



I now confirm that I have listened to the audio recording and it confirms the Hansard Record of Mr. Irfaan Ali's statement "we are ready", with exemplary clarity. I now ask for a tape recording of the portion of the debate to be played, please.

[Audio played for the benefit of all Members of Parliament.]

I have requested the Clerk to ensure that Hon. Member Khemraj Ramjattan receives a copy of the audio recording and I look forward for appropriate comments in this Assembly, tomorrow, after the Hon. Member would have had an opportunity to study the tape.

I will ask the Clerk to forward the written transcript of the Hansard, the audio transcript of the tape and a copy of this announcement to the *Kaieteur News*. I expect that the *Kaieteur News* will make an appropriate statement on the matter.

I wish to add, finally, that the staff of the Parliament Office who have shown dedication, commitment and integrity to this Parliament, not to this side of the Parliament or to that side of the Parliament, but to this Parliament, far beyond the call of duty since I have served as your Speaker from 1991, are deeply pained at the Hon. Member's allegation. I look forward that anything he or the *Kaieteur News* might wish to say would go some way in alleviating that distress.

Thank you.

Private Members' Business – Motions

130th Sitting dated August 9, 2010

MOTION OF PRIVILEGE AGAINST HON. DR. ASHNI SINGH, M.P., MINISTER OF FINANCE

Preamble

Mr. Khemraj Ramjattan, M.P., moved a motion of privilege with respect to a misleading statement made by Hon. Dr. Ashni Singh, M.P., Minister of Finance, during the consideration of Financial Paper No. 6/2009 on the 11th January, 2010.

The Speaker informed the Assembly that a prima facie case was not made out against Hon. Dr. Ashni Singh, M.P., Minister of Finance. Thereafter, the matter was disallowed by the Speaker.



Verbatim

Mr. Ramjattan: Hon. Speaker, I rise to seek to bring to the honourable Assembly Motions on Privileges, one against Minister of Finance Dr. Ashni Singh and the other against Minister of Housing and Water Mr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali. I seek your leave under Standing Order No. 26, under the Privileges Motion.

Mr. Speaker (Hari N. Ramkarran): Could you read the Motions one at a time, Hon. Member?

Mr. Ramjattan: I will read firstly the one against the Hon. Minister of Finance:

“WHEREAS, as the 109th Sitting of the 9th Parliament, held on the 11th January, 2010, the Hon. Member, Dr. Ashni Singh, Minister of Finance, presented in his name, Financial Paper No. 6 of 2009 in which approval was being sought for the supplementary appropriation of the sum of \$6,626,800,000.

WHEREAS, out of this sum of \$6,626,800,000 a sum of \$4 billion was being sought for provision for housing development in the said Financial Paper No. 6 of 2009, under Item No. 4, Agency Number 45, and Legend 1900900.

AND WHEREAS \$430 million had already been budgeted and voted for at the beginning of 2009 under this head as is evidenced in the said Financial Paper No. 6, 2009.

WHEREAS, by seeking approval of the National Assembly of this sum of \$4 billion on the 11th January, 2010, the Hon. Minister of Finance was representing to the National Assembly that the sum of \$4 billion was to be spent on a date after the 11th January, 2010, that is, after the National Assembly's approval.

WHEREAS in the estimates for the year 2010, which was presented to the National Assembly by the Hon. Minister of Finance on 8th February, 2010, both under Capital Expenditure, page 429, Legend 1900900 and under Capital Project Profile at Reference 156, under the programme 451, Housing and Water, it is stated that the amount of \$4,430,000,000 was paid out and spent in 2009.

WHEREAS the Hon. Minister of Finance was present in the National Assembly on both the 11th January, 2010 and again on the 25th February, 2010, when the



Financial Paper No. 6 of 2010 and the estimates for the year 2010 were being considered and was present when his colleague, Hon. Minister Irfaan Ali, fragrantly refused to answer questions put to the said Minister concerning when the said \$4 billion were actually spent or disbursed.

AND WHEREAS there is a patent contradiction as to the representation of the Hon. Minister of Finance made in Financial Paper No. 6 of 2009 as against what is made in the estimates of 2010 concerning these \$4 billion in that, in the former, representation is being made to the National Assembly that the \$4 billion had not been spent or disbursed in 2009.

WHEREAS in the latter the representation is that the said \$4 billion was indeed spent and disbursed prior to 31st December, 2009.

BE IT RESOLVED:

That this House signals its unanimous disapproval of the Hon. Member's misleading statement on the 11th January, 2010, as to the said \$4 billion and that the matter be referred to the Privileges Committee in keeping with Standing Order 26 and 32 for a finding of contempt of this Hon. House in relation to the said misleading statement and a determination as to the sanction that should be taken against the Hon. Minister Ashni Singh for misleading this Hon. House."

I proceed now in relation to that which is against Mr. Irfaan Ali and it is in similar context.

Mr. Speaker: Let me deal with the one first. Hon. Member, I had the opportunity of having this Motion before me for a little while now; I have had the opportunity of studying it and I find that no prima facie case has been made out against Dr. Ashni Singh and, therefore, the Motion will have to stand down. Mere presence, as is asserted here, cannot constitute a prima facie case and I have examined the Financial Paper No. 6 of 2009 and that does not support any such finding either.

Thank you.