of the Government of the day, once taken, and I appeal to everybody to get together and to pull as a team, as the people of this country should be, and as from afar I look at your progress, I will hope to see things going well. You will always be in my prayers that the bounty of God be in full measure among you. Thank you.

ADJOURNMENT

Resolved, "That this Assembly do now adjourn to a date to be fixed." [Mr. Bissember.]

Adjourned accordingly at
10 a.m.