

**THE  
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES  
OFFICIAL REPORT**

**[VOLUME 7]**

**PROCEEDING 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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**142<sup>nd</sup> Sitting**

**2 p.m.**

**Friday, 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 1978**

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**MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**Speaker**

Cde. Sase Narain, O.R., J.P., Speaker

**Members of the Government – People’s National Congress (49)**

**Prime Minister (1)**

Cde. L. F. S. Burnham, O.E., S.C.,  
Prime Minister

**(Absent – on leave)**

**Deputy Prime Minister (1)**

Cde. P. A. Reid,  
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of  
National Development

**Senior Ministers (8)**

Cde. H. D. Hoyte, S.C.,  
Minister of Economic Development and Co-operatives

\* Cde. H. Green,  
Minister of Health, Housing and Labour

\* Cde. H. O. Jack,  
Minister of Energy and Natural Resources

**\*Non-elected Ministers**

- \* Cde. F. E. Hope,  
Minister of Finance
- \* Cde. S. S. Naraine, A.A.,  
Minister of Works and Transport
- \* Cde. G. A. King,  
Minister of Trade and Consumer Protection
- \* Cde. G. B. Kennard, C.C.H.,  
Minister of Agriculture
- \* Cde. M. Shahabuddeen, C.C.H., S.C.,  
Attorney General and  
Minister of Justice

**Ministers (5)**

Cde. S. M. Field-Ridley,  
Minister of Information

**(Absent – on leave)**

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

\* Cde. C. V. Mingo,  
Minister of Home Affairs

\* Cde. V. R. Teekah,  
Minister of Education, Social  
Development and Culture

\* Cde. R. E. Jackson,  
Minister of Foreign Affairs

**Ministers of State (9)**

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

Cde. P. Duncan, J.P.,  
Minister of State, Ministry of  
Economic Development and Co-operatives

Cde. C. A. Nascimento,  
Minister of State,  
Office of the Prime Minister

**\*Non-elected Ministers**

- Cde. K. B. Bancroft, J.P.,  
Minister of State – Regional  
(Mazaruni/Potaro)
- Cde. J. P. Chowritmootoo, J.P.,  
Minister of State – Regional (Essequibo Coast/West Demerara)
- Cde. J. R. Thomas,  
Minister of State, Ministry of  
Health, Housing and Labour
- Cde. R. H. O. Corbin,  
Minister of State, Ministry of  
National Development
- Cde. A. Salim,  
Minister of State – Regional  
(East Demerara/West Coast Berbice)
- Cde. F. U. A. Carmichael,  
Minister of State – Regional (North West)

**Parliamentary Secretaries (4)**

- Cde. M. M. Ackman, C.C.H.,  
Parliamentary Secretary,  
Office of the Prime Minister,  
and Government Chief Whip
- Cde. E. L. Ambrose,  
Parliamentary Secretary,  
Ministry of Agriculture
- Cde. S. Prashad,  
Parliamentary Secretary,  
Ministry of Economic Development  
and Co-operatives
- Cde. M. Corrica,  
Parliamentary Secretary,  
Ministry of Education, Social  
Development and Culture

**Other Members (21)**

- Cde. E. M. Bynoe  
Cde. W. G. Carrington  
Cde. L. A. Durant  
Cde. E. H. A. Fowler

Cde. J. Gill  
Cde. W. Hussain  
Cde. S. Jaiserrisingh  
Cde. K. M. E. Jonas  
Cde. M. Kasim, A.A.  
Cde. M. Nissar  
Cde. L. E. Ramsahoye  
Cde. J. G. Ramson  
Cde. P. A. Rayman  
Cde. E. M. Stoby, J.P.  
Cde. S. H. Sukhu, M.S.  
Cde. C. Sukul, M.S.  
Cde. H. A. Taylor  
Cde. R. C. Van Sluytman, J.P.  
Cde. L. E. Willems  
Cde. C. E. Wrights, J.P.  
Cde. M. Zaheeruddeen

**(Absent – on leave)**

**(Absent)**

**Members of the Opposition (16)**

**(i) People’s Progressive Party (14)**

**Leader of the Opposition (1)**

Cde. C. Jagan  
Leader of the Opposition

**Deputy Speaker (1)**

Cde. Ram Karran  
Deputy Speaker

**Other Members (12)**

Cde. J. Jagan  
Cde. Reepu Daman Persaud, J.P., Opposition Chief Whip  
Cde. Narbada Persaud  
Cde. C. Collymore  
Cde. S. F. Mohamed  
Cde. L. Lalbahadur  
Cde. I. Basir  
Cde. C. C. Belgrave  
Cde. R. Ally  
Cde. Dalchand, J.P.  
Cde. Dindayal

**(Absent – on leave)**

Cde. H. Nokta

**(ii) Liberator Party (2)**

Mr. M. F. Singh, J.P.  
Mrs. E. DaSilva

**(Absent – on leave)**

**OFFICERS**

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

Acting Deputy Clerk of the National Assembly – A. Knight

3.3.78  
2:05 p.m.

National Assembly

2.05 – 2.15 p.m.

**PRAYERS**  
**ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SPEAKER**  
**LEAVE TO MEMBERS**

**The Speaker:** Leave has been granted to the Cde. Prime Minister and Cde. Kasim, and the hon. Member Mr. Feilden Singh for today's sitting.

**Hours of Sitting**

Comrades, I also wish to remind you that the position that appertained to yesterday's Sitting will continue today, that is, we will sit until 4 p.m. and after 4:30 p.m., we will continue until 8:30 p.m.

I also want to compliment members on their very good behaviour yesterday and I look forward to the same type of behaviour today.

**PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORT, ETC.**

The following Papers were laid:

- 1) Customs Duties Order 1978 (No. 26), made under section 8 of the Customs Act, Chapter 82:01, and published in the Gazette on the 27<sup>th</sup> of February, 1978.
- 2) Consumption Tax (Amendment) Order 1978 (No. 29), made under section 4 of the Consumption Tax Act, Chapter 80:02, on the 25<sup>th</sup> of February, 1978, and published in the Gazette on the 27<sup>th</sup> of February, 1978.

**[The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Leader of the House,  
on behalf of the Minister of Finance.]**

**PUBLIC BUSINESS****MOTION****APPROVAL OF ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURE FOR 1978****BUDGET DEBATE**

Assembly resumed debate on the Motion moved by the Minister of Finance on 27<sup>th</sup> February, 1978, for the approval of the estimates of expenditure for the financial year 1978, totalling \$476,515,775.

**The Speaker:** Cde. Collymore

**Cde. Collymore:** Cde. Speaker, we note from the statement delivered by the Cde. Minister of Finance on the Budget and, on the four-year Development Plan that what we are confronted with today is an attack upon the working class. We on this side of the House conclude that the entire package presented there is tantamount to the Government throwing down the gauntlet to the organised trade union movement. This is also symptomatic of the total bankruptcy of the economy.

Cde. Speaker, on the last occasion when this National Assembly met to deal with what we called a Mini Budget, that is last year, you took occasion to intervene and you made a comment that if the country is bankrupt how then it is getting loans—

**The Speaker:** That is not a correct statement. If you are going to quote me, please quote me accurately. I asked the Minister of Finance if he could advise me how it is that a bankrupt Government could obtain loans.

**Cde. Collymore:** The inference which you were projecting was that because of the criticism of the Opposition that the economy was bankrupt you wondered how this country was getting loans. We wish to say that the matter is one of political motivations. If this country is in a parlous state, if the economy is on the verge of crisis, the political motives of certain forces overseas, and in this case the imperialist powers, will be inspired to rush in and render all necessary assistance.

For the past two months of this year we have seen nearly \$200 million in loans to Guyana. And the Public Debt has risen by leaps and bounds. We are also saying that the attacks on the working class and this reliance now on overseas credits and loans mean that the Government has shifted its policies towards the Right. The proof of the bankruptcy of the economy will be cited later.

The Minister in his suggestions on how to meet the deficit for this year intimated in one part of his statement that a certain sum would be forthcoming from overseas and he itemised the figures as, external loans \$105.2 million, external grants \$1.6 million. Then he went on to say that he intends to raise internal loans to the value of \$40 million. This adds up to \$146.8 million. And then we have to add the record taxation in the history of this country of \$44 million. So since we have a deficit on current and capital account of \$160.2 million, the Minister is saying in his financial prognostication that he is going to realise \$190.8 million.

We have experienced in this National Assembly the gross inaccuracy of Budget prognostications so we are going to wait until the revenue period comes to see what the Minister will say. I wish to quote the Minister of Economic Development when he said that the 1972-1976 Development Plan had rolled over to 1977. I want to say that the austerity measures of 1977 have been rolled over to 1978. And we note that social services have felt the axe but certain areas which could have been pruned further have been left to fatten.



What about the army? We need an Army but the Army is much too large for this national economy. We have what we call a push-bike economy and the Army is Cadillac-style life. We suggest that the vote for the Army be out further. If we refer to what transpired previously in the Army, we note that the 1976 expenditure was \$48.7 million, whereas in 1977 this fell to \$23.5 million through austerity. At the time when I spoke about this, I congratulated the Government for these large mercies for which the people are grateful. We note the expenditure has been increased again. In 1978 they are going to expend \$36.2 million, an increase of \$2.7 million. We do not know whether this is due to an enlargement of the armed forces or increased emolument due to the increase in the minimum wage and salaries.

We would like to ask those who would be replying to stipulate that.

So, Cde, Speaker, we are suggesting a further cut in the armed forces because when we look at the way the Army is operating, when we take into cognisance the manoeuvres carried out by the Army recently, we note that these manoeuvres are anti-masses manoeuvres. These are not manoeuvres where we can contend that the Army will someday be facing an aggressive force from overseas or beyond the borders. When we look at these manoeuvres, we see that they are aimed at peace demonstrations; they are aimed at searching the homes of individuals. There was one memorable night when there was intense gun fire at Ayanganna and we can only conclude that they were stimulating a situation of rebellion. We feel that the Army is too large; it must be cut.

Then we are suggesting that there be further austerity by eliminating completely the Ministry of National Development; you can save \$6 million by just cutting down this Ministry and finding somewhere to put Dr. Reid.

What about the National Service? We note that in 1977, the National Service budget was \$14.7 million and for this year they have slashed it to \$8 million. Cde. Speaker, we do not see

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**National Assembly**

**2.05 – 2.15 p.m.**

why the National Service should have so much money. We are suggesting a further cut by \$5 million. We are not asking that the National Service be completely closed down; we are saying, as we said before, that this Service which the Government is stage managing and calling it National Service is a state of affairs which cannot be afforded by our national economy. When I spoke on the last occasion, the Prime Minister was very caustic in his comments, but we are very grateful to see that he took our advice and he has cut the National Service vote. When we compare the

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1977 and 1978 expenditure of the G. N. S., we find that it is cut by 68.75 percent by we are saying that this Service needs further cutting. We are also suggesting that the military aspect of National Service should be completely eliminated. We do not see why we should have a plethora of military and para-military organisations. National Service can be made specifically to function in a civil and social capacity rather than have it dabbling in military matters.

**[Interruption]**

We have always been in agreement with National Service. Why are you trying to distort facts? Cde. Speaker, to talk about the Guyana People's Militia, on various occasions we made the point that the Militia is the thing to emphasise, but this is not being done. Today, we observe that there has been a de-emphasis of the People's Militia. We rarely see people practising any more on the Mall and in various localities where people are supposed to function; it is not functioning. We have reliable information to the effect that the volume of intake has dropped considerably and interest has also waned. This could be Government's policy and it could also be the reaction of the people towards this. We are asking Government therefore, to scale down the National Service and scale up the People's Militia and the reason why I am saying so is two factors; the People Militia could be serving as a reserve of the Guyana Defence Force, and it also could be serving as an auxiliary anti-crime unit for the Police Force. This would reduce Government's military and para-military expenses. We are making good suggestions and the Government is moving half-hesitantly towards implementing them.

To effect further austerities, we should take a very close look at Government Ministries, Corporations and Ministers. Why do we want so many Ministers? One Minister quit recently because of disgust and we have two more Ministers in his place. We do not need all those Ministers. With all due respect to my friend over there, the Minister of State, Cde. Oscar, I do not see why we should have regional ministries. What are they doing? They are merely lieutenants of Congress Place. We are saying that there should be a reduction in the number of Ministers, a reduction in the number of Government institutions and a close look –

**The Speaker:** I want to understand you very clearly. There are Senior Ministers, Ministers, Junior Ministers, and Regional Ministers. What Ministers do you mean?.

**Cde. Collymore:** we are going to take a microscopic look. And then, we are going to drop the axe there. You can find other jobs. So, the Army, the G.P.M., and the G.N.S. should be rationalised in order to effect greater austerity in the interest of meeting the economic crisis.

Let us talk about defence. The Government is making much ado about defence. On the last occasion when the former Minister of Foreign Affairs and Justice spoke, he made reference factually to foreign policy, the aspects of foreign policy as pertaining to defence, and he said the foreign policy of a country is its first line of defence – he is with me – because if you can have peaceful neighbours or peaceful neighbourliness on your borders, there will be less need for a bloated military apparatus. You talk about this. What about the Surinam situation? We feel that the Government in seizing trawlers part-owned by the Surinam Government committed a **faux pas** of great magnitude. That is why they cannot come out of it. No Guyanese fisherman can go into the Corentyne River. I do not see why the Corentyne River cannot be shared by Guyana and Surinam. We are saying that the Government must release the trawlers and re-open negotiations immediately.

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**2.15 – 2.25 p.m.**

What about the Venezuela border situation? We are not hearing anything about Ankoko; the Venezuelans have taken much more than a blade of grass and nothing is being done. They are quiet. What about Brazil? Sometime ago we heard that destabilisation was emanating from Brazil. What is happening now? All quiet on the southern front too. What about the United States of America? We notice that there is now camaraderie between Georgetown and Washington. On June 21, 1977, the G.I.S. Bulletin said “United States Under-Secretary Department of State Mr. Philip Habib said today the American administration was satisfied with the relations that existed between Washington and Guyana.” This lends credence to the opinion that we do not need a very large military apparatus. Cut it! I told you already about the recent military manoeuvres. Now we come to a very touchy aspect of the situation, national unity.

**2.25 p.m.**

Yesterday, my very good friend, Cde. Oscar Clarke, went to town and said that the People’s Progressive Party should come forward and help to improve the economic situation, produce more, etc. And my colleague, Cde. Narbada Persaud, intimated in his delivery yesterday that the P.P.P is offering the olive branch to the opposite side, and there was great laughter. Rather than accept the olive branch, they have thrown down the gauntlet. The Minister of Economic Development, Cde. Desmond Hoyte, issued threats in the House about what is going to be done if there are strikes, dislocation, political agitation and so on. He issued threats in the House and in the Lobby. We do not know if the members of the Government are going to cement national unity by threatening people. We on this side have offered the olive branch and the Cde. Minister of State said that he is willing to accept. [Interruption.] Not you. You have nothing at all to offer anybody. You are going to Washington just now.

We are interested in national unity and to prove it, this is the People’s Progressive Party’s Central Committee document calling for a National Front Government. When this was decided upon, we suggested to the members of the P.N.C to have it discussed at its Congress, that they take a serious view of our offer to create a National Patriotic Front and a National Patriotic

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Government. They discussed it at the Second Biennial Congress and it was rejected categorically by the Prime Minister at a subsequent meeting at the National Park. This shows who is interested in national unity and who is posturing. I would venture further to advise my friends on the opposite side to secure a copy of this document.

**The Speaker:** you should give them free.

**Cde. Collymore:** They have to buy it. The Minister of State, Cde. Oscar Clarke, actually said “come with us at the community development level and we shall produce to the benefit of the nation.” Why is it that we must come at the community development level, the lowest level? What is going on at the middle level and the top level? Why are we not involved? What about the Guyana Rice Board? Are we not entitled to several directorships on the Guyana Rice Board? Nothing is being said about that. What about the People’s Militia? The operation of the People’s Militia is partisan in the extreme. In the areas where the Government feels that it does not have popular strength, there are no militia groupings functioning and when they make a show of organising a corps in such an area, the drill is less than nothing. It is a Boy Scout drill.

What about the Guyana Defence Force? We look at it and we see it is one-sided. We have information to the effect that it is a risk for any person in the Army to even venture a criticism about anybody from Pilgrim upwards. What about Local Government bodies? No involvement, no elections since 1970 and now the Minister is saying that we must participate at the Community Development level. The Community Development level is an attempt by the Government to substitute the community development council for local authorities. We want free and fair elections to these bodies.

What about the Public and Police Service Commissions. Are we not entitled to have a voice? The Prime Minister himself made solemn promises to the Leader of the Opposition that there would be participation at these Commission levels. Up to today he had merely gone through the motions but nothing has been achieved. So we have the same one-sided partisan

situation rolling along and yet my friend on the opposite side is calling for national unity. What about the State Planning Commission? When we looked at the composition of the Commission we see hardly any socialists, any person who can understand the intricacies of socialist planning. Bureaucrats! Not a single person who belongs to the P.P.P and yet they are talking about national unity. Is that how they are going to get it? What about the Boards of Corporations and so on? What about the Central Government? They have failed and it is time for them to either bow out or commence negotiations on a National Front Government.

Now we come to economic stagnation. The Minister of Economic Development went to town yesterday, he spoke for two hours and said hardly anything. He went to town also on an editorial in the Mirror – he did not mention the Mirror when he spoke but it was the Mirror of Wednesday, March 1. The editorial might not be your vote. He was trying to project the view to this National Assembly and to the nation at large that this editorial is a fallacy.

To return to my good friend, the Minister of Finance, Cde. Hope, he said in his Budget Speech, page 11:

“Cde. Speaker, when I presented the Budget for 1977, the indications were quite evident that we were about to enter into a very difficult though challenging year. In fact, 1977 **brought little** growth in production and earnings.”

This is a mis-statement and it is an attempt to mislead the House because there was no growth at all in 1977. The Minister should have said so. What did Minister Hoyte do? He compared two periods, 1972 and 1977. I must thank the Cde. Minister of Finance for having presented this yesterday to arm me today. I am not going to say that the Minister was dishonest but he omitted vital information and distorted the situation. The editorial is claiming that the country went backwards. What did the Minister say further? On page 31 in his Budget Speech he said:

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“First of all Cde. Speaker, the economy is targeted to grow by a total of 17% in real terms in the four years from 1978 to 1981. Based on prices prevailing in 1977 that would mean that Gross Domestic Product – the total value of production – should expand from \$1,006 Mn. in 1977 to G\$1,238 Mn. in 1981 (at 1977 prices).”

Why I quote this is to put on the record that the Minister identified G.D.P. in 1977 as \$1,006 million.

**2:35 p.m.**

Now, let us see what happened. When we go to this Bank of Guyana Report we see that in 1975 the Cross National Product cost was \$1,056.4 million. When you also look at the 1976 figures you get \$1,010 million. When you compare the 1975 figure with the 1976 figure, you get a reduction in goods production of \$46.4 million. When you reduce it to percentage you get a minus – zero – growth. In other words, the growth rate fell below the negative so that you get minus –zero-growth of 4.3 percent. The country went backwards. This means that the volume of goods produced within the period 1975 to 1976 fell considerably. And then you have to take into consideration that the inflation rate was very high. They don't tell you what is the inflation in Guyana but they tell you what it is all over the world and in this book they tell you of inflation in Switzerland and all over the place but not what it is in Guyana because they want to conceal it. If you knew what the inflation is, you know the situation is more precarious than what the Minister intimated in his Budget Speech.

What about 1975, 1976, and 1977? It fell further to \$1,006 million. Between 1976 and 1977 the Gross National Product fell further by .39 percent or \$4 million. Between 1973 and 1977 there was a drop in production in the country by 50.4 million or – 4.7 percent of the gross. Why do I say gross? In order to realise the real growth as the Minister has said here – he is talking of projecting a total of 70 percent in real terms in the four years 1978 to 1981 – he has to deduct to know what is the inflation rate. Then you know the real growth in the national economy. We submit that the country is moving backwards that is why the situation is so

precarious. Shelves in the shops are bare and things are rough. I challenge the Minister to refute that.

What about the Minister's prognostication for four years? He says the economy will grow by 17 percent in 4 years to 4.25 percent. We are saying on this side of the House that this projection for four years means that the national economy will be running at break-neck speed just to stand still because there is already negative growth.

What about the so-called popularity of our friends on the opposite side? There is a demonstration outside. A circular went to Heads of Government Departments to get the people out to demonstrate; they must come out. What about the Mashramani? If they were so popular, people would respond spontaneously. This is a circular issued on the instruction of the paramount party to Guyana Stores, dealing with Mashramani. This is what the circular said:

“A serious view will be taken with respect to those persons who do not attend the ceremony, and deliberately try to circumvent the arrangements made to ensure that there is a full turn-out at the National Park on Wednesday, 22<sup>nd</sup> February, 1978.”

Popular people. The so-called paramount party. Here is a place for all the names, and at certain pre-designated points there is a roll call, and for those who don't respond, there is a tick against their names. My good friends on the opposite side talk about their popularity.

Sometime last year we had occasion to see published a document for the Ministry of National Development, Office of the P.N.C. General Secretary. The document, which was supposed to be a confidential document, fell into the hands of the People's Progressive Party and there was confirmation in the opposition camp. They spoke about disillusionment, groups cracking up, crisis at leadership level, over-emphasise on fund raising, and all sorts of things. I don't want to read. I want to quote from a document of the People's National Congress, **People's National Congress In Service Of People** Report by Cde. Oscar Duke, Regional



Secretary, Greater Georgetown, delivered to the Greater Georgetown Annual Conference of the People's National Congress 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> February, 1978. Quite up to date. Now, Cde. Speaker, I read from the report here. They were talking about membership. We are going to see who is popular or who is masquerading. In the eight districts, membership at the 1<sup>st</sup> February, 1977, was as follows: They itemised Kitty, Campbellville, North Central, South, Wortmanville, Lodge, La Penitence, Ruimveldt: Total Adults 3,456; Children 733; YSM 479; WRSM 407. You have to compare this with what will happen this year. At the 1<sup>st</sup> January, 1978, the records show the following for the same districts, 1,865 adults, a drop of over 50 percent; the number of children and infants fell from 733 to 271; YSM from 479 to 230 and WRSM from 407 to 273. This is the “vanguard”.

Listen to what they are doing. We will talk about their activities now, the anti-working class activities of the so-called “vanguard party”. Page 3 of the document states as follows:

“A major activity during the year was the involvement of members in the harvesting of sugar cane during the strike called by the Guyana Agricultural Workers Union.”

Shameful!

“During the months from late August to January 1978 when the strike was called off, day after day Party members, supporters and all those who understood the realities of the situation toiled unceasingly to save the economy of the country and thus enable Guyana to meet its contractual commitment to overseas ...”

Cde. Speaker, this shows the anti-working class attitude not only of the Government but of the party in power. Now on page 5 – our good friend reports others – are quotes from his reporting on their districts. The above record shows that there has been a reduction in membership and a decline in the attendance of those who remain members.

This is despite the Party's programme and plan for the wealth of the country to be more equally distributed and for all the people to benefit by the gains produced from our natural resources and the efforts of the working class. One of the Ministers said yesterday that if you are not careful the people will reject us. Why is it then that our good friends on the opposite side cannot seem to hold on to their members they have to coerce people, threaten people and get them to respond to blackmail pressures.

**2:45 p.m.**

Cde. Speaker, we have another matter to raise about further austerities but before I go to that, let me talk about the National Defence Savings Bonds scheme. Much ado was made in this House on the last occasion when this Bill was tabled and passed. When we on this side said that \$30 million would never be realised, the Minister said that they will realise it with or without the co-operation of the People's Progressive Party. They got less than 19 percent. They got about 19 percent. They got about 9 percent out of this so-called \$30 million worth of defence bonds and this clearly shows the lack of confidence the people have in our friends across the room.

Now, let us talk about some of their measures for austerity. They tried to belittle our suggestions but we know behind the scenes they are working on them. We don't see why they cannot be consistent. If, as we have intimated, defence spending should be cut this year and National Service is slashed, why couldn't the Ministers in their reply say "We are going to do it". They said they are not going to and then do it behind our backs. What is going on here? This is a Fact Sheet from the Guyana National Service which was discussed in great heat at Sophia. Well, they were talking about how to close the uncloseable budgetary gap. Funds actually spent in 1977, \$14.7 million. Funds voted for 1978, \$8 million. Well, Cde. Speaker, when you look at the funds actually spent on salaries in 1977, the total comes to \$6.7 million out of the \$14.7 million and this means that 45.5 percent was spent on the bureaucracy in the National Service.

What about agriculture? The Prime Minister in this very august House responding to questions from me said that the G.N.S. is pursuing the cultivation of cotton, legumes, etc. But now, the funds actually spent on agriculture in 1977 totalled \$816,927.54. Cde. Speaker, when you compare this very small expenditure with the total of \$14.7 million, it comes to 5.4 percent. Cde. Speaker, the prognostication for this year is worse. Out of the \$8 million which the Government has budgeted for the National Service, we find that the bureaucracy will be taking up \$5.5 million and, Cde. Speaker, this is equal to 58.7 percent of the allocation. So the bureaucracy is biting more heavily although there has been a cut.

What do we have? All we have perhaps is staff. Why do we need this entire staff? Redeploy those persons. What about agriculture for this year? For last year it was \$800,000; for this year it is going to \$400,000. Compare these figures with the allocations; it is just 5 percent. When you compare the figure for agriculture, it is 55 percent against the bureaucracy of 69 percent; we see where we are going, and so that is why we say the National Service is a para-military institution basically. Scrap the para-military aspect and utilise the People's Militia; you are going to save money.

They are now making suggestions for austerity. Hear what they are saying: "Major suggestions to cut expenditure in 1978: (a) dismiss all.....staff, junior leaders and pioneers; voluntarily give up 1977 increases; all staff, give up one month's salary, close Papaya Training Centre after graduation in 1978. Freeze recruitment in 1978. We were saying this all the time. Why can't they say it openly and admit they have been beaten? Why hide? They operate in the Government as though they operate in a pawn shop. They have a pawn shop mentality. And then they have some other scatterbrained suggestions but we are in full agreement with the austerity measures in the National Service and we would like to intimate to the Government a further out in this aspect.

2:55 p.m.

Cde. Speaker, to wind up, I want to quote from the Party's document for a National Front Government. There is one vanguard Party in Guyana, that is the People's Progressive Party.

**The Speaker:** Cde. Collymore, you see when you are making references to these things, the Speaker should be provided with copies of all these documents so that he can be **au fait** with what you are saying.

**Cde. Collymore:** I can make a donation to you of this one. As soon as I am finished I will give it to you. We have some suggestions on page 29. They are quite fair and just.

The Constitution – we want a new Constitution – should provide for an executive President, a Prime Minister and a National Assembly elected every five years. To ensure that elections are free and fair, a new voters' list should be compiled by house to house enumeration under the impartial supervision of representatives of the ruling and opposition parties; proxy postal, and overseas voting should be abolished; and ballots should be counted at the place of poll.

The President – Cde. Speaker, listen now to the suggestions and see if they are not fair and why our friends are afraid – shall be elected by the people as in the United States and France or by the members of the National Assembly. He shall have the right to send messages and proposals to, and to address the National Assembly, and to exercise the right of veto. The National Assembly will have the right to override the veto by a two-thirds majority vote – which they have – after which the measure would automatically become law.

The Prime Minister will be drawn from the party or parties which have majority support in the National Assembly. He will preside over a Cabinet or Council of Ministers drawn from each party (which is revolutionary and agrees to a socialist-oriented programme) in proportion to

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its strength in the National Assembly. Whichever party wins, the election should not oppose the candidature for the Presidency from the other major party.

At the local level, district councils should be directly elected and be based on small historically evolved, culturally-homogeneous communities. Regional Councils, indirectly elected through the district councils, should be given a substantial degree of autonomy.

Rather than go through the process of elections our friends are appointing people. Why can't we have regional elections? Why do they have to appoint regional bodies? I would like my friends on the opposite side to say whether these bodies have been appointed as they have been considered to be. Cde. Speaker, the proposed National Front Government has a programme and this programme which we have here is not at variance with the programme of the P.N.C. I will tell you about it.

The minimum programme of the revolutionary National Front Government should be based on the following:

State ownership of the commanding heights of the economy including the banks and insurance companies: This is one aspect which is out of the way.

Central Planning: Where are our seats on the State Planning Commission? Central Planning and planned proportional development of economy with emphasis on the Ministry of Agriculture: The Minister of Economic Development actually said this yesterday in his very long dissertation.

The expansion of the State and Co-operative sectors.

A land reform aimed at ending rapacious landlordism. They are talking about this but when we look at the opposite side, we see a lot of rapacious landlords. So they will have to check on this, keep it out of the way.

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Free medicine, free education, and adequate State pensions: Not \$15 a month that can't even buy cigarettes and milk.

Workers' control and meaningful involvement of the people in all aspects of socio-economic reconstruction: This is being honoured in the breach.

Development of strong relations with the socialist world: This is also being honoured in the breach – tongue in cheek. If you look at the Government's balance of trade, it is in favour of the imperialists.

Firm measures to end corruption, nepotism, favouritism, black-marketing, racial and political discrimination. Special facilities to all depressed groups, particularly the Amerindian, for development.

Salaries, allowances, etc, for Ministers, Parliamentarians and public servants and others to be so fixed as to narrow the present wide gap between the highest paid and the lowest paid; one person to earn only one salary.

The creation of a democratically run and people-managed National People's Militia with branches in every city block, village and settlement. This is why we are asking them to emphasise the G.P.M.

Imbuing the people with a revolutionary, scientific socialist ideological consciousness. Effective rent and price control – not to have landlords taking off stairs and zinc sheets and ripping off boards and jacking up the rent and not putting a coat of paint on the walls. We are making a farce of this. We should be looking at this more seriously.

**The Speaker:** Cde. Collymore, you recall what your other colleague said when he was renting a house?

He said, “Keeping to his standard as a Member of Parliament, he must live in that house.” Your colleague over there.

**Cde. Collymore:** Yes, I heard that.

Respect for and observance of the fundamental rights laid down in the Constitution: Enactment of integrity legislation and a Commission with “Watchdog” Committees to probe corruption and theft of public property.

The P.P.P. feels that their proposal for a solution to the political impasse which has bedevilled this nation for more than two decades is fair and reasonable. It is confident that all patriotic Guyanese will recognise that it offers a way out of the present crisis. We appreciate the difficulties faced by our comrades on the opposite side but they must realise that if they want the ship of State to move forward properly all the persons rowing must row together, not one side rowing contrary to the opposite side or one side not rowing at all and the other side rowing. The ship will turn round in a circle. This is what is happening to the ship of State in Guyana, it is going round in a circle. We are back where we started, in a deep rut. So we are asking our friends on the opposite side to be serious about solving the economic crisis and to consider our proposals for national unity and progress.

**The Speaker:** Cde. H. O. Jack.

**The Minister of Energy and Natural Resources (Cde. Jack):** Cde. Speaker, we meet at a time when it is recognised by all that the country faces certain difficulties. But I think that there are certain aspects of our situation which lead to optimism and which point towards recovery in the not too distant future. As Minister charged with responsibility for energy and natural resources, there are some plans which the Government has dealing particularly with our natural resources and the development of those resources which I would wish to mention.

(Cde Jack continued)

3.05 p.m.

But, Mr. Speaker, we have been the recipients of certain criticisms. We have listened to remarks, statements, some of them so far away from reality and some of them so dangerous that I thought that before embarking upon the presentation of the things which I intend to present, I should make a few responses to some of the remarks that have been made on the other side.

In an effort to be critical, it would seem that some of the members of the Opposition are prepared to do damage to the economy and to damage the security of this country. It is within this context that I think I should say something about the very strange – and I am using the most polite word that I can think of at the moment – the very strange call for a reduction in the size of the Army and a reduction in the provisions made for the upkeep of our Defence Force. There are some who would leave us defenceless and who, because perhaps of ambitions and plans that they may secretly harbour, can only see a Force designed not for the protection of this country in terms of a break water but against their own ambitions. Let it be stated quite clearly here and now that our Defence Force is primarily for the defence of the nation and, of course, to defend order internally if the need arises. **[Applause]**

Cde. Speaker, before I make my next remark I am going to repeat something I have said on previous occasions. I hold the view that members of the Opposition have a right to be informed of matters of particular importance to the nation and I have publicly, in this forum, on previous occasions intimated that if persons who have an interest in Government thought that there was some action by Government or some situation which would cause national concern, that they could, formally or informally, consult with members of the Government and seek information and, as the Opposition knows, I am on record as having offered time and again to supply that information within the bounds of propriety to members who have a legitimate concern. I am particularly concerned that some people would be so irresponsible as to make



remarks in this House which could damage the national interest of this country without having sought to clarify what the issues are.

I refer, Cde. Speaker, particularly to the most unfortunate remarks that have recently been made by the last speaker with reference to what he terms the Surinam situation. This, Cde. Speaker, is a national matter, I have no knowledge that the last speaker has sought to get information from anybody on this side of the House yet he has made bold enough to condemn our country for an action which was taken in the interest of the nation as a whole.

Let me therefore make a few statements with regard to what he has termed the Surinam situation. We have extended our boundaries to take into our patrimony, the waters of the 200 miles where fishing can be obtained. This has been done in conjunction with a number of other countries in the world and is now accepted principle and practice. Other countries, our neighbours, have done likewise. In previous months and in previous times, Guyanese boats have strayed into Surinam waters and they have been seized, their catch confiscated, the persons have been charged and fined and many cases the ships themselves have been confiscated. While in some cases representations have been made, we have recognised the right of any country to seize ships trespassing in their borders and we have not sought to make any public complaint. We have had to accept it. In a similar way a ship strayed into our waters, a fishing vessel, and that vessel was quite properly, along with other vessels, seized and the necessary legal court action was taken. This was within the sovereign rights of this country and it was done for the protection of a natural resource that is of extreme value in the world today, namely fishing.

Now consequent action which has sought to prevent Guyanese fishermen and loggers from using the Corentyne river, and which the Surinam authorities have been at pains to claim was not connected with the action which we took with regard to the ship which was seized, has caused inconvenience and financial and economic loss to some of our Guyanese citizens. It is the duty of the State to look after the legitimate interests of our citizens and we have proceeded to do so.

To make a statement, therefore, in this House that we are wrong and, without finding out the facts, to castigate us, is, I think, an action of disloyalty and I mention it not to gain a point on the other side but to hope that in subsequent presentations made by the Opposition an opportunity will be sought to present a solid front on this matter and to show that we are acting, all of us, as responsible persons.

As I said, we are prepared to discuss with them if they ask us. We do not have to go to everybody and tell them. But what we have been saying is this: Ignorance is no licence for invention and that persons should not, on a matter as serious as this, seek to excuse themselves for irresponsible behaviour on the ground that they do not know. Now, Cde. Speaker, we wish to say just one other thing with regard to this and that is, that in the event we shall continue to pursue our just rights in this matter and we will seek a conclusion which will meet with the legitimate rights of the Guyanese people.

**3:15 p.m.**

Let it be known, as appeared in the newspapers, that the situation with regard to the regime on the Corentyne has been one which was part of a package whereby just before the last World War, it was agreed that the British would recognise the Corentyne as belonging to the Dutch at the same time that the Dutch would recognise that the New River triangle belonged to British Guiana. The people in Surinam have sought to question the second part of that agreement while holding on to the benefits of the first part. As I said, those of us who may have some hope some time in the future to find ourselves with responsibility for running the affairs of this country should be careful that we do not give up what are the rights of this country just for the purpose of gaining a present political advantage.

Enough of that, Cde. Speaker. There is one last point that I would make and that is that there has been a lot of talk in this House about a national front and national unity. There will be

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other speakers who will deal with this but allow me to say the following: I have been amazed at the belief which seems to occupy the minds of some people that the best way of getting a marriage is to abuse the person one hopes to marry, hit that person with a hammer on his head and drag that person into marriage. It would appear that there are some people who believe that they can come day after day and say what terrible people we are on this side of the House and when they are finished say “Let us join together.” I do not think that is the way in which it will be done but as I say, I will not spend too much time on this because there are other speakers who will take up this particular topic.

Now, let me turn to some of the things which point to the fact that while at the moment we are experiencing economic and financial difficulties which are also being experienced by many other countries in the world, there are signs and projections which lead us to believe that we can get out of our present problems and that we can find ourselves in the near future on the road to economic recovery.

First of all I turn to the question of forestry. This year we hope to sign an agreement with the World Bank and with the E.C.F. for providing funds for the establishment of a sawmilling complex in the upper Demerara, some 65 miles south of Wismar. That complex will produce 18 million board feet per year and will be the forerunner of a number of ancillary production components and other aspects of production of timber including plywood, veneer, particle board, etc. The cost of that project is estimated at present to be in the vicinity of \$US26 million and we hope that the complex of itself will be started before the end of this year. Already, the preliminary designs are being worked upon and we expect to have them by the end of April.

In keeping with our undertaking to promote this complex, we will be building the Moburo Road, that is, the road from Wismar/Rockstone to the Great Falls area. Forty miles of that road have already been done and we have already started this month, construction on the extra thirty-five miles. We have already mobilised since January and we have a team in the field at the moment geared to the commencement of this project.

This forestry complex should have a very significant impact not only on the quantity but on the quality of the woods which we will be producing and it should also have an impact on the employment situation since there should be something in the nature of 1,200 persons employed during construction and not less than 400 persons after the plant has got on the way.

Apart from this, we will be seeing in the first half of this year, the effects of the CIDA loan which we negotiated last year with Canada. Machinery should be arriving here between April and May and that machinery will be distributed amongst the leading sawmills in the country. We expect from the infusion of this machinery to almost double the productive capacity of those sawmills that are already in operation. Apart from this, we have on order, two head rigs for the Guyana Timbers Limited which suffered a very disastrous loss by fire and expect that between June and September this year that mill should be back in full production. With these developments in the productive sector of the forestry, we expect a significant increase both for local consumption and for export abroad.

The Timber Export Board is being reorganised and improved. Members will recall that we recently sent a team into the Caribbean to look for orders and we have been extremely heartened by what we have found. However, it appears to us that if we are to make a significant inroad into the CARICOM market, we will have to ensure that the wood that we sell is both seasoned and properly preserved. Because of the buyers' market that we have had so far, there has been a tendency here to sell raw wood and wood that has not been preserved but this can no longer be the case. We must, if we are to compete in the international market with woods other than greenheart that is with our mixed tropical hard woods, we must give guarantees for the length of period over which the wood will last as well as guarantees that these woods are properly treated. Up to the present, there has been reluctance on the part of millers locally to embark on seasoning of wood and the Government will take certain action to persuade them to accelerate whatever plans they have for the preservation of wood. Apart from that, the

Government itself in its own mill will this year be carrying out an intensive programme of preservation of wood.

There has been some talk about the difficulties which have attended the changeover from timber leases to timber sales contracts. Previously, grant owners held vast tracts of land over which they had no possibility of carrying out full utilisation. The new policy of the Government is to give timber sales agreements to millers upon proof that they have a capacity to utilise a certain amount of timber and with provisions for them to have the quantity of timber increased as their productive capacity increases. So, there is no intention to restrict the production of the timber manufacturers but to prevent them from holding on to vast tracts of land which they prevent others from using and which they themselves cannot use.

**3.25 p.m.**

Before I leave the question of the production of timber, I think I should take this opportunity to mention that my Ministry has gone on record as assuring timber producers that having regard to the stringency of obtaining foreign exchange for spare parts and equipment, my Ministry is prepared to assist the timber industry, by way of advice and by way of looking and promoting the priorities of timber so that with regard to their production they will not be held up for want of other equipment or for want of spare parts. However, the only way the Ministry can give this assistance is if the timber producers approach the Ministry in the first place. There has been a tendency for timber producers to go directly to the banks in an effort to get foreign currency and only when they find themselves unable to get it then they resort back to the Ministry. We have no objection to them adopting this course but we say that by adopting that course they waste a lot of time.

Now, Cde. Speaker, we come to the question of energy. It is popular in some quarters to criticise an emphasis upon infrastructure but to spend our money and our energies in

manufacturing or in productive enterprise. For myself, I have no quarrel with this proposition. However, I would wish to point out that because of the nature of our country, there are certain aspects of infrastructure which must be carried out if we are to get the benefit of any other production which we will embark upon. One of the most important of these is the development of cheap electricity in Guyana. We have estimated that if we do not have the hydro-power station developed, then by 1984/1985 our energy bill will be something between \$400 million and \$500 million Guyana dollars and that is assuming that we kept our energy consumption to what it is today. It makes no provision for the natural increases in energy which any developing country must expect to have. If we did have to have an energy bill of \$400 million to \$500 million, you can readily understand that most of the increased value that we may get over those years will go into paying only for energy.

Apart from that, with the high cost of energy as it is now and as it is projected to be, a lack of cheap energy will stultify industrial development in this country. It is, therefore, vitally necessary for us to develop our hydro-electric potential and the hydro-electric site and the project which we have identified is the one, in our opinion, which would give us the cheapest cost of energy. We have already built over half of the road that goes from Bartica to the hydro-electric site. I would like to suggest that later in the year a Parliamentary group should take the opportunity of visiting the road to see what is being done. I know that I have discussed this with some Members before and it seems that this is something, at least, on which we do not have any great disagreement. So that, hopefully, later in the year we will mount a team so that Members of Parliament can see. The reason for this is that in my view it is a national effort, it is an effort which is of extreme importance to all of us who look towards the development of our country.

However, despite the fact that we are developing this hydro-electric site, we cannot abandon or disregard the potential for small hydro-electric sites such as one would find in far-off places like the Rupununi, the North West District, etc. At the moment, we have a study being done of the Moco Moco River in the Rupununi and our officials are studying the possibility of

developing a very small hydro-electric plant in that area to serve that area and, therefore, to relieve us of the necessity of importing more fuel. I know that yesterday Cde. Ramsahoye gave a very concise and clear exposition of the benefit to be derived from wood and I would not go over what he has said. Let me merely say that with regard to charcoal, we have contact with the

National Science Research Council. We are proceeding with all dispatch in the development of our charcoal industry and we have the prospect at the moment of an export trade of about 20,000 tons of charcoal in the very near future.

There are certain aspects of the forestry operation which I think I should mention at this stage. The Forest Department has, in the past, operated as a monitoring department and has attempted, within the limits of its capabilities, a certain degree of investigatory work. But with the thrust which we are placing on forestry, the Ministry is of the opinion that we need a new structure, a structure which will, in a more comprehensive manner, superintend the promotion of the entire forest industry in this country.

For this reason, very shortly we propose to bring Cabinet proposals to transform the Forest Department into a Forestry Commission charged with the planning and development of the forestry sector of this country. My friend says that this is an old thing. That is true but we cannot do everything at one time. We will be doing it, hopefully, this year.

Turning now to the question of geology and mining, we are going to be establishing very shortly a gold-buying agency. Last year I recall that I did mention our intention of doing so. It is unfortunate that we were unable to establish it before but I can assure this House that next Tuesday the Bill and the attendant memorandum will be presented to Cabinet. The work has been done and I expect that it will be passed next Tuesday so that within a month we shall have a gold-buying agency. The purpose of the agency is that Government will be the sole buyer of raw gold, Government or the State will be the sole exporter of raw gold but we will sell a certain

portion of gold to local jewellers for the manufacture of jewellery. We have found that while we have been giving assistance for the development of the gold industry, and while the declared figures of gold production have gone up, we have reason to believe that those figures represent merely a fraction of the true production. We understand also that there have been certain small aeroplanes which fly in the hinterland and which upon occasion, take advantage of their position to move gold in and out of this country. Steps will be taken very shortly to monitor these planes and if it becomes necessary, I will propose that the planes be grounded.

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Apart from the gold-buying agency, we also intend to transform the geological and mining department into a separate commission charged with the responsibility of making long term plans for the development of our mineral resources. One advantage, as I see it, of these two transformations, that is, the forestry commission and the geological and mining commission is that these commissions will be self-financing. The geological and mining commission will be financed out of assets from increased royalty on our mineral production and the forestry commission will be financed largely out of what used to be called royalty. We have not changed that in something over 30 years, the royalties to be paid both on forestry and in mining, and we think it is high time that this ought to be done if we are to give a better and an up-to-date service in both of these sectors.

I think I should mention something about the Upper Demerara Development Authority. I spoke a moment ago about the necessity of having hydro-power but now I wish to say something about the opening up of the creeks and rivers in the Upper Mazaruni. You will recall that Government gave an undertaking that it would give title to those lands as recommended by the Amerindian Lands Commission for ownership by Amerindians, and you will also recall that we have done so in all areas of the country except the Mazaruni. We have not given this title in the Mazaruni because due to the prospect of flooding of the area we are looking to see where the



persons who live in the area can be resettled and therefore we have established a resettlement Committee on which Amerindian and other persons particularly concerned are represented.

However, we decided that in order to ensure that we do not allow the resources of that area to remain there dormant and to have it flooded in such a way that we cannot get the benefit of it, we would, stage by stage and under controlled conditions, open up some of that area. With that in view, the Government developed a scheme under which it selected something like 72 Amerindians to be trained in prospecting and diving for gold and diamonds. Apart from that, the Government build for the Amerindian communities 12 dredges which it presented on the 12<sup>th</sup>

October last year to the Amerindian community. In this way for the very first time in the history of this country – and I would be bold enough to say in the history of South America – the Amerindians were brought into a position where they could share equally in the exploitation of the natural resources of this country and I am happy to say that within a very short time they were recovering almost as much gold and diamond as the coastlanders.

For the period 16<sup>th</sup> October, 1977, to 31<sup>st</sup> January, 1978, the Amerindians produced 680 ounces of gold while the other producers produced 891 ounces. The value as we have put it down here and as calculated at \$G310 per ounce works out to \$210,800 to the Amerindians and \$275,490 to the rest of the pork-knockers. All that is paid on this is royalty. In the case of the Amerindians they do not pay royalty. Up to now we have not had the gold-buying agency established but it is intended that when the agency is established we will collect the gold, we will give a price for the gold, and we will sell it. All those figures have not yet been worked out.

Cde. Speaker, we come to the question of the bauxite industry. Last year – on the 1<sup>st</sup> October, to be exact – merger took place between the Berbice Mining Enterprise, Bermine, and the Guyana Bauxite Company, Guybau, creating a new enterprise now called GUYMINE. This Enterprise has certain special features about it which I wish to comment on. The bauxite

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industry, since its nationalisation, has been a trade's agent in many of the developments which we hope to have taking place in this country. We have been talking about workers' participation and workers' control but we have said that we are not going to copy slavishly anything from another country. We have sat down and worked out over the months a system for participation of workers and the community and I wish to explain what we have developed.

We have developed a set of councils called Bauxite Community Councils. These councils are composed of representatives of the Union, elected workers, representatives of Local Authorities and representatives of other interested organisations. There are three bauxite community councils, one at Everton, one at Kwakwani, and one at Linden and I am happy to say that today at Everton, at Kwakwani, and at Linden, these community councils are being inaugurated.

The purpose of this, Cde. Speaker, and I maintain that this is an advance on what has happened elsewhere in this country so far, is to recognise that an industry has a responsibility not only to the country as a whole but to the community in which it is situated. For this reason, to give an example, at Everton we have representatives of the G.M.W.U., the G.D.S.A., the Town Council, non-management workers, management workers, education, etc. A similar thing has been inaugurated in the case of Kwakwani and in Linden and the purpose of this is to ensure that the needs of the community are taken into consideration.

**3:45 p.m.**

We do not have a situation in which the management of itself sits down and thinks only of what the company is going to do for itself. The company must gear its operations in such a way that not only must it be considering what surpluses it will be making, but it must be alive to the needs of the community and for this reason representatives of the community will be sitting on the various boards. There are some who would claim that this will not work. Well, let us

wait and see. We do not claim that we have a blueprint cut and dried for success in every field of human endeavour. We accept that we are going through a period of experimentation, and we can give this assurance that if this does not work, it will be changed. It is not like the laws of the Medes and the Persians that have to remain here forever. What we are saying is that a genuine attempt is being made to give voice and participation not merely to the workers but to the community as well and this is a concept, I think, which should be appreciated on both sides of the House.

Now, Cde. Speaker, there are some other aspects of our bauxite development which I wish to touch upon. It appears that there are some who place the Government in a role of villain and whenever they notice the Government doing something progressive they become a little uncomfortable. They want us to live up to the description which they have made of us. I am very sorry that in my presentation I have not said anything that will allow them to feel satisfied that we are living up to the description which they made of us but I will try some time in the future but not in this forum. We are proposing this year to redouble our efforts to finalise arrangements for the development of a smelter which I spoke about on the last occasion. All other studies have been completed and it is quite clear that we in Guyana have one of the best prospects in the developing world of producing not only hydro-electricity but an aluminium smelter. It could be the foundation for industrialisation in this country. Some people do not understand how long it takes for a serious and large developmental process to take place. In the case of the Aswan Dam, persons were working on it and the Egyptian Government was working on it since 1947 and in other friendly countries near to us where they have been producing other minerals, some of our friends know that ten years is a short time to have a development of over US\$1,000 million. But, I am happy to see the confidence which they placed in us when they feel impatient if we do not carry out matters of this nature in five years.

We also propose to develop our kaolin resources. We have before us now three proposals which we are studying, hopefully before the end of this year a decision will be made and we

should next year see the development of construction of a kaolin plant. The bauxite industry is also pursuing investigation for the production in this country of refractory material. This could be a very useful addition to the product-mix which we have been producing in the bauxite industry so far.

Apart from this, we are also studying the feasibility of developing a caustic soda plant and we have also been in discussion with a friendly Socialist country for the erection of an additional alumina plant in Guyana. Comrades would know that up until recently we imported alumina from abroad but late last year a decision was taken that the bauxite industry would be the producer of alum for our needs. I am happy to say that by June this year we will be supplying all of the needs of Guyana; we would be producing something over 1,000 tons a year and we are already searching for markets overseas.

Those are some of the products which we are working on in the bauxite industry. Apart from these, of course, there is the question of oil. We have not had the success in oil exploration which we had expected. But, this is largely due to the fact that oil exploration is an extremely costly enterprise and, apart from that, one is forced, of necessity, to deal with some of the multinationals whose conditions for participation are extremely onerous. It is easy to speak of going to the Socialist camp for oil exploration but up to the present our greatest potential for oil happens to be off-shore and not on-shore and our friends in the Socialist camp have their greatest expertise in exploration on-shore and not in off-shore exploration. Added to this, because of the distant off-shore where there are likely to be deposits of oil, the cost of drilling one well is something in the region \$3 million.

We are at the moment in discussion with two oil companies and should we be able to reach agreement then later this year the first phase of their exploratory work, that is the sizing work, should be done. One cannot say any more than that at this stage because we are in a stage of negotiation

We have been also looking at our radioactive potential and in recent times we have been the recipient of many interested inquiries concerning the development of our radioactive potential. Comrades would know that particularly with regard to uranium it is a sensitive subject and until matters have been finalised it would not be in the interest of the nation to have details disclosed but at another forum I am prepared to discuss with the relevant person on the other side what are our prospects in this field.

Basically, these are the things which my Ministry intends to do during the course of this year. One can see therefore that despite the fact that at this moment some persons on the Opposition are wringing their hands and saying what a terrible state we are in, we have the prospect before us, given the will and given the desire on the part of persons to work co-operatively together, we have the prospect of pulling ourselves out of our difficulty and becoming a truly prosperous nation.

But, Cde. Speaker, I have listened to statements coming from the other side and I have wondered why it is that we cannot hear from them what it is that they would really do. They tell us not to do away with the subsidies. They say to us that we should not borrow money; they say that we should not redeploy; they complain that the government Service is swollen and at the same time they complain if we redeploy any persons out of the Government service. They claim that we are bankrupt. They say we have no money and they say at the same time that we must keep everybody in employment and pay them with the money which they say that we do not have. Since Lewis Carroll wrote **Alice in Wonderland**, I am sure that publishers have been looking for another author and would they come to Guyana I am sure they would find such an author. I will not say – because of my great respect for this House – that they would find that author seated on the benches of the Opposition. I have not said so, but they will find such a person.

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3.55 – 3.57 p.m.

3:55 p.m.

I would like to urge in conclusion, that those who claim to want to see progress in this country that they should be prepared to let us engage in constructive dialogue. We have heard **ad nauseam** about corruption, squandermania, etc. Let us sit down and let us hear if there are constructive proposals. It does seem, listening to my friend, that apart from the fact that he wants us to stand naked without an army, most of the rest of the things that we are doing he agrees with but of course he has to say it in a very roundabout manner. But if it is that they have constructive proposals, let us hear those constructive proposals. We have put forward our proposals. Furthermore, I would say that their call for a National Front is not to be made at this place. Perhaps it should be made somewhere else. Perhaps it should be made not somewhere else but at another time, after Members of the Opposition have shown a capacity and willingness for co-operation.

**The Speaker:** Comrades, perhaps this is a convenient time to take the suspension, but before I do that, I am sure you will be happy to learn that Australia is batting. We have four wickets down for 37 runs. The Sitting is suspended for 30 minutes.

*Sitting suspended at 4 p.m.*

4:35 p.m.

*On resumption –*

**The Speaker:** Comrades, I want to thank Cde. Collymore for being so kind enough as to give me a copy of “For a National Front Government”. I also wish to say that during the recess, Cde. Belgrave mentioned to me that my statement was not accurate, although Cde. Collymore concurred with it. I am sorry it was not so. Cde. Dalchand.

**Cde. Dalchand:** Cde. Speaker, today this country is in a serious economic straitjacket, worse than ever before. Last year the nation was presented with a hopeless austerity budget. This year the nation is being presented with another hopeless assumption and expectation budget. The P.N.C. Government has hopelessly failed to realise its expectations in the 1977 budget and so, to further confuse and fool the nation, the Minister has presented the 1978 budget with a four-year projected programme. If the Minister could not successfully achieve the objective of his annual budget, I wish to assure him that he is again treasuring another false hope which is bound to fail.

The P.N.C. Government is noted for its failures and more failures, budget deficits and greater budget deficits. Last year when the 1977 budget was presented, there was a projected deficit of about \$72 million. But that year ended with a total budget deficit of over \$143 million. That sum was doubled. This year the budget is proposed with an over-all deficit of over \$130 million. The situation, as I said earlier, is very critical. The situation this year is worse than last year and I am confident that this sum also is going to double itself by the end of this year. Government must accept the blame for these failures which are due to its poor, unrealistic planning and discriminative policies.

Today, there is wholesale deterioration in all Government services. Important drainage and irrigation work, constructed and properly maintained during the P.P.P. Government up to 1964, is now neglected and has been ruined. This is one of the main reasons for a drop in total agricultural production. Coupled with this, farmers who are making tremendous sacrifice to produce under these existing inhuman conditions, cannot receive payments for their produce. Provision farmers in many areas, who have supplied their produce to the Guyana Marketing Corporation since January this year, are unable to receive their payments. Rice farmers, pig farmers, and other farmers are in the same dilemma. Although the farmers are the ones on whom the Government is dependent to save it, yet these people are being treated like rats.

The Government, earlier this year, increased the price of rice for local consumption from \$1 per gallon to \$2 per gallon. When the Minister was making the announcement he promised the consuming public of this country better quality rice. I wish to tell this House that the consumers of this country who are being asked to pay double for their rice are still receiving pig feed standard of rice. I call upon the Government to honour its obligations to the consumers of this country and to see that the consumers get good quality rice to eat because they are now paying double. The rice being sold to the public is deemed as No.1 rice. The Rice Board buys, as No. 1 rice from the rice farmers, a quality of rice with not more than 12 percent broken and for this the rice farmers are receiving between \$36 and \$38 per bag. But the Rice Marketing Board, through the Government, is selling rice with over 80 percent broken for \$2 per gallon and they want to deem it as No. 1 rice. I make this point to show that the consumers are not receiving No. 1 rice as was stated and promised by the Minister. I wish to go further. It was anticipated when the Government increased the local selling price of rice that this would yield about \$10 million. I want to tell this House and the nation that not even one farthing of that extra income has been passed on to the rice farmers of this land. The Government wants productivity and increased production. But the Government is only interested in this productivity and production for its own ends. You can see clearly that the farmers and the consuming public are being robbed by this Government.

**4:45 p.m.**

I will now move on to deal with roads which is a very important means of communication. I need not repeat myself about the West Demerara road. This road was started in 1973 at a cost of \$9.5 million.

This was to cover 38 miles of road to be built on West Demerara including Canal No. 2. Up to the end of last year a sum of over \$30 million had been spent on these roads and I want to



tell this House today that less than 70 percent of the work is so far completed. Late last year when the Minister responsible was making a plea to this House for a supplementary budget, he gave the assurance that this sum would have completed the West Demerara roads. I have seen that there is a further \$8 million being asked for in this Budget to complete the roads. Again I want to say that this further sum now being sought will not complete the roads. I want to appeal to the Minister to stick to his promises and make certain that work commences now in building the No. 1 Canal public road where the greatest portion of the residents are farmers.

After wasting huge sums of money on roads in other parts of the country, for example, Leguan and other farming areas, the road programme, I understand, is now abandoned. The same thing applies to roads in Wakenaam. Let us look at access roads where we have farmers. Let us take the land settlement scheme, the road at Tain. The road is in a deplorable condition. We have the farmers in that area, mainly rice and cane farmers. Just a little bit of rain and you cannot travel properly on the road. Since 1968, Government has been making promises to those people living in that area about a better road. I now want to call upon the Government to give these people who are farmers a better all-weather road.

I will go further to mention the farmers at Hubu and Parika backdam. These are the people who have been supplying hundreds of tons of provisions to the markets in Georgetown and recently those are the people who are not being paid for their provisions. Those are the people who do not have any road at all.

I want to ask the Minister, I want to appeal to the Government, that attempts be made now to provide those with a fair-weather road until the situation improves for them to have good all-weather roads. The Government claimed that it was the rice farmers and the other farmers, especially the rice farmers, who produced that bumper crop last year. That saved Government from a disastrous financial position yet this Government is turning a blind eye and its back on these progressive people.

There is also tremendous suffering throughout the country in the farming areas. I also want to draw to the attention of the Minister of Agriculture the plight of 46 farming families living at Laluni 12 miles from New Kuru Kuru. There is nothing near even a realistic service. These people, 46 families, live at the mercy of the Demerara Tobacco Company. These people have been producing tons and tons of tobacco. These people have been helping this country to save foreign exchange. These people have been contributing to the revenue of this country. Tobacco was one of the items chosen by the Minister of Finance to give him some more money to help to meet his expenditure. These people, as I said, live 12 miles from the main road. The only means of transportation they have is apparently sometimes being provided with tractor and trailer transport. The sick and pregnant mothers have to be transported through those roads. The nearest health centre is at Soesdyke and I was told that last year a lady had to walk through knee-deep sand, sometimes being helped, to reach the health centre to be delivered of her baby.

These are some instances of the plight of these families. The Government of Guyana has given the lease of those lands to the Demerara Tobacco Company and the Demerara Tobacco Company in turn has rented the lands to those farmers. There is no security for these farmers relating to their holdings. I call upon the Minister of Agriculture to investigate this situation and to see that proper leases are executed to those farmers by the Government so that they can have security for the sacrifices they are making. These people are in a serious dilemma. They cannot have water. They are not even allowed to plant subsistence crops.

I notice that the Demerara Tobacco Company denied this. I wish to say I was there and the Demerara Tobacco Company has prohibited them from planting any other crop by tobacco and the sole purchaser of those people's produce is the Demerara Tobacco Company. They can sell their produce to no one else. The price for the people's produce is also fixed by the monopoly Demerara Tobacco Company.

I wish to move a little further on the local government situation –

**The Speaker:** You will have to do it very quickly because you have only 5 minutes more.

**Cde. Dalchand:** This P.N.C. Government has miserably failed to mobilise the people under the local government. Many local government areas today are in this way. Many local authorities cannot meet for they fail to get a quorum. Many members do not attend meetings. The whole local government system is now in bankruptcy. Maintenance of subsidiary and important work that is supposed to be done by these people has been also neglected and the sum collected is being misspent. The greatest part of taxation received by the local authorities is being spent on wages, excursions, etc. I call upon the Government to stop fixing robots in these positions. Hold free Local Government Elections and let the people elect their representatives who will offer them the necessary services.

**4:55 p.m.**

Cde. Speaker, as my time is limited, I am prepared to go a little faster on my subjects. Pure water. It is a shame for anyone representing the Government to stand in this House and tell the people that the supply of pure water has improved. Throughout the length and breadth of this country the supply of pure water has become a hopeless failure. A well collapsed at La Grange for over seven weeks and nothing can be done to bring water to those suffering people. Since October 1976, the Guyana Water Authority embarked on constructing a new well. Up to this moment, that well has not been completed. One well will take almost two years. I know those responsible will make false attestations here. I want to call on this House and the Prime Minister to appoint a commission of investigation to inquire into this hopeless pure water situation.

The P.N.C. Government has failed to grapple with the problem of this country. Agricultural Livestock Extension Services. Today this is a service that many livestock farmers cannot dream of seeing. I had cause to speak to a Livestock Officer. He said he is willing to

work but they are not receiving travelling allowances so he cannot go and meet the needs of the farmers.

As I said, the P.N.C. Government has failed to grapple with the problems of this country. It has hopelessly failed the nation. It has ruined the economy of a very progressive and prosperous people. The P.P.P. is confident that even at this critical stage the nation can be saved. I now call on the P.N.C. Government to accept the P.P.P.'s meaningful call for a National Front Government or resign now and restore democracy, hold free and fair elections, and let a progressive P.P.P. Government lead this nation to prosperity.

**The Speaker:** Comrades, the score is now set 7 for 75; Croft has taken three wickets. Cde. Seeram Prashad.

**The Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Economic Development and Co-operatives (Cde. Prashad):** Cde. Speaker, when last I spoke to this House on the subject of potable water supplies, I had referred to some of the formidable problems involved with this question and to the achievements, up to that date, of the People's National Congress Government in dealing with these problems. Today, this Government is no less determined in its aims and no less unrelenting in its efforts to provide all the people of Guyana, regardless of race, creed, or political affiliation, with an opportunity to obtain pure, adequate and reliable supplies of water.

Guyana, we are told is a land of many waters and, indeed, Guyana undoubtedly has abundant surface waters mainly in the streams and rivers which carry run-off from heavy rainfall northward to the Atlantic Ocean. But supplies of fresh water, said to be in large quantities, are also known to exist in the sub-surface aquifers of the Guyana basin, and this is the primary source of virtually all of the potable water in the coastal areas.

Guyana's economy, for the most part, is tied to the exports of the agricultural and mining industries in which the bulk of the total labour force of over 200,000 is engaged. Even though considerable advance has been made in the mechanisation of agricultural and mining operations, the economy of the country is heavily dependent upon the productivity of its labour force. It is obvious, therefore, that the elimination or reduction of illness arising from diseases must have the effect of increasing the productivity of the labour force. The provision of adequate and wholesome water supplies to existing areas and the expansion of these supplies to new areas, must lend to an improvement in the quality of life of all our peoples along with the economic benefits which follow on the attraction of industry to new areas and the encouragement of a more uniform distribution of population. In all parts of the world, in developed as well as developing countries, improvement of the environment is receiving increased attention because it is generally accepted that the absence or deterioration of conditions which support life, threatens the very existence of mankind.

In the past, I have heard reference made in this House to what was described as the brain-drain, but the provision of amenities of this kind, would tend to make the rural areas, in particular, a more desirable place in which to live and work, to increase productivity, and reduce the drain on man-power through emigration.

The situation regarding the morbidity and mortality of diseases which are water-borne must naturally be reduced following the improvement and expansion of urban and rural water supply services. This Government is satisfied that its vigorous and imaginative approach to this problem and to the question of environmental sanitation is leading to an elevation of life and to the reduction of the case rate in water-borne diseases.

In the period prior to the assumption of office of this People's National Congress Government, water supplies and services for the country, were scattered among various agencies and, of the systems then operating, many were either derelict or on the verge of collapse, and

only the feeble attempts were made by the colonial and other administrations of the past to deal with this challenging problem. But this Government had resolved, as a major objective, to solve once and for all this situation no matter how daunting it appeared. To this end, therefore, this government established the Guyana Water Authority as a Public Corporation, with power to provide water supply services, to plan and develop new capital work-projects, to prevent contamination and degradation of the country's water resources and to provide other regulatory functions.

**5:05 p.m.**

From its inception in 1972, the Guyana Water Authority, conscious of its responsibility to the nation, has endeavoured to provide the country with adequate supplies of wholesome water. It would be misleading if I were to suggest that this formidable task is completed or even nearing completion. What I would say is that very considerable progress had been made. The plans for these improvement schemes which were meticulously prepared some eight years ago with the help of overseas consultants were conceived as an on-going project to be executed, stage by stage, up to the year 2000, and the estimated expenditure at that time was of the order of \$140 million. At current costs, attributable to world-wide inflation, that figure of estimated expenditure might be increased to as much as \$280 million.

I have referred to the assistance we have had from overseas consultants in planning these schemes, but opportunity was also taken to train young Guyanese in Public Health Engineering, in the first place, at the University of Guyana, and as individual engineers demonstrated their willingness and ability, arrangements were made for them to proceed for higher training in Public Health engineering at overseas Universities. Training has also been extended to trades – people in various skills including pump operators, pipe-fitters and well-drillers.

As regards the first improvement scheme for Demerara, all stages on the East Coast, (Coldingen to Cummings Lodge) and on the East Bank, up to Friendship, have been completed. The last stage at East Bank is in progress and it is about 86 percent completed. In other districts, we have not just been marking time. Expansion and improvement of old water systems have taken place over extensive areas of the country. The obtaining of materials from overseas is still one of the major problems in these operations with delivery dates in some cases being as long as one year and sometimes longer. However, the laying down of extensive lengths of pipelines is not all. Water must first be produced before it could be distributed through pipes.

As I stated earlier, the main source, that is to say, about 80 percent of all potable water supplied in the coastal area is extracted from the sub-surface aquifer, described as the “A” sands, which are encountered at depths of from 250 feet to as much as 1400 feet along the coast. Wells have been drilled in these sands from Pomeroun on the west to the Corentyne on the east. Water pumped from this aquifer contains some percentage of iron, but otherwise the water quality is excellent since the chloride content and hardness are very low. Unfortunately, because of the iron-content this water is “aggressive”, that is, it is highly corrosive. Because of this, non-corrosive materials must be used in the construction of wells. These materials, comprised mainly of stainless steel and fibre glass, are considerably more expensive than ordinary mild steel. I mention these facts because it is very necessary to bear them in mind when one considers the current cost of constructing a well with the appropriate materials.

In all these operations it has been one of the cardinal objectives of the Government that the programme for increased water production should be planned to meet not only increased domestic consumption but also the demands of industry. In this respect, well have been completed at Yarowkabra for the Glass Factory on the Linden-Soesdyke Highway; at the Bel-Lu Claybrick Factory, West Bank, Demerara; at Moblissa, Demerara River, for the dairy products; at Charity, Pomeroun, and at Parika to include service for the cassava Factory; at Ruimveldt for

the textile mill and at Burma for the Guyana Rice Board. A new well is under construction at Enmore Sugar Estate.

The construction of fourteen new wells was undertaken during the past year in areas extending from the Essequibo coast and Islands, East and West Coast Demerara, Timehri and Kuru Kuru, Canje and Corentyne, Berbice, at a cost of approximately \$2 million. On completion of the wells, pumping stations were constructed and pumping equipment installed comprising mainly deep-well turbine pumps powered either by electrically driven motors or diesel engines. Where diesel engines are used, the selected pump and engine speeds are such that with the advent of electricity in the area, an electric motor could be installed for regular use with the diesel engine as a standby.

The expenditure incurred in the sinking of each well in the “A” sands is between \$350,000 while the cost of constructing a Pump House and providing the pumping and ancillary equipment is of the order of \$110,000 per well. The total number of wells sunk throughout the country is 314.

In the drive to extend potable water supplies to as many new areas as possible and to improve existing supplies, a total of 72,000 feet of new pipelines was laid at a cost of \$537,000 benefiting communities extending from Charity, Pomeroon, through Somerset and Berks, Henrietta, Johanna Cecilia, Anna Regina, Queenstown, and Adventure in Essequibo, Wismar Rockstone, Windsor Forest on the west Coast Demerara, Perseverance on the East Coast Demerara and Canje, Berbice. In addition, as part of the First Improvement Scheme, a total 26,830 feet of pipelines was laid in the area extending from Industry to Buxton, East Coast Demerara, at a cost of \$213,000, and 13,633 feet from Agricola to Soesdyke involving expenditure of \$135,000.



5:15 p.m.

It is estimated that the projects carried out so far actually serve a population of approximately 770,000 persons. It would not be out of place to inform the House that through the efforts of this Government to which I have referred, the population served with potable water has exceeded the ten-year goal adopted by the Third Special Meeting of the Ministers of Health of the Americas in 1972.

The Guyana Water Authority has established a water quality control laboratory, and the staff appointed was given extra training in chemical and bacteriological analysis to ensure that the quality of water distributed in the systems conforms with international standards and requirements.

The Hydro meteorological Section of the Ministry of Works and Transport is not directly involved in water supply, but is responsible for collecting, recording and analysing hydrologic information concerning aquifers, rainfall, etc. Some domestic water supply wells are tested periodically by this Section to determine chemical and mineral content and sampling for bacteriological analysis has also been performed in the rural systems.

I make no apology for referring once more to the rather profligate use of water by consumers both urban and rural, evidenced by taps left open, unreported leakages and general wastefulness. I pointed out earlier that the treatment of water for the removal of iron is a costly operation. It is indeed a situation in which every consumer – man, woman and child – must be awakened in a true socialist spirit, to their responsibility, and to a due regard of the real cost of producing water. Moreover, at this time, especially when the provisions proposed for financing the operations to produce potable water for our people are such that they reflect the national austerity, it is all-important for each user to appreciate the need to exercise care, avoid wastage and ensure that all equipment is adequately protected.

I would venture to say, Cde. Speaker, that the statement I have made today is a catalogue of very impressive achievements by this Government in the field of potable water supply, and I have no doubt whatever that at the appropriate stage, this House would have not the slightest hesitation in giving its approval to the provisions proposed for financing these operations.

Cde. Dalchand has claimed that the well at La Grange collapsed but because of the good planning of the Guyana Water Authority we took action to build a new well and I am happy to tell this House that that well was completed a week ago. Preparations are now being made to install the pump.

**The Speaker:** Cde. Dalchand, if you don't behave I'll ask you to leave the Chamber and you cannot sit there and sleep.

**Cde. Prashad:** At the same time a week ago water tenders were used to supply people with water but because of good planning the Guyana Water Authority has drilled a new well to replace the old one.

Cde. Speaker, at this stage I would wish to deal with areas of Government's activities as they relate to Local Government. From time to time various definitions have been given to the expression, Local Government, but the definition which appeals to me most is the one which states that:- **“Local Government is a decentralised system of administration, democratically controlled by the people of the local communities”**, and the for its special appeal to me, is that it enshrines the three main characteristics of Local Government, that is:-

- a) The administration of services in a prescribed local area
- b) The councils responsible for administration are drawn from within specified local areas
- c) The management of the affairs of the councils are in the hands of the councils

At present, in addition to the City of Georgetown and the Town of New Amsterdam, there are three other Towns (Linden, Rose Hall and Corriverton), twenty District Councils and thirty-five Village Districts and Country Districts. It was not surprising that some of the new Local Authorities had encountered difficulties of one kind or another immediately following their establishment. By and large, however, the Councils have overcome their initial problems and have since settled down and are, in fact, making reasonable progress. In this respect, it would be of more than passing interest if I should direct attention to some of the areas of significant progress by Local Authorities.

The routine maintenance of drainage and irrigation trenches, kokers and sluices which are the responsibility of the Local Authority, has been carried out at a pace commensurate with the collection of rates. In some cases, new trenches have been dug and new kokers constructed. All such works are intended to provide improved facilities for agricultural crops, particularly rice. Considerable acreages of farm land have benefited from these works, and this has led to an increase in agricultural production, especially rice.

Prior to the Government's assuming the responsibility for all education in the country, Local Authorities had established no less than twenty-four nursery schools. Most of the expenditure on these Projects was met by the Local Authorities concerned from their own revenue. Following the take-over of these schools by Government in 1976, the Local Authorities have continued to be associated with their management and have been organising self-help groups to take care of maintenance.

**5:25 p.m.**

In Georgetown, health clinics have been established at six areas in the city, while at Linden, one such clinic has been established. The expenditure for these projects was met directly from the revenues of the Councils concerned.

As the local sanitary authority of its district, the Local Authority is responsible for exercising the functions and performing the duties relating to public health as required by the Public Health Act. It is also responsible for the promotion of Public Health and carrying out certain elementary environmental sanitation services. Certain Councils provide garbage collection services.

Local authorities are also responsible for processing building applications and submitting them to the Central Housing and Planning Authority for approval for land use, following which they also issue building permits.

The administration and maintenance of Community Centres and Recreation grounds, including those transferred by the Sugar Industry Labour Welfare fund Committee, are the responsibility of the Local Authorities, and the cost is met from the rates collected. Some Local authorities have branches of the National Library in their areas, and the physical facilities for the operation of these branches are provided by the Councils concerned.

Many Local Authorities in Demerara and Berbice have availed themselves of the facilities provided by the Guyana Electricity Corporation's expansion schemes by installing public street lighting financed from their own revenues. This has been a boon to the residents concerned, and has contributed in no small measure towards the general elevation of the quality of life.

In Georgetown, the City Council has continued its programme for the routine maintenance of roads in the city, while further steps were taken regarding the reconstruction of roads particularly in the newly incorporated areas at the eastern extremity of the city. New projects executed by the City Council include the construction of one mile of asphalt road, 2,400 feet of concrete and asphalt pavement and one traffic bridge at Tucville involving expenditure of \$500,000, \$50,000 and \$90,000 respectively.

In the rural areas, considerable progress was made in the construction of all-weather roads. To date, a total of seventy miles of all-weather roads has been constructed in these areas extending from Corriverton, Corentyne, to Vergenoegen, Essequibo, at a cost of \$14 million. In this connection, I would wish to express to the Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Fund Committee the gratitude and appreciation of Government for their willing and generous assistance in the financing of these projects.

For the purpose of providing drainage for the area of Georgetown east of Sheriff Street, the City Council embarked on a scheme involving the digging of a new drainage trench, the construction of a reinforced concrete culvert and the installation of an electrically-powered drainage pump at a total cost of \$1.5 million. This project is now completed.

The Valuation Division of the Ministry of Economic Development and Co-operatives is responsible for all the professional and technical aspects of valuation and for the preparation of the valuation lists for the collection of rates and taxes. The valuation for Local Government rating has been carried out on the annual rental (value) basis for the City and all the towns in Guyana and is being carried out on the capital value basis for the rural local authority areas in the rest of the country.

To date, the Division has completed the revaluation of properties for the following: Georgetown, New Amsterdam, Linden, Rose Hall, Corriverton and the Local Government Districts of: East Coast, Berbice, Plaisance/Industry, Eccles/Ramsburg and Leguan. The revaluation of properties at Parika/Salem and Klien/Pouderoyen/Best are currently in progress, and during the year similar exercises will be carried out at Goed Fortuin, Toevlugt/Potentia and Canals Polder.

In all Local Authorities, rates represent the principal source of revenue, and from this the pace is set for the financing of developmental works. The importance of this new and scientific

approach to the question cannot be too strongly emphasised, if only for the reason that the new system is leading to the disappearance of the former method of sight valuations, and thus to an equitable distribution of rates collectible from the property owners and to the main source of revenue being raised at levels appropriate for financing the operations of the Local Authorities.

Again I would like to refer to Cde. Dalchand when he said that Local Authorities are not keeping meetings because of want of a quorum. I would like to tell this House that is not true. All Local Authorities are keeping their meetings in accordance with the law, according to the Local Authority Municipal and District Councils Act, Chapter 28:01, and the Local Government Act, Chapter 28:02.

The last three years have witnessed continuing progress in the expansion of the country's electrification programmes. Power lines, transformers and meters were installed and extended at Anna Regina, Essequibo Coast, at Bartica, Wakenaam, and West Bank Demerara from Vriesland to Canal No. 2, at Onverwagt, West Coast Berbice, and in East Berbice linking between Rose Hall and No. 53 stations and from Canefield to Kilcoy.

The 69 KV Transmission Line from Garden of Eden, East Bank, to Sophia, East Coast Demerara, was completed and on the commissioning of the rotary converter at Sophia, power was supplied from the Garden of Eden Plant to the Kingston System in Georgetown via the rotary converter at Sophia. During the period referred to a total of 4,602 new consumers was added to the systems.

The on-going expansion programme of electrification for the rural areas provides for the extension of the 69KV Transmission Line, which had been run from Garden of Eden to Sophia, on to Canefield, Canje, crossing both the Berbice and Canje Rivers and then to extend further from Canefield to No. 53 Sub-Station. Further, a second Black Bush Polder feeder is to be built

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**National Assembly**

**5.35 – 5.45 p.m.**

from No. 53 Sub-Station thereby extending the existing 13.8KV line from Linepath, Skeldon, to Crabwood Creek, making power available to all the residents in East Berbice.

As a result of the building of this 69 KV transmission line, it is anticipated that the areas from Esau and Jacob to Mora Point and Champagne Villages, Mahaicony District, would also be supplied.

**5:35 p.m.**

In the case of West Demerara, future plans include extending the 13.8 KV line, which presently feeds the Bel-Lu Claybrick Factory in Canal No. 2 Polder, a distance of 5.1 miles, to the Versailles Power Station. On the Essequibo Coast, it is planned to supply power to the Cozier Canal Project and provide further electrification to the area for the benefit of the residents on the Coast.

It is anticipated that the demand for electricity will increase even more rapidly from 1979 onwards. Because of this, the question is being examined of future additional generation at Garden of Eden to provide power to meet the anticipated needs for development not only at East Bank Demerara but also along the Coast up to the Corentyne area.

**The Speaker:** Comrades, the Australians are all out for 90. Croft has taken 4 wickets. We will now have Cde. Jackson.

**The Minister of Foreign Affairs (Cde. Jackson):** Cde. Speaker, may I begin with an expression of sincere thanks for the welcome which you so generously extended to me on Monday, February 27, 1978, when I took the Oath as a Member of this National Assembly.

In normal times it is generally agreed that a carefully formulated foreign policy is essential to the advancement of national objectives. It is even more necessary in the present circumstances of our economy, described by the Cde. Minister of Finance as “facing an economic crisis”, to maintain the rigorous pursuit of a foreign policy designed to assist in achieving such primary national objectives as the survival and security of the State, the stability and expansion of export markets and the consolidation and acceleration of the process of economic and social development.

Indeed, it is imperative in this increasingly interdependent world that foreign policy be conceived and executed, as this Government has always maintained, as an integral part of national policy. For the two components of that policy – domestic and foreign – are functionally related. Thus, the aims and objectives of our foreign policy must continue to be to ensure the security of the State and, to this end, to work for the creation of an international environment in which small States are no longer subject to pressures to their sovereignty whether overt or subtle in their thrust; to support the programmes of rapid economic development by maintaining and expanding export markets, and by enlisting the co-operation with like-minded States, the establishment of an international order which is supportive of our interests; and, finally, to protect and further the interests of Guyanese nationals abroad.

We are confident that an objective scrutiny of the budget proposals so eloquently presented to this House on Monday afternoon by the Minister of Finance, my colleague, Cde. Frank Hope, will reveal an economical disposition of available funds for the task of discharging the responsibilities of the Government, on behalf of the people, for the development of the country.

In respect of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, except for provision for a Mission in Moscow, which will be opened shortly, the present level of representation will be maintained. We will, however, seek to extend our bilateral, diplomatic and political contacts through a



structured system of non-resident accreditations within the constraints of the resources at our disposal. This level of representation reflects closely our security and economic needs and our regional commitments as well as our continuing close ties with those other countries, regions and peoples from which our own community derives.

Utilising the resources of our Missions and of our Headquarters staff in co-ordination with those of other Ministries, we will continue to provide, in pursuit of an effective foreign policy, representation in certain international forums – in particular the U.N. and its agencies – and at the major consultations of the Non-Aligned Movement, the Group of 77, and the A.C.P. Group of Countries.

Moreover, our bilateral diplomacy will increasingly be employed for the maintenance of stable and remunerative markets, the search for new ones, and the attraction of the necessary external financial and technical support for our programmes of internal development. Nevertheless, with the increasingly important multilateral diplomacy of international forums we will continue to advocate vigorously the creation of an international system which is democratic in its operations and which is attuned to the development effort of the developing countries at national levels. Our multilateral diplomacy will therefore continue to promote the institution of a New International Economic Order.

Cde. Speaker, in the determination to give concrete meaning to our independence we have freely chosen the way of socialism. It is a path appropriate to our circumstances, and on this there is broad-based, national consensus.

As a mature people we recognise that as the Minister of Finance observed:

“The price of political and economic independence must be a willingness to face up to the challenges that one’s strong assertion of sovereignty must sometimes evoke”.

Indeed, the exercise of freedom involves the acceptance that ours is the primary responsibility for the development of this dear land of Guyana. The fundamental base of our strategy for development must therefore be our national self-reliance. It is for this reason that we have embraced Non-Alignment as a basic tenet of our foreign policy for maintaining and strengthening our independence through joint action and collective self-reliance. For Non-Alignment is essentially a philosophy of self-reliance in international politics.

Indeed, given what we are as a people, it could not be otherwise. Our-geo-political circumstances, our commitment to self-determination, our predominantly Afro-Asian heritage, the conditions which were a legacy of our colonialist exploitation, our choice of development strategy, our special needs as a small State, this combination of factors leads inevitably to a commitment to Non-Alignment, that Movement which has advanced, in all parts of the globe, the processes of political and economic self-determination, and which has given meaning to the exercise of sovereignty.

**5:45 p.m.**

Cde. Speaker, our commitment to non-alignment is well attested to by the role we have been called upon to play within the Movement, which now includes some two-thirds of all States in the international community. At the request of the Movement as a whole Guyana has served continuously as a Member of the Co-ordinating Bureau, since it was first established special responsibilities for the promotion of economic co-operation at the global level among Non-aligned and other developing countries and it has sought our participation in such areas as the mobilisation of support for the Liberation Movements of Southern Africa and the search for a solution to the Middle East situation; and there are others.

It is non-alignment through principled advocacy which has moved the United Nations from being a small security club almost exclusively dominated by the interests of the victors of the last European civil war to a more universalist organisation concerned with the legitimate and pressing needs of the developing countries. Non-alignment has consistently advocated those principles for the conduct of relations between States with widely divergent systems, that doctrine of peaceful co-existence which provided the basis for detente, limited at present to the major powers and thus requiring extension to all parts of the globe to be truly effective. It is non-alignment which has insisted that the international directorates for the exercise of power are democratised. It was through non-alignment that the doctrine of a people's permanent sovereignty over their natural resources was effectively promoted thereby facilitating the way to their recovery and control. It is Non-alignment which first articulated and formulated principles and a programme of action for a new and equitable system of international economic co-operation.

Yet, now nearly two decades after the policy of non-alignment was first adumbrated, there still persists misunderstanding or misrepresentation of it. There is, for example, in some quarters, the ill-informed belief that a foreign policy of non-alignment requires the maintenance of an equal distance between poles of power. Cde. Speaker, such mistaken judgements bring to mind the well-known fable – though I can see it is not fully analogous – of the Ass of Apulieus who, while standing midway between two bundles of hay, perished from hunger because it was unable to make up its mind in which direction first to move so as to satiate its hunger.

The whole point about non-alignment is its overriding concern for the maintenance of the State's freedom to exercise in its national interest and in keeping with its sovereignty, an independent judgement on international issues, and to pursue a freely chosen path for internal development.

In the milieu of the cold war, non-alignment provided a strategic alternative, now that power is more diffused, the Non-aligned Movement, consonant with these changes and its commitment to full independence, encompasses in its activities heightened concern with the struggles for global under-development and malformations, and the establishment of the New International Economic Order.

I wish to dwell for a moment with the particularly important emphasis which the Non-aligned places on one element of the New International Economic Order, that is, the promotion of economic co-operation among Non-aligned and other Developing Countries or collective self-reliance as it is sometimes described. As I said earlier, Guyana has been entrusted with special responsibilities for the promotion of economic co-operation among Non-aligned and other developing countries. Our specific responsibilities are in the fields of trade, transport and industry and, to this end, a Secretariat funded by external sources has been established in Georgetown.

The programme of collective self-reliance, Cde. Speaker, was elaborated at the Conference of foreign Ministers of Non-aligned Countries held in Georgetown in august 1972. In passing, may I note that it was that Conference which restored to Democratic Kampuchea its rightful place in the Movement and admitted Vietnam to membership. I am sure that all in this House will share with me the hope for an expectation of the early and peaceful settlement of the dispute which has recently arisen between these two valiant peoples – peoples who have already made a remarkable contribution to non-alignment.

Returning to the question of collective self-reliance, there are two dimensions to economic co-operation among developing countries, namely, joint action vis-à-vis the developed world, the matter of South/North relations, and effective substantive co-operation between Third World countries involving the development of trade, industry, transport and other exchanges, in

short, the development of South/North economic activities and horizontal links. Influence for change through inter-regional co-operation directed to advancing a particular issue or a cluster of issues is of special significance. One example of such functional co-operation as between primarily developing countries in different regions of the world is the producers' association an instrument of solidarity which has already demonstrated its capacity to act as a decisive catalyst.

Another example of such inter-regional economic co-operation among developing countries is the ACP Group and more particularly the Action Programme on Intra-ACP co-operation in trade, transport and other fields. Evidence of the success of the type of co-operation to which I refer is the negotiation by the ACP Group with the European Economic Community of the Lome Convention, the provisions of which ensure for us secure markets for some of our vital export products and an important source of external support. We expect to play a full part in the renegotiation of the provisions of the Lome Convention in the months ahead and will seek to improve the benefits which can accrue from those negotiations – negotiations which should be pursued on the basis of present day economic realities and mutual respects.

**Cde. Speaker,** the Cde. Minister of Finance had documented, with facts and figures, the vulnerability of our economy to shifts and pressures in the export markets for those main products on which we are almost wholly dependent. Within the context of a programme of collective self-reliance or economic co-operation trade can be better made to serve development objectives. Thus, the development of South/North economic relations will enhance the prospect of the developing world being removed from a position of periphery and dependence.

In the altered international milieu to which I made reference earlier, another major concern of the Non-aligned Movement is the security of member States. Aggression against member States, violation of the sovereignty of States through interference in their internal affairs, the fomenting of conflicts between member States, are important issues which now occupy a salient place on the agenda of non-alignment. Confronted by these developments, the Movement is concerned at the international level to build safeguards and security devices into

the United Nations System and within the Movement itself to develop techniques of early warning, mediation and conciliation.

**5:55 p.m.**

In this connection the Movement is giving particular attention to security at the level of the region through the possible establishment of zones of peace, as, for example, in the Indian region. If a pattern of co-operation can be devised at the regional level – a pattern which prevails against the divisions of language or culture dating from an imperial past – we may have in the zone of Peace concept a form of collective security which minimises the use of force. Guyana fully supports non-aligned activity in this direction. In all these varied issues and concerns Guyana has played a responsible and constructive role. And we will continue to do so.

The task of societal transformation, that major restructuring of the economy which the Cde. Minister of Finance has identified as the main objective of policy, can be implemented with greater facility at the national level if there is fundamental change in the international economic system and its key institutions. The New International Economic Order which enjoys a certain universal acceptability, if only at the level of rhetoric, in restructuring international economic relationships will make them more responsive to, and supportive of the efforts and aspirations of nations such as ours. Guyana, under the leadership of the P.N.C., has never been, and will never be, either a passive onlooker or a parasitic free-rider in the struggle for this New International Economic Order.

However, even as we note the increasing strength and influence of non-alignment, we must remain vigilant to ensure that our solidarity is not weakened. The Movement must be on guard lest hostile forces, in the promotion of interest alien to the Movement, make use of conflicts, exploit internal divisions and suborn our objectives. In its nearly two decades of

existence, the Non-aligned Movement has shown a remarkable capacity to deal with such threats while participating actively in bringing about desirable change in the international system.

Very shortly, the Foreign Ministers of the Bureau of the Movement will be meeting in Kabul, Afghanistan, to finalise preparations for the Conference of Foreign Ministers of all member States to be held in Belgrade in August.

That Conference will chart a course for the Sixth Summit Conference which will convene in Havana next year. I venture to think it is fitting that the Movement should return to Belgrade where it was founded some seventeen years ago as it prepares for its first Summit in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Cde. Speaker, as we prepare and look towards Kabul and Belgrade and to the first Summit within the Caribbean, I should like, with your leave to quote a statement by the Prime Minister in which he succinctly expounded the nature and aims of the Non-aligned Movement. It is an articulation which is today as true and as relevant as when the Prime Minister made it some seven years ago at the Fourteenth Annual Delegates Congress of the P.N.C. The Cde. Leader said:

“The Non-aligned nations are predominantly developing countries all striving to make life better for their people. They have varying and different political systems but are agreed on certain basic principles. They are dedicated to the cause of world peace which will provide the atmosphere for the development of the poorer nations and benefit mankind, they are pledged to the tactic of national self-reliance and are intent on owning, controlling and developing their resources for their own benefit. They recognise the compelling need to change the world patterns of trade and to increase significantly, international trade between themselves. They are committed to economic co-operation and mutual technical assistance. They identify colonialism in its various forms as an evil

and a crime and oppose it with all the means at their disposal. They ...are firm in their determination to pursue their independent policies...”

Cde. Speaker, I have sought the indulgence of the House in this somewhat lengthy exposition of non-alignment and the role of Guyana within that Movement as it is too often the case that our principled and Non-aligned approach to Foreign Policy is misunderstood or misinterpreted or deliberately misrepresented, even from within, by concerns not rooted in our national interests.

Cde. Speaker, it seems necessary at this stage to deal with certain regional issues in keeping with the recognition that such issues form a cornerstone of our Foreign Policy. Foremost among our regional concerns must always be the preservation and development of the Caribbean Community. We recognise that a number of factors, some of which press hard upon us from outside, now threaten to erode the integration movement and to stultify its further growth. Despite a shared experience and many ingredients of a common identity, certain factors have prevented the emergence of that consensus which would make possible effective planning of regional economic development including the integrated use of resources. Inflationary pressures from outside the region have exacted their toll in continuing balance of payments difficulties for some members of the Community. It would be as foolish to deny that the way forward is difficult as to maintain that there are no factors which underline the need for integration. The Cde. Prime Minister had at the beginning of this year outlined flexible proposals which if approached with a sense of purpose could inject a new dynamism into the Movement and revive and strengthen habits of consultation and patterns of co-operation. We are committed to pursue these proposals resolutely.

One specific situation which inhibits the development of economic integration is the continuing colonial stalemate in Belize. In this context, together with other Independent States of the region, we have strongly expressed our concern over the exercise of any pressure on the small territory of Belize and its courageous people to cede territory as a basis for a negotiated



settlement of the Angle/Guatemalan controversy. The people of Belize, although of diverse origins like other peoples of the region, have through the processes of history become a distinct community living in a territory which is theirs by birthright. We cannot countenance any step which would diminish the integrity of this community and its territory. Indeed, Cde. Speaker, it is our view a curious logic that the people of Belize should be asked as part of the process to become Independent that they should begin that Independence by a self-imposed act of dismemberment.

We will continue to give our unstinted support to the Government and people of Belize in their determination to achieve an early and secure Independence with full sovereign and territorial integrity.

Cde. Speaker, if I have dealt with our relations with the Caribbean Community with which we have historic ties of culture and language, this should not be taken as in any way minimising the importance which we attach to our relations with our non-English-speaking immediate neighbours.

One of the cardinal goals of our Foreign Policy over the years has been the development of relations of co-operation and amity based on mutual respect at all possible levels with our immediate neighbours Surinam, Brazil, and Venezuela. It is only but right that one should seek to live in an atmosphere of peace and co-operation with one's neighbours.

We are convinced that fruitful and feasible bilateral, sub-regional and regional co-operation between the States of Latin America is a responsibility which history has ordained and today's circumstances make desirable. We will therefore continue to pursue with our neighbours

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**National Assembly**

**5.55 – 6.05 p.m.**

and other States in Latin America, programmes of bilateral and multilateral co-operation. We will do so not only in the interest of the ethic of good neighbourliness but in acknowledgement of the need for the progressive development of harmonious relations within the hemisphere and between Third World countries which are seeking collectively to redress the malformations resulting from colonialism and imperialism, and to build new bases for relations between States based on equity and justice.

Cde. Speaker, this is not a Foreign Policy debate and consequently I have not dealt with a number of serious issues affecting Guyana's Foreign policy. I refer, Cde. Speaker, to issues like freedom in Southern Africa, the Middle East situation and the Palestinian question, Cyprus and the Korean question, among others. The policies of the Government on all these issues have frequently been expounded and do not need to be repeated today. Suffice it to say that guided as they are by certain fundamental principles – self-determination, independence from colonial exploitation, non-acquisition of territory by force, non-interference in the internal affairs of States and the settlement of disputes by peaceful means – all Members of this House, I am certain, will continue to support the Government's stands on these issues.

**6:05 p.m.**

Cde. Speaker, as I come to the end of this brief **tour d'horizon** of the complex and rapidly changing regional and international environment in which we must pursue our Foreign Policy, I am persuaded that there might be advantage in trying to view our present difficulties within a wider perspective. The Cde. Minister of Finance adverted in his speech to the sluggish growth and recovery of the industrialised countries. Indeed, some developed market economies have found themselves faced with prolonged economic difficulties. More recently we have learnt of the deleterious effects of inflationary pressures on some centrally planned economies. Cde. Speaker, the present experience of Guyana is similar to that of many a non oil-producing developing economy. To take but two examples, two Non-Aligned countries with which we have close and brotherly relations, Zambia and Cuba.

As a result of the “softness” in the copper market – copper being the principal Zambian export commodity – and the consistent rise in the price of imported manufactured goods and petroleum the Zambian Government, for the second successive year has found it necessary to increase taxation on a number of items including beer, soft drinks, petrol, work permits, etc., to increase taxes on several other items, and to introduce a belt-tightening budget while at the same time seeking to expand the production base of the economy and to improve productivity.

Further, President Fidel Castro, one of the foremost revolutionaries of our time, who displayed a formidable reservoir of human courage in his struggles against reaction, imperialism, and neo-colonialism, has exhibited similar political valour in explaining to the Cuban people the realities of contemporary international economic relations and the need for them to postpone certain levels of consumption in order to concentrate national resources on the construction of a strong and ample economic foundation.

In a recent statement at the end of the Second Session of the Cuban National Assembly of Peoples Power, Cde. Castro revealed that had it not been for special prices paid for Cuban sugar by the Soviet Union and large reductions in the price of fuel, Cuban sugar exports, which constitute some 85 percent of total exports, would have barely sufficed to cover the cost of importing fuel and nothing else. In that very address, which is the very epitome of political candour, Cde. Castro added that even though Cuba could earn an additional 200 million pesos (or about \$600 million) during 1978 from increased sugar sales alone, the Cuban people should concentrate more on increasing exports than on increasing consumption. He added that for the next seven or eight years the Cuban people should be prepared to maintain the same levels of consumption and to strive to consolidate the development of the economy. Indeed, the lesson he sought to convey was that it was the task of this present generation of Cubans to emphasise development over consumption. In explaining the situation which faced Cuba during 1977, President Castro said:

“1977 was a very difficult year for our Revolution. You, the deputies, are fully aware of all the problems we have had to face. This is due to the objective facts of the world situation.”

I refer to these facts and experiences, Cde. Speaker, to show that Guyana is far from being alone in its present economic difficulties. I refer to them also to show how a country like Cuba, while still remaining an oil-importing country – albeit enjoying special terms – is seeking to overcome those difficulties arising from the spill over of the economic crisis afflicting the developed market economies. I refer to these facts also to demonstrate to this House that in the present context economic recovery is a function of facing the hard economic realities; explaining them frankly and honestly to the people and harnessing all human and other national resources towards that end. Those of us on this side of this House are proud to be associated with a leadership that has had the necessary courage to face the Guyanese people with reality and to plan and work for the speedy and effective transformation of that reality.

In conclusion, Cde. Speaker, I venture to say a few words on the role of the House in this situation. While there may be disagreement on some details of policy there can be no room for disagreement on substance in what is in fact the continuation of our struggle for Independence.

We will expect from all in this House support for the national effort of economic recovery. To do otherwise would be unpatriotic. We on this side of the House are committed to that effort.

We will resolutely pursue our policies of self-reliance seeking external support as necessary from all possible quarters on terms which are consonant generally with our national objectives, and, particularly, with the socialist strategy we have chosen for ourselves.

Ultimately, the test which we apply in the articulation and prosecution of our national policy is whether the careful management of our financial and human resources and the prudent

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**6.05 – 6.15 p.m.**

initiatives which we will take will serve to maintain and advance our levels of living, and to guarantee the security of the State of Guyana.

**The Speaker:** Cde. Jackson may I congratulate you on your maiden speech and the very high level of contribution you have made to this House. The silence which emanated from the Opposition is sure testimony to that contribution. Once again, congratulations. Cde. Nokta.

**Cde. Nokta:** Cde. Speaker, yesterday I listened to the first speaker over on that side of the House. He described the Minister's budget as the end of one era and the beginning of another era. I took it for granted. It is and "error" and from what I learnt of Guyana, this is one of the greatest errors to come to come to this House in the form of a budgetary presentation. We have had so many errors in the past years. Let me go through them quickly. Free milk, free cassava, free bread. That is an error. CARIFTA will save us, the economy will become viable. That was an error. "Tighten your belts." That was another error. "Sleep less, eat less, work harder," that was also an error. "Co-op. Republic, small man will be the real man." A monstrous error. Later on we had "Legalise obeahism." What a shameless error. "Feed and House and Clothe the nation by 1976." Another error. So my friends, years go by one after the other, errors upon errors.

**6.15 p.m.**

The Minister was supposed to bring out this error at the end of December, 1977, he couldn't bring it out. End of January passed; 27<sup>th</sup> February. My friends so many increases, so many taxes and yet what do we see? A Budget presented in this House with a deficit of \$160 million. Do you mean in the context of hopes and expectation you couldn't put in some more hopes at least, assumptions at least? So many assumptions. Two months. Do you mean you couldn't put in more assumptions and bridge the gap? Out of current Estimates of Revenue for 1978, \$175 million will be for salaries, \$154 million for debts. What is left for social services? Less than \$3 million. Where is Guyana going? You will see it.

Today, we are seeing all of them are talking about austerity budget; talking about “tighten your belts.” Redeployment. The whole society is sick. Why? Because a parasite is now sucking the nation, sucking to a point that in 1978 out of current Estimates of Revenue \$3 million is left to run this whole of Guyana. Out of revenue. That is why the society is sick. Look at it straight. Social services have gone to nothing. All of these boys over there are talking about socialism. An old age pensioner, who served this nation for 60 years is going to be content with \$15 per month in today’s cost of living and you talk about socialism.

Go to Cuba and tell Castro what you have for pensioners. Whither are we going? Look at it. The whole society has become sick, so sick that the Prime Minister went last year to Canada and became a doctor. Outside of this building there are four people bracing up what they call Prime Minister’s prescription. What a prescription! My friend, Mr. Wills has lost the will. He resigned and pretended to be ill . . .

**The Speaker:** Cde. Nokta I didn’t know you were a poet as well.

**Cde. Nokta:** Cde. Speaker, I didn’t know you were an Accountant. Now, let us look at the reality in Guyana. One junior Minister spoke boldly about social services and water supply. Of course, he read his speech well. Somebody prepared it. I never knew Wakenaam had electricity. He should have told this House. I came from West Coast Berbice last Sunday. Four villages have a water pump with one battery. The people have got to wait till one pump starts up, then finishes, and then they move the battery and send it to another village and pump the water; move the battery and send it to another village and pump the water. You can’t buy a battery? You mean we have gone so bad? All right, my friends, go to Cummings Lodge one day and tell the people about water supply. Go to Industry where people have to dig pits in the ground and when it is time to sleep, midnight, they have to get up and fetch water in cups. Go into Cummings Lodge. I live in that area. You don’t know. You are living away from the people. What about Suddie hospital?

Let us look at the picture. The year 1964, salaries \$28 million: today \$176 million; Debts, \$128 million, today \$1,471 million. Where is Guyana going? Less than one million people and we have \$1,400 million in debts. People are laughing but time will catch up with you as it is doing now. At least what you were saying here you cannot put to the small man out there. They were speaking here about corn price being 20 cents. He didn't say that in the P.P.P.'s time one file cost 50 cents and now it is costing \$7.00. What has happened to that? It is a reality that in the P.P.P.'s time in government \$5.00 used to fill a basket with goods and seven people were able to eat for a week. Today, \$40 cannot do it. You go out in the street there. That is reality. Now you are talking here. All these are many speeches.

Let us look at social services. They keep cutting out. I am wondering now when all the subsidies are cut out and you cannot tax the people more, what next? What is the picture? Social services will have to be curtailed. Already we have seen the Transport and Harbours Department telling the people that we are going to stop having the Pomeroun services. We are going to cut out the Bartica Steamer service. Is this development? Is this the production and productivity they are talking about? Where will the people carry their produce and with what? Where will they sell it?

This is the reality. What about public transport, steamers? I said it here already. If the P.P.P. did not produce for this country three steamers, we would not have had any transport service. And they boasted about rice. In 1961 when the Tapakuma Scheme was being built everybody over there was poisoned with the venom of the rattle snake. Today, they have caught their senses. Instead of going to Black Bush, they should have gone to Freedom House and bowed down to Jagan. They know the importance of rice. But they are robbing the rice farmers. I don't have to go into that.

Let us look at the failures. So much money has been wasted. Look at Orealla. They started a road there some time ago. Crabwood Creek to Orealla over \$2 million worth of cash wasted. The road is abandoned. Poor people in Orealla village cannot get proper medical facilities. I went there. Because of the shortages of foodstuffs, because of Police oppression, shooting down of Amerindians, because of uncertainty, on-third of the people from Orealla and Superuka have gone to live in Surinam. Ask them. They know about it. Why? Are they not patriots? But the people cannot live on those papers that you present here. That is paper. People want to see something realistic.

What about in the North West District? They talk about production. Let me tell you what happened at Matarkai. At one time they used to call it Matthew's Ridge. Over \$20 million has been spent from 1967 to now but every year you look at the Estimate to see what revenue has come out – nothing. It is here; 1974 revenue, nothing; 1975 nothing, 1976 nothing, 1977 nothing, and in 1978 we project nothing. What has happened to all this money that is being spent at Matthew's Ridge? We heard them talk about blackeye and corn, about cassava factory. Where is the cassava? Cassava takes three months to bear. Any Amerindian will tell you that. Five years ago you started to plant, you have not reaped a crop yet? You have not sold any? You can't put a cent in the book to cover shame? What has happened to the stud farm we were hearing about? The Prime Minister put horses in a plane and flew them to Matthew's Ridge. When the people criticised they said they were going to establish a stud farm. What has happened to the beef? Aren't we getting milk? Time will catch up. I understand 500 are to be retrenched. They were boasting that Matthew's Ridge will be the bread basket of Guyana. I told them the last time that if the sloop **Daman** does not buy food and carry it up there, all of them would starve.



6:25 p.m.

What about Global Agri in the Berbice River? They are so ashamed of it that they changed the name. Millions of dollars were spent. They call it Kibilibiri now. Just as how they are ashamed about Matthew's Ridge and now call it Matarkai. They have changed the name because they are embarrassed. What about Butenabu, Mahaicony River? Butenabu is a scheme where thousands and thousands of dollars were spent. What about Alik, Essequibo River, not far away from Bartica? Perhaps Mr. Bancroft can tell you, ask him how many plantains are coming out. The best production in Alik is bush rum. It is a bush rum haven now. Bartica has become a ghost town. They had **Ambrosia** lighting it up. Now they have brought **Ambrosia** back to Georgetown. I want the Minister to tell this House how much money is being spent on **Ambrosio**. One Minister says we have to turn away from oil but we are wasting it there. Somebody has to pay for it at some time and I am sounding a warning. Somebody has to answer questions for this. There is a colossal wastage in this country. People want to write their names in history. What is happening in Bartica? The last time I said: They broke the clock; they put up a tombstone and marked their names. I read the names, Bancroft and Romain. Where is Romain? The names are all scratched out so what did they put: Co-operative Republic of Guyana.

However, there are more important matters than that. Let us look at the transport service from 1974 to 1977. So many vessels have gone into disrepair, so many have been scrapped. Let me give you a list of the number of steamers that are either dead, scrapped, or limping. **Ambrosio** is dead, but cannot have a funeral. Sir Crawford, and here is where we have an example of the sense of this Government. The only dredge we had in this country. For several years now we have not had a dredge. As a result, the river is silting. The **Malali** instead of moving by time has to work by tide. I don't want to talk about conditions on the steamers. Everybody knows. Even the three steamers the P.P.P. gave them they are wrecking. They cannot replace them. What about the dredge? It is a shame.

Guyana is a big nation and they are boasting “we are building co-operative socialism” and what they did? They have a dragline put on a pontoon. They baptised it and call it “Dredge”. Dig sand on one side and throw it on the other. I mentioned that already.

What is happening in transport? I have here a report from the Transport Advisory Council September, 1977. Over \$2 million deficit. This year, Transport and Harbours Department submitted Estimates for \$5 million; you put it in the Budget \$3 million. How it looks like a sick man! By the end of 1977, the deficit will be over \$3 million according to that rate. So, Cde. Speaker, with \$3 million deficit and \$3 million voted, it looks like a sick man taking a pint of blood in one hand and giving out a pint in the other. That is what these people have done to the Transport and Harbours Department. And they boast about it.

Look at the North West District, several years now and I keep pressing here and even at the meetings of the Advisory Council, give the people of North West a new steamer. I want to wan in this House that if nothing is done shortly I am afraid disaster will take place in what dungeon which is now used. Two or three years back they were telling the people that they are going to provide a new steamer. The Minister made a bold statement, carried it in the Press: “New steamer for North West.” When I enquired, what did I hear? Even the plan, the White Paper for the steamer has not been completed yet. When will the steamer be completed?

While these people are masquerading and making promises, fooling the nation, browbeating this nation, the citizens of this country have to stand long hours waiting for transportation. How are you going to have production and productivity? Look at the East Coast. Every morning, thousands of people are losing nearly one hour each man per day. Imagine the loss in work hours and production.

What about the Pomeroon? **[Interruption]**

That prescription cannot work in Guyana. Anyhow, this is a serious business because while you are promising, the people are definitely becoming frustrated. I crossed on the Berbice ferry last Sunday morning. The 5:45 ferry did not cross until 7:30. Right in Georgetown the people had to queue up here for two hours. They do not work on schedule. The Ministers will not give us that. They give us a different picture but we are concerned with realities, what is happening in Guyana, not with presentation of reports only. The people outside want to have something positive but it is not coming.

Cde. Speaker, if we are to look at the interior what do we see? I go into the Berbice River and this is what I want to come back to, social services. Education is a social service; health is a social service. In fact, it was the P.P.P. that built four health centres in the Berbice River. When I last visited, only one had a nurse and that is the one at St. Lust. Sandhills had none. Ida Sabina had none up to the last time I visited. What is happening at Kalkuni? At Kalkuni the school is broken down, the teacher is using the health centre for a school and he lives in the nurses' house. What a shame! You cannot have clinics! You cannot have health service. The health centre is now diverted to become a school and they are boasting.

**6.35 p.m.**

Let us look at the Rupununi. Of course, these boys fly in planes; they do not go to meet the people. In the Rupununi today all the bridges have become impassable. I put a question in Parliament and I hope someday it will be answered. The jeeps have to go in the creek and drive out and hope that the water is not too high for no brick or rock has shifted. Otherwise, it is left in the creek. The Ministers do not know that, they fly in planes. They move from Lethem to Aishalton by plane and from Aishalton to Karasabai by plane, so they do not have cause to move on the swamps. That is one of the basic reason why people in Rupununi starved and children died from hunger. This is what you have brought this country to. In 1976 you say you are feeding the nation and in 1977 people's children die from the want of food. They cannot deny

this. I went to Shea, a village in the South and I met the parents of the children who died and they told me how it happened. It is pitiful to relate here. People must die in Guyana for the want of food, it is a disgrace.

I have in my file a letter from an Amerindian Captain. I'll find it later on.

**The Speaker:** Cde. Nokta, you have 5 minutes more.

**Cde. Nokta:** All right, Cde. Speaker. As my time is nearly up, let me talk about what is happening to the people, how Amerindians are treated. In my last contribution during the Budget debate, I told this House how the G.D.F. and police have been harassing people, Amerindians in particular, in the North West District and in the Rupununi and this state of affairs has not stopped. What has happened? I mentioned already the attempt to rape the girls in the Police Station at Imbotero. I mentioned the shooting of the man in the house. What has happened in the Rupununi last year? An Amerindian boy by the name of Dennis Joaquin was one night in his house when four soldiers went to attack his female family and in defence of his sister he killed one soldier, he injured one and two fled. What has happened? Was any case made?

I would like the Minister to write it down if he does not know. The boy's name is Dennis Joaquin; he now works with the Government two miles away from Parika. In order to cover the story, they gave him a job. This is what is happening in Guyana.

Look at Mabaruma! Is this the way you intend to have national unity? Over fifty families in the North West have already gone to live in Venezuela. Why? Because of hunger, police harassment, frustration and lack of social services! People going to Mabaruma hospital are told to walk with their cup, plate, blanket and sheet. Last year October, a sea truck was named after a dedicated worker, a boy who was known to me as a personal friend when I lived there, a young

Amerindian boy. One night around 10:30, a headman in the army at Mabaruma, with a machine gun, pumped ten bullets. Seven got him and ripped his guts apart. In order to browbeat Amerindians you are going to fool them. “Boy, don’t keep noise. We are going to make him a martyr. We are going to name the sea truck after him. So they called the sea truck “Sir Patrick Rodrigues.” The shame of it all, in as much as they shot the man, the **Chronicle** newspaper of Sunday, November 27, 1977, stated:

“It was the people of the North West themselves who chose the name for the sea truck as a kind of memorial to Cde. Patrick Rodrigues who was killed in an accident some months ago.”

Shooting a man down in public and you are going to refer to it as an accident! This is what is going on. Amerindian Captains are saying that they have to leave, soldiers are raiding their farms and all these things. I am asking this Government and all those concerned to try to treat people better, especially people in the interior, who live so far away and cannot get the services that are necessary. As a result, people are living in poverty and hunger all over. People are crossing the border. Why are they doing that? You have to change your attitude. People cannot get medical services. All that you get now is jeeps going in, no medicines, no drugs. All they take is **New Nation**, **Chronicle** and a newspaper called **Forward**. When you read the **New Nation** there are so many lies and half truths that the society gets pregnant with stupidity. You may try to fool the people, but not all the time.

What is happening? Cde. Roshan Ally talked about farmers not getting guns. One Minister replied and said only people who deserve the guns will get them. Are they telling us that all the Amerindians who are losing their crops through animals destroying their crops do not need guns? You are going to go back to Mabaruma and tell them so? You are going to tell them that they do not deserve guns? Look into the North West District. I see Government officers who are employed to drive trucks are roaming the place with guns on their shoulders. People

who cannot produce food to feed themselves are given guns and legitimate farmers whose farms are destroyed by monkeys are not given. It takes them one dollar to buy a monkey. One hundred monkeys, one hundred dollars. How can he survive as a farmer? In the time of the P.P.P., one pack of cartridges cost \$5.

In the North West we talk about production. I want to ask the Minister when the people plant and reap their produce where they will carry it to be sold. Some time ago, the Canadian Government gave the people a sloop which was named ... They scrapped the sloop. Is this the way we are going to help poor people when you talk of co-ops. Look at what is happening with co-ops.

**The Speaker:** You will have to finish now.

**Cde. Nokta:** Look at the people who have guns. Jeffrey Thomas in company with people –

**The Speaker:** Cde. Jeffrey Thomas is a Parliamentarian and he is entitled to a gun.

**Cde. Nokta:** And how he is using guns? Do they deserve guns to chase people who produce out of their farms? Is this the way you are going to produce? They have not been helping the farmers. What about medical doctors in the North West? A dentist is there, a doctor is there. But –

**6:45 p.m.**

**The Speaker:** Please wind up.

**Cde. Nokta:** In the Ministry of Education, the Education Officer is supposed to move in the river. The only boat he has, they call it the Cecilene B is now for sale. I would like to continue. The Transport service is hopeless. Medical service in the interior is also hopeless and as a result of that, while we continue to talk, we are not doing anything positive to assist and alleviate the problems of the people. In conclusion, this Budget is like a big serpent ashamed of its size. In order to cut down, it is swallowing the tail.

**The Speaker:** Cde. Minister of Works and Transport.

**The Minister of Works and Transport (Cde. Naraine):** Cde. Speaker, the Minister of Finance in his Budget Speech referred to significant allocations to be made in the plan period 1978-81, to provide facilities for transportation to support production activities. This is not surprise since, even in the previous development period, we all know that very substantial sums of money had been provided for infrastructure for transportation, and for transportation facilities themselves.

It has been the principal policy objective of Government to ensure the availability of fast, safe and economic transport services in response to the need to promote commerce, living conditions, the quality of life, the farming community, and to maintain the security of the nation. Towards this end the Government has made substantial investments to expand and improve the basic transport network and to increase and modernise the fleet of vehicles in the three modes. As an adjunct to the policy, it has also increased its investment in postal and telecommunication services to facilitate transactions in which face-to-face contacts are not at their premium.

Cde. Speaker, Cde. Nokta in his presentation, has made some very unfortunate references and since he has run out of time in this House, I hope he has the courage to continue his exhortation outside of this House because I am sure the consequences of his statements would be of grave import and consequence to himself and those whom he supports.

Cde. Nokta became oblivious of how development actually takes place. One knows for a fact that the more spending of a sum of money would not in itself immediately give the kind of return which might be anticipated from a particular project and, therefore, the expenditure of money in a particular development would not necessarily mean that the day after the expenditure had been incurred financial returns would start flowing. But one has to realise that where the life and living of people are concerned then any responsible Government, anyone who claims that he is a representative of the people, and that he has the people at heart, in the manner that our comrade from the other side has said, would realise that there would have to be the necessary developmental expenditure in order that they can live, that they can develop themselves and can pursue a policy and developmental course for the future of the nation as a whole.

Cde. Nokta has mentioned a number of projects which he has described as failures. But in talking of the successes of the P.P.P. he seems to be able to recall over seven years in office, three steamers, three health centres and the participation in some projects; two drainage and irrigation projects, for which I know for a fact the P.P.P. was not directly responsible in their financing as they are really an inheritance from the Interim Government.

**[Applause]**

**The Speaker:** Cde. Naraine, you have even Cde. Ram Karran clapping on that statement.

**Cde. Naraine:** It is an acknowledgement because I was his servant in those days. One realises, Cde. Speaker, that even in development like this, if this Government, the People's National Congress Government, was not interested in people, people of all races, people of all political pursuits, people who are our people of Guyana, then one would not have expected that the People's National Congress Government would have gone into a place like Black Bush Polder and would have spent such substantial additional sums of money for making right a



number of deficiencies which existed in that project, and also today, pursued a course for the further development, improvement and expansion of that project in that area.

One would realise and readily understand that the settlers of that area were all selected by the People's Progressive Party Government, and therefore, the tirade put through by Cde. Nokta in terms of the manner in which he alleges that people are being treated must be just a figment of his imagination.

**6:55 p.m.**

I remember in this House not so very long ago, when Cde. Nokta or Cde. Janet Jagan raised the question of shortage of food in the Rupununi. Cde. Hoyte was able to point out to this House, documented evidence and figures which could not have been contradicted and even to this day cannot be contradicted. It is a fact that the people in all areas are being well served and served in a manner superior to that in which they have ever been served before.

I think that the members of the Opposition have one thing of which they can accuse this Government. I think indirectly they hinted at it but did not have the courage to come out openly and say it. I believe it is true that this Government, probably in its sincere and very deep feeling for our people, has built up tremendous hope and expectations beyond which we have been able to reach so far.

I think it may be useful at this point to go back, not to 1965, that is too far because then the figures will become too large for the members of the Opposition to understand, because one will remember their last developmental budget presented was of the tune of \$16 million, of which they spent \$9 million. I will just go back to the last development period. During that period, 1972 to 1976, this Government spent on road construction and improvement alone \$140 million and over that period more than 200 miles of road were constructed or rehabilitated.

As a consequence of the massive and very much needed expenditure on public highways and new roads, there is a linking of centres of population like Georgetown and Linden, and more recently, with the Upper Mazaruni, where today one can drive with a four-wheel drive vehicle from Georgetown, crossing by ferry at Essequibo and Mazaruni, and getting right up to the Upper Mazaruni. This is a fact and a thing that is being done now.

**[Applause]**

Therefore, when one listens to Cde. Nokta, one would imagine that the transport services of the country and the transport facilities and infrastructure have deteriorated from the burnt earth pot-hole roads of the P.P.P. to such an extent that people cannot travel at all today. The farm produce cannot move from the farm. Everyone has to stay in his home and in his little community and paddle with little boats, but, the figures reveal a completely different story.

If one takes a traffic census, say, on the East Bank road at Houston, one will find that where in the early sixties the number of vehicles passing up and down was less than a thousand at that point, today that number is 21,711 recorded at the last census. The transport facilities have increased more than twenty times. Now, if we considered the year 1971, the number of vehicles using the roads, all the roads, was 34,700. In 1975, that number had increased to 41,100 vehicles.

Let us take the increment. This is just the annual increment in the number of new registrations of vehicles in the country. For 1972, the increment was 3,581 and by 1976 that annual increment had increased to 4,946. What are these vehicles doing? If, as the comrade is suggesting, there are not transport facilities, if, as he is suggesting, people have no means to move, we show on one side that the number of vehicles is increasing at a very rapid rate and we show on the other side that the usage of the vehicles on the road has multiplied twenty times from the time of the P.P.P. to the present time. This is in relation to road transport. But what is more significant is that in 1970 when the Guyana Transport Services took over the East Coast

bus service, all that was done at that time was to replace ten buses that were privately owned and, therefore, the traffic which was generated by the movement of people was accommodated at that time by ten buses. Today, that fleet of buses in this country has reached 258. Accepting the accusation made by the learned members of the Opposition, that people have to wait; but people have to wait in London and in New York; they have to wait in Moscow to get transportation and they have to wait in Guyana. Therefore, it means that although there are more transportation services, the demand for these services is rapidly growing. This is why people have to wait in queue to get on the buses.

**7:05 p.m.**

The Government is not unconscious, as the past Government was, of the needs of the people. Right now, the Government is making arrangements to supplement the number of buses and in the programme going to 1981 the fleet of buses will be further increased. Necessary workshop maintenance facilities, depot facilities, will be provided also. The sum of \$27 million has been earmarked for this purpose. This is not idle talk because historically it has been shown that this Government has been able to improve the bus services in the country and increase its fleet in seven years from 10 to 258 buses. Therefore, if we say we are adding to the fleet, it will be no surprise to anyone, because our actions in the past have proven that we have the capacity and we have the will to undertake projects like these and complete them.

At this point I would like to make reference to why it has been found necessary to increase or to reduce the subsidies on certain transport facilities. It is no sense burying our heads in the sand and making wild statements such as: When the P.P.P. was in office, we used to buy cartridges – I do not know how many – for \$5. I thought they used to give them away for nothing in those days until they were caught, so they should have said that the cartridges were given at no cost. I do not think the intention was to use them on birds or four-legged animals. I think they had other views which they were not allowed to execute. I wonder whether they made

the cartridges at the time and why they did not take steps to make them so that we could get them now for the same \$5. They should have done that rather than having inherited projects from the colonial people to whom they refer all the time, and calling them their projects, or building three health centres and boasting vigorously about them. But what has been happening? We do not manufacture buses in this country; we do not manufacture machinery yet in this country. We are now taking steps to encourage manufacturing of certain things in this country. There was a curtailment and substantial reduction in the importation of vehicles during last year and this year. This is true because, as I explained, the flow of vehicles into the country had been very substantial in previous years. But while this is going on, there is a local company making small vans and vehicles which are being used in the transport services, in the farming services, and for general transport facilities. The members of the P.P.P. would never have thought about that. They would have gone to their masters overseas to send the vehicles to them in some way or the other but we have been able to create a new industry whereby you can have vehicles made here. We hope, for this year and next year and certainly in the four-year period, to expand on this and to produce spare parts in the country, to manufacture bus bodies and other components necessary for vehicles and equipment in the country.

What has been happening? The prices for parts and new equipment which have been coming into the country have increased substantially. For instance, let us take one item, tyres. Over the period, we are re-treading them at much less cost. The prices of tyres have increased by 175 percent over the past few years. The basic price of fuel has increased by over 200 percent. Cde. Jack told you about that. Spare parts: prices have increased by 175 percent and therefore --

**[Interruption]**

**The Speaker:** Please let us have some order. We have one jester in the Parliament. I am not going to permit two.

**Cde. Naraine:** Because of these increases and because the Government has found that the workers deserve more than what they have been receiving, over the period 1977 to 1978 wages have also increased by 100 percent. Now, because of all these increased costs it has become necessary to revise the rates of fares. We have done that and it may be necessary to have further revisions of these rates. Of course, everything is going up including wages. Cde. Speaker, I believe, in so far as the transport and infrastructural facilities for land transportation are concerned, there can be no question whatsoever that very substantial changes have taken place for the better.

There has been very much improvement and because of the increased economic activity, because of the better quality of living, because of all these factors, the traffic has also increased substantially on our roads. There was still some life to be had out of the old Canje swing bridge but that bridge became non-functional and the delays caused by the opening and closing of that bridge became an economic burden on the country. It was necessary for us to replace that swing bridge with a bridge which had an economic life of 150 years, where there can be a free flow of road traffic and a free flow of river traffic at all times.

**[Applause]**

Cde. Speaker, in relation to the Demerara ferry, here again I think the comrade has – and should not do this as a member of –

**7:20 p.m.**

*[At this stage there was an electrical power failure.]*

**The Speaker:** I think we have a premature end to our proceedings this evening. There will be a suspension for 15 minutes by which time I think the emergency plant will provide electricity for a while. The Sitting of the House is suspended for 15 minutes.

*Sitting suspended at 7:20 p.m.*

**7:28 p.m.**

*On resumption –*

**The Speaker:** Comrades, unfortunately we have a blackout at this time. As a result we have lost one hour of sitting time. I propose that on Monday that we will sit from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. We will then take the Suspension from 4 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. and sit from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. We shall come back at 8 p.m. and sit until 11 p.m. or midnight. I regret that this is so. So as not to rob anybody of the time allocated under the Standing Orders, that will be the pattern for Monday.

#### ADJOURNMENT

**Resolved,** “That this Assembly do now adjourn until Monday, 6<sup>th</sup> March, 1978, at 2 p.m.” [The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Leader of the House.]

**Adjourned accordingly at 7:30 p.m.**

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