

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

OF THE 32ND SITTING OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE THIRD
SESSION (1983-1984) OF THE FOURTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA HELD

AT 14:00 hrs

ON WEDNESDAY 1984-08-15

IN THE PARLIAMENT CHAMBER, PUBLIC BUILDINGS, GEORGETOWN

MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (70)

Speaker (1)

*Cde. Sase Narain, O.R., M.P., Speaker of the National Assembly

Members of the Government - People's National Congress (57)

Prime Minister (1)

Cde. Dr. P.A. Reid, O.E., M.P., Prime Minister

Other Vice-Presidents (4)

Cde. H.D. Hoyte, S.C., M.P., Vice-President, Production

Cde. H. Green, M.P., Vice-President, Social Infrastructure

Cde. B. Ramsaroop, M.P., Vice-President, Party and State
Matters (Absent - on leave)

*Cde. Dr. M. Shahabuddeen, O.R., S.C., M.P., Vice-President and
Attorney General.

Senior Ministers (6)

Cde. R. Chandisingh, M.P., Minister of Education, Social
Development and Culture

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

Cde. H. Rashid, M.P., Minister of Energy and Mines

*Cde. R.E. Jackson, M.P., Minister of Foreign Affairs

*Cde. J.R. Thomas, M.P., Minister of Home Affairs

*Cde. C.B. Greenidge, M.P., Minister of Finance and Economic Planning

Ministers (7)

Cde. U.E. Johnson, M.P., Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister

Cde. Sallahuddin, M.P., Minister within the Ministry of Agriculture

Cde. R.C. Fredericks, A.A., M.P., Minister of Youth and Sport within
the Ministry of Education, Social Development and Culture (Absent)

Cde. S. Prashad, M.P., Minister of Transport within the Vice-Presidency
of Social Infrastructure

Cde. Y.V. Harewood-Benn, M.P., Minister of Information and Public Service

*Cde. Dr. R.A. Van West-Charles, M.P., Minister of Health and
Public Welfare

*Cde. K.W.E. Denny, M.P., Minister of Manpower and Co-operatives

Ministers of State (2)

Cde. M. Corrica, M.P., Minister of State within the Ministry of
Internal Trade and Consumer Protection

Cde. H.L.B. Singh, M.S., M.P., Minister of State within the Ministry of
Regional Development

*Non elected Member

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Parliamentary Secretaries (3)

- Cde. A.W. Bend-Kirton-Holder, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary, Housing, within the Ministry of Health and Public Welfare
 Cde. D.A.N. Ainsworth, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary, within the Ministry of Education, Social Development and Culture
 Cde. B. Bhagga, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary, in the Office of the Prime Minister

Other Members (23)

- Cde. M. Ally, M.P. (Absent - on leave)
 Cde. M. Armogan, M.S., J.P., M.P.
 Cde. B. Beniprashad, M.P.
 Cde. J.B. Caldeira, M.P.
 Cde. A.A. Chin, M.P.
 Cde. J.P. Chowritmootoo, J.P., M.P.
 Cde. D.E. Clarke, M.P. (Absent)
 Cde. E.B. Davidson, M.P.
 Cde. H. Doobay, M.P.
 Cde. A.B. Felix, M.P.
 Cde. E.H.A. Fowler, M.P.
 Cde. P. Fredericks, M.P.
 Cde. E.F. Gilbert, M.P.
 Cde. J. Gill-Mingo, M.P.
 Cde. A. McRae, M.P.
 Cde. E. Melville, M.P.
 Cde. J.M. Munroe, J.P., M.P.
 Cde. R.N. Primo, M.P.
 Cde. P.A. Rayman, M.P.
 Cde. C.G. Sharma, J.P., M.P.
 Cde. B. Tiwari, M.P., Government Chief Whip
 Cde. C. Vandenburg, M.P.
 Cde. R.E. Williams, M.P.

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

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

Members from the Regional Democratic Councils (9)

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

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Members of the Minority (12)

(i) People's Progressive Party (10)

Minority Leader (1)

Cde. Dr. C. Jagan, M.P., Minority Leader (Absent)

Deputy Speaker (1)

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

Other Members (8)

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

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

Cde. N. Persaud, M.P.

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

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

Cde. I. Basir, M.P. (Absent - on leave)

Cde. C.C. Belgrave, M.P.

Cde. H. Nokta, M.P.

(ii) United Force (2)

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

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

OFFICERS

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

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

PRAYERS

The Clerk read Prayers

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER

(i) Leave

The Speaker announced that leave had been granted to Cde. Ally and Mr. M.F. Singh for that day's sitting.

(ii) Resignation of Cde. Dr. P.A. Reid, O.E., M.P., Prime Minister

The Speaker informed Members that he had received a letter from Cde. Dr. Ptolemy Alexander Reid, O.E., Prime Minister, tendering his resignation as a Member of the National Assembly with effect from 16th August, 1984 and that with Cde. Reid's resignation, a seat in the National Assembly had become vacant. He had, therefore, in accordance with article 99A of the Representation of the People Act, Chapter 1:03, called upon the Representative of the List of Candidates from which Cde. Reid's name had been extracted following the last general elections, to further extract from the said List, the name of a person to fill the vacancy.

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(iii) Resignation of Cde. B. Ramsaroop, M.P., Vice-President, Party and State Matters

The Speaker informed Members that he had received a letter from Cde. Bishwaishwar Ramsaroop, Vice-President, Party and State Matters, tendering his resignation as a Member of the National Assembly with effect from 16th August, 1984 and that with Cde. Ramsaroop's resignation, another seat in the National Assembly had become vacant. He had, therefore, in accordance with article 99A of the Representation of the People Act, Chapter 1:03, called upon the Representative of the List of Candidates from which Cde. Ramsaroop's name had been extracted following the last general elections, to further extract from the said List, the name of a person to fill that vacancy.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS, ETC.

By the Minister of Finance and Economic Planning:

Annual Report of the Commissioner of Inland Revenue for the year 1983.

(ST:25/2/1/1) (Circulated)

QUESTIONS TO MINISTERS

No. 12 - Salary, Allowances and Duties of Chairman of Elections Commission

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud, on behalf of Cde. Collymore asked the Minister of Home Affairs the following question:

- QUESTION:
- (a) Will the Minister state why it was necessary to increase the salary and allowances of the Chairman of the Elections Commission?
 - (b) Will the Minister state what are the duties of the Chairman of the Elections Commission, how many times per year the Commission meets and for how long and how many hours per week the Commissioner works at the office of the Elections Commission?

The Minister of Home Affairs gave the following reply:

- ANSWER:
- (a) The post of Chairman, Elections Commission is a Constitutional one treated as equivalent to that of a High Court Judge.
 - (b) (i) The duties of the Chairman are fully defined in Article 162 of the Constitution.
 - (ii) The Elections Commission meets at least once per month and on such occasions as required by the exigencies of the service. Because of the inadequacy of the accommodation at the General Post Office Building, the Chairman is temporarily accommodated at the Attorney General's Office.

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No. 13 - Dumping of Contaminated Foodstuff

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud on behalf of Cde. Collymore, asked the Minister of Home Affairs the following question:

QUESTION: Will the Minister confirm or deny that more than 500 bags of wheat flour which had been in Police and Municipal custody, were recently 'dumped' (destroyed) together with a quantity of split peas, salt and cheese because these foodstuffs had become contaminated?

If the answer is in the affirmative, will the Minister state early whether, before they became contaminated, consideration had been given to making these foodstuffs available to hospitals, the Palms, Prisons, the Dharam Sala and other similar institutions?

If not, why not?

The Minister of Home Affairs gave the following reply:

- ANSWER:
- (a) It is true that a much smaller quantity of wheaten flour and split peas, was overrun by weevils while held under Police control to satisfy various postponements of court trials in relation to the charges which were instituted against persons for reasons relating to the possession of the commodities named.
 - (b) These were not given to the Palms, Hospitals, Prisons and other institutions, because they were unfit for human consumption and human beings live in those institutions.

Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud asked a supplementary question.

QUESTION by Cde. N. Persaud

No. 14 - Reports of the Auditor General

- QUESTION:
- (i) Will the Minister state when the report by the Auditor General for the years ended 31st December, 1975, 31st December, 1976 and 31st December, 1977 would be laid in the National Assembly?
 - (ii) Will the Minister further state when the reports for the years ended 31st December, 1978 to 31st December, 1982 would be laid in the National Assembly?

Cde. N. Persaud indicated that he had already received the information on part (i) Question 14, and proceeded to ask part (ii).

The Minister of Finance and Economic Planning gave the following reply:-

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ANSWER:

The report of the Auditor General in typewritten form for the years ended 31st December, 1978 to 31st December, 1980 has recently been received by the Minister responsible for Finance who will approach Cabinet shortly to obtain approval for same to be laid in the National Assembly. The report for the years ended 31st December, 1981 and 31st December, 1982 is expected to be submitted to the Minister responsible for Finance by November, 1984, shortly after which it would be laid in the National Assembly.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Presentation and First Reading

GUYANA MANUFACTURING AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY BILL, 1984 -
Bill No. 12/1984.

The Vice-President, Production, on behalf of the Government, presented the following Bill which was read the first time:-

A Bill intituled An Act to provide for the establishment and functions of the Guyana Manufacturing and Industrial Development Agency and for matters connected therewith.

PUBLIC BUSINESS

MOTION

Report of the Public Accounts Committee for 1967

Cde. N. Persaud moved and Cde. Fowler seconded the following motion:

BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Report of the Public Accounts Committee on the Public Accounts for the year 1967, which was laid in the National Assembly on 5th August, 1980, be referred to the Government for its consideration.

Thereafter the motion was put and carried.

FAREWELL TO CDE. DR. PTOLEMY ALEXANDER REID, O.E.

As that was the last sitting of the National Assembly at which Cde. Dr. Reid would have been present as a Member of the Assembly, the Speaker observed that some special remarks to mark the occasion should be included in the proceedings and in the Records. He thereupon gave an outline of Cde. Dr. Reid's parliamentary and ministerial career since his election to the National Assembly after the general elections held on 7th December, 1964.

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The Speaker related that Cde. Dr. Reid had been elected to the National Assembly as a member of the People's National Congress Party for four consecutive terms, and during the nearly twenty consecutive years he served in Parliament he was -

- (a) A Minister from 15th December, 1964
- (b) Deputy Prime Minister from 1st February, 1969, and
- (c) Prime Minister from 6th October, 1980 to that date.

The Speaker concluded by thanking him for his services to Parliament and extending to him best wishes for peace and happiness and the restoration of good health.

FAREWELL TO CDE. BISUWAISHWAR RAMSAROOP

The Speaker took the opportunity to bid farewell to Cde. Ramsaroop. He also gave a brief outline of Cde. Ramsaroop's parliamentary and Ministerial career from his entry to Parliament on 3rd January, 1969 to that day. The Speaker thanked him for his service in general and more particularly as leader of the House, and extended best wishes to him in his new fields.

FAREWELL TO CDE. DR. REID BY MEMBERS

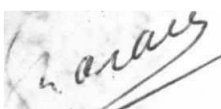
Cde. Hoyte, on behalf of the government, Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud, on behalf of the People's Progressive Party, and Mr. Abraham, on behalf of the United Force joined the Speaker in bidding farewell to Cde. Dr. Reid.

REPLY BY CDE. DR. REID

Cde. Dr. Reid thanked the Speaker, Cde. Hoyte, Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud and Mr. Abraham for their kind remarks. He assured Members that he was well on the way to complete recovery and that although he was retiring from his parliamentary duties, he would continue to be active in the fields.

ADJOURNMENT

At 15.38 hrs, on a motion by the Minister of Home Affairs, the Assembly was adjourned to a date to be fixed.


S. NARAIN
Speaker

84-08-25

PARLIAMENT OFFICE,
Public Buildings,
Georgetown.
1984-08-25.