

BRITISH GUIANA

FIRST LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

THIRD SESSION

1963 - 1964

MINUTES of the Proceedings of the 31st Sitting of the Legislative Assembly of the Colony of British Guiana under the British Guiana (Constitution) Order in Council, 1961, held in the Chamber of the Legislature at the Public Buildings, Georgetown, Demerara,

AT 2.00 P.M.

on

WEDNESDAY, 26TH FEBRUARY, 1964

PRESENT:

His Honour the Speaker, Mr. R.B. Gajraj.

(a) Members of the Government

(i) Ministers

Dr. the Honourable C.B. Jagan, Premier and Minister of Development and Planning.
The Honourable B.H. Benn, Minister of Agriculture, Forests and Lands.
The Honourable Ram Karran, Minister of Works and Hydraulics.
The Honourable R. Chandisingh, Minister of Labour, Health and Housing.
Dr. the Honourable Charles Jacob, Jr., Minister of Finance.
Dr. the Honourable F.H.W. Ramsahoye, Attorney General.
The Honourable E.M.G. Wilson, Minister of Communications.

(ii) Parliamentary Secretaries

Mr. G. Bowman, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Home Affairs.
Mr. S.M. Saffee, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forests and Lands.

(iii) Other Members

Mr. G.L. Robertson.
Mr. M. Bhagwan.
Mr. J.B. Caldeira.
Mr. V. Downer.
Mr. M. Hamid, J.P.
Mr. D.C. Jagan.
Mr. H. Lall.
Mr. M. Shakoor.

(b) Members Constituting the Minority

(i) People's National Congress

Mr. L.F.S. Burnham, Q.C. |
Mr. W.O.R. Kendall, Deputy Speaker.
Mr. J. Carter, Q.C.
Mr. E.F. Correia.
Mr. N.J. Bissember.
Mr. W.A. Blair.
Mr. R.S.S. Hugh.
Mr. J.G. Joaquin.
Mr. R.J. Jordan.
Mr. C.A. Merriman.
Mr. H.M.S. Wharton.

(ii) United Force

Mr. P.S. d'Aguiar.
Mr. R.E. Cheeks.
Mr. E.E. Melville.

Clerk of the Legislature - Mr. E.¹ Viapree (Ag.)
Assistant Clerk of the Legislature - Mr. F.A. Narain (Ag.).

Absent

Mr. S. Campbell.
Mr. B.S. Rai.

PRAYERS

The Clerk read prayers.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER

Resignation of Mr. L.E. Mann

His Honour the Speaker read a letter dated 21st February, 1964, and received by him on the 23rd February, 1964, from Mr. L.E. Mann, resigning his seat as a member of the Legislative Assembly.

In terms of Article 59(2)(a) of the Constitution of British Guiana, His Honour declared the seat vacant.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS, ETC.

By the Parliamentary Secretary Minister of Home Affairs:

Annual Report of the Commissioner of Police
for the year 1962.

(P. 77/11 IX) (Circulated)

QUESTIONS TO MINISTERS

QUESTION No. 21

His Honour the Speaker stated that it was agreed that this Question should be deferred.

QUESTION No. 22

Mr. Downer asked the Minister of Finance the following question:

- Question: (i) Will the Honourable the Minister of Finance state whether the Jacobs Report was published today (27th January) before it was laid in the Legislative Assembly?
- (ii) Will the Minister state:
- (a) the medium through which this earlier publication was effected?
- (b) if there has been any breach of the normal procedure by which such documents are released to the public?
- (iii) If the answer to (ii)(b) is in the affirmative, will the Minister state:
- (a) what office or department of the Government was responsible for this breach?
- (b) what action the Government proposes to take with respect to this breach by having the Jacobs Report made public before it was laid in the House?

The Minister of Finance gave the following reply:

- Answer: (i) .Yes.
- (ii) (a) Bookers Stores Limited, the agents in British Guiana of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London.
- (b) "Normal procedure" can only be determined by reference to the practice with respect to the publication of other reports in the past:

Waddington and Robertson Reports

Publication times in London were arranged to coincide with announcements by the Governor in the Legislative Council.

Wynn-Parry Riot Report

Laid in Legislative Assembly on October 3, 1962, at approximately 2.10 p.m., but published at 9.45 a.m. (4 hours and 25 minutes earlier) on the same day.

K.C. Jacobs Report

Laid in Legislative Assembly on January 27, 1964, at about .10 p.m., but published on January 26, 1964, at 8.16 p.m., some 17 hours 54 minutes earlier.

Because of the unusually long interval - 17 hours 54 minutes - between publication of the Jacobs Report and its tabling in the Legislative Assembly, as compared with that in respect of the Wynn-Parry Report (4 hours 25 minutes), there was some departure from the "normal procedure" in this instance.

- (iii) (a) The Office of the Governor.
- (b) The Government has already drawn the Governor's attention to this matter and has observed that the manner in which the Report was published locally, which enabled the information media to have it long before it was seen by Honourable Members of the Hous , was a discourtesy to the Legislature.

Supplementary questions were asked by Mr. Downer, Mr. Burnham and Mr. D. Jagan.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

Phagwah Festival

The Minister of Agriculture, Forests and Lands, made a statement on the celebration of the Hindu Festival of Phagwah on Thursday, the 27th of February, 1964, and, on behalf of the Government and himself, extended sincere Holi Greetings to the Hindu Members of the Legislature and to other Hindus.

REQUESTS FOR LEAVE TO MOVE THE ADJOURNMENT OF THE ASSEMBLY ON MATTERS OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Situation in the Sugar Industry

With the approval of His Honour the Speaker, and the leave of the Assembly, Mr. Jordan was granted leave to move, at the appropriate time, the adjournment of the Assembly for the purpose of discussing the situation in the sugar industry.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

- (a) STATUTORY PUBLICATIONS BILL, 1964.
(Bill No. 7/1964(L.A.) published 22.2.64).
- (b) PUBLIC CORPORATIONS (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1964.
(Bill No. 8/1964 (L.A.) published 22.2.64).

The Attorney General, on behalf of the Government, presented the following Bills which were read the first time:

- (a) A BILL intituled AN ORDINANCE TO REGULATE THE PUBLICATION OF CERTAIN INSTRUMENTS IN NEWSPAPERS.

- (b) A BILL intituled AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE PUBLIC CORPORATIONS ORDINANCE.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

MOTIONS

MOTION BY MR. BURNHAM RE FAREWELL TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR, SIR RALPH GREY, G.C.M.G., K.C.M.G., K.C.V.O., O.B.E.

On a motion by Mr. Burnham, seconded by Mr. Correia, the relevant Standing Order was suspended to enable Mr. Burnham to move a motion on the occasion of the pending departure of His Excellency the Governor, Sir Ralph Grey, G.C.M.G., K.C.M.G., K.C.V.O., O.B.E., from British Guiana.

On a motion by Mr. Burnham, seconded by Mr. Kendall, and supported by Dr. Jagan, Mr. d'Aguiar and His Honour the Speaker, the Assembly adopted the following Resolution:

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Assembly extends to His Excellency the Governor Sir Ralph Francis Alnwick Grey, G.C.M.G., K.C.M.G., K.C.V.O., O.B.E., on the occasion of his departure from British Guiana, sincere wishes for a pleasant journey and a happy stay in the Bahamas for himself, Lady Grey and his family.

Item 1 - MOTION BY MR. BURNHAM RE ASSISTANCE TO FARMERS WHO SUFFERED LOSS IN FLOODS

Mr. Burnham moved and Mr. Kendall seconded the following motion:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That this Legislative Assembly recommends that Government take immediate steps to render assistance to those farmers who had suffered loss in the floods early in the year.

Mr. Cheeks, Mr. Benn, Mr. d'Aguiar, Mr. Blair and Mr. Ram Karran spoke to the motion.

Mr. Burnham was replying when the time for the suspension of the sitting was reached.

Suspension of Sitting

At 4.03 p.m. the sitting was suspended for tea.

Resumption of Sitting

At 4.36 p.m. the sitting was resumed.

ADJOURNMENT - DEFINITE MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Situation in the Sugar Industry

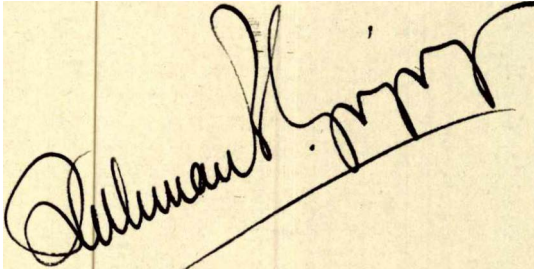
In accordance with the leave granted earlier, Mr. Jordan moved the adjournment of the Assembly and referred to the present situation in the sugar industry.

Mr. Cheeks, Mr. Ram Karran, Lall and
Mr. Chandisingh spoke.

Mr. Burnham was speaking when the time agreed
for the adjournment of the sitting was reached.

ADJOURNMENT

At 6.33 p.m. the Assembly was adjourned to
2.00 p.m. on Friday, the 28th of February, 1964.



Speaker.

PUBLIC BUILDINGS,
Georgetown.

28th February, 1964.